

VOICE OF THE MOORS

NYMA - PROTECTING THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS
FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS



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Cover: Moorsbus gives passengers a glorious view of the heather from Blakey Road (©Bill Breakell)

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CHAIR'S FOREWORD

TEESSIDE FREEPORT AND MARINE CONSERVATION - A CAUSE FOR CONCERN?

The Campaign for National Parks has recently flagged up Freeports and Marine Conservation zones (or 'marine national parks') as new areas of interest. NYMA is fully concerned with both.

The Teesside Freeport raises worries that current planning and conservation designations may be threatened by the 'laissez faire' activities intended. Marine conservation is already a concern nationally, but the existing North York Moors National Park boundary throws up a peculiarity. There is a section of coastline where there is a gap in the National Park boundary north of Burniston and including Robin Hood's Bay. This could mean that the Park already extends into the North Sea!

In these two instances we need to have maps we can trust. The obvious first choice is the Ordnance Survey 1:25,000 Explorer series, a favourite of many outdoor lovers, and still offering a handcrafted look despite its digitisation and availability online as an app. The OS is clear enough on the National Park boundary but not yet forthcoming on the Teesside Freeport boundary.

An online search takes you to a smaller scale map in a 'Maps of UK Freeports' section on the Government's website. This has defined 'tax zones' in red and an ominously large radius circle which illustrates 'outer boundaries'. This bisects the coast approximately at Saltburn in the south and in the vicinity of Peterlee in the north. The complete absence of any place names makes it hard to judge exactly where the line goes (which is, presumably, the intention), but the radius must be greater than ten miles. Is it then any wonder that existing protection designations could be threatened, and that NYMA is concerned about it?



New Whitby Lifeboat

A NEW LIFEBOAT FOR WHITBY

On a lighter note, one of the most heart-warming traditions was enacted in Whitby in mid-June when the RNLI's new Shannon class lifeboat arrived at the port, welcomed and accompanied by lifeboats from Staithes, Runswick Bay and Scarborough, plus a flotilla of local boats and a big quayside crowd. The new boat (RNLB 13-49, Lois Ivan) is similar to Scarborough's RNLB 13-15, Frederick William Plaxton. They have a range of 250 nautical miles and a top speed of 27 knots (31 mph). They can carry 23 survivors and still stay self-righting, and up to 79 people but without self-righting. There are now 50 such vessels in UK and

Irish waters, a formidable capability, a clear indication that the volunteer lifeboat crews are being given the equipment that can cope with the dangers and challenges involved.

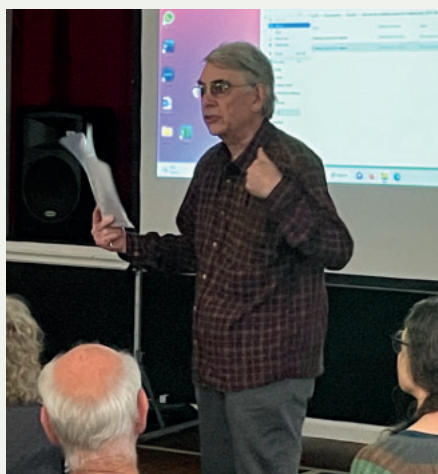
THE BENEFITS OF THE OUTDOORS

Quite rightly, we are now hearing a lot about the restitutive benefits of the great outdoors, especially to those with lower incomes, illness, or infirmity. NYMA is happy to encourage projects such as the Outdoor Partnership / North Yorkshire Sport's current initiative to improve personal potential through better access to outdoor activities (<https://outdoorpartnership.co.uk>). 'Improving potential' may sound woolly but this must be a fundamental aim of much charitable work, especially where claimed benefits can be clearly assessed. However, many projects fail or peter out because their objectives may be clear and laudable but the means to achieve them are not properly available or supported.

For instance, many outdoor pursuits - sporting or otherwise - involve lugging equipment around, which normally means using a car. Currently, Scotrail supplement some trains on the West Highland Line with an extra vehicle specially converted to carry bigger, often unwieldy, equipment. These diesel-powered units are attached to the regular train (or can run singly if needed). Would it be beyond the bounds of possibility to do something similar in the Moors? Perhaps attaching trailers to service buses, or creating new routes accessing locations like Dalby Forest and Wykeham Lakes, perhaps getting such summertime-only routes sponsored? A similar scheme happened in the past when British European Airways (BEA) used trailers to carry luggage between Victoria Station and Heathrow. But judging by the trouble the excellent Moorsbus service has had this year in getting funding, any such ideas would be quickly dismissed by those with the potential to 'make things happen'.

ADRIAN LEAMAN

NYMA NEWS



Ray Clarke has continued giving his lively presentations on wildlife and culture of the Moors to groups and societies across the north-east, while Janet Cochrane gave well-received talks to WI groups around York. Ray also generated lots of interest with his stand at the popular Duncombe Park fair and - as we go to press - he'll be supporting Tom Ratcliffe and other fell runners at the Cock Howe race (from Chop Gate) organised by the Esk Valley Fell Club. The group has kindly offered a donation to NYMA from race entry fees.

Our Walks Coordinator Dave Moore continues to organise a monthly programme of sociable and informative walks in different parts of the Moors; do let him know if you'd like to be notified of the programme on walks@nyma.org.uk.

AWARDS

The Council of Trustees has made two grants under our Conservation Award scheme in the last quarter. First, we are pleased to support Moorsbus, as we have done for several years, since we believe strongly that Moorsbus embodies the

principle that national parks should be accessible to all as well as helping to reduce carbon emissions in the Park. We also made a significant donation to the Friends of Dalby Forest, which is working in partnership with Forestry England and drystone waller Mark Ellis to create a drystone wall maze in Dalby Forest - the largest of its kind in the world. You may have seen it featured in Channel 5's 'The Secret Life of the Forest' series. We look forward to visiting it once it's open to the public.

NEW BUSINESS MEMBER

It's good news that Guisborough Town Council, a long-standing supporter of NYMA, has voted to take out Business & Organisation membership. The Council owns and operates from the fine Georgian Sunnyfield House, a Grade 2 listed building, which also hosts a community centre and delivers other important community services. Amongst other actions, they supported the recent renovation of the magnificent Guisborough Town Hall.

A **S** **E** **V** **E** **R**, it's been a busy few months for us. At the start of July Adrian Leaman chaired a discussion forum on improving local biodiversity, held in Danby as part of the Esk Valley and Cleveland Community Earth Festival (see photo), and in May he promoted NYMA's work at the Heritage Summit organised by the Yorkshire Society. NYMA is proud to be one of the Yorkshire Society's Heritage Guardians.

NYMA AGM

The Annual General Meeting will take place on Saturday October 14th at the Danby Lodge National Park Centre. The event will include the standard business of presenting the Trustees' Annual Report and Accounts and electing or confirming Officers and Trustees, and will follow on from a Nature Recovery networking event at Danby Lodge in the morning. This initiative was flagged up by Ian Carstairs' 'President's Piece' in the Spring 'Voice' and further explained in this edition. NYMA members are warmly invited to both parts of the day. There will be additional invitees to the morning event and a buffet lunch for all, with an optional walk.

We will circulate more details to members by email and put them on the website, but if you are not on email and would like to be kept informed, please phone Janet Cochrane on 07570 112010.

NATURE RECOVERY - PLOUGHING OUR OWN FURROW

T. S. ELIOT wrote: 'Only those who will risk going too far can possibly find out how far one can go'. So, we embark on our mission to promote Nature Recovery with hope we may be able to go much further than we expect.

THE BACK-STORY

In the Spring edition of 'Voice' I introduced the idea of a parish-based, bottom-up approach to encouraging everyone to play a part in facing up to the challenge of the international crisis for wild plants and animals. I explained how the town where I live had unilaterally declared the parish to be a local nature recovery area and that plans were afoot to expand the idea over parishes in and around the Moors and across the York, Pocklington, and Selby area.

RECENT TIMES

We are now some months further down the road with community activity here in Norfolk. And it is this growing breadth of experiences which is underpinning plans to hold two conferences in Yorkshire in early autumn.

As we embark on this experiment it is worth a recap on the origins of the initiative. The idea grew out of preliminary work a couple of years ago when the Heritage Fund invited the Carstairs Countryside Trust, a conservation charity with which NYMA co-operated several years ago in the Cornfield Flowers Project, to submit an application for funding as part of the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs' Green Recovery Network initiative. The subsequent proposal outlined an imaginative low-bureaucracy, multi-parish approach to triggering local action for nature. Surprisingly, the bid was turned down; however, the principles established were not wasted.

The essence of the scheme sought to encourage parish councils to give nature recovery a formal face by declaring the parish to be a local Nature Recovery Area in support of the Government's 25-year Environment Plan to build back nature. As the local tier of Government, this offers an overarching umbrella for action without there being any controlling organisation or administrative and funding burden requirements.

Taking this approach makes it easy for anyone to join the cause without onerous obligations or anyone telling them what to do, or pressures to fulfil the expectations of grant-givers. The logic of this light-touch approach reflects the fact that, broadly speaking, most people don't want complicated commitments but are happy to participate in their own ways.

The chance to test out the ideas came when my Town Council formalised Nature Recovery in the adopted Neighbourhood Plan and established policies to take it forward. This simple step provided the focus around which the community could apply its imagination. And apply its imagination it certainly has! From individuals to organisations such as fishing and sailing clubs, primary and senior schools, town societies and higher tiers of government, not only statements of support have been forthcoming, but practical actions are gathering momentum too. Special flags have been designed and flown, the schools have embedded nature recovery into the curriculum, a community group has paid for materials, events have been held, and neighbouring parishes are encouraged to join in the chain



Craig Ralston is Senior National Nature Reserves Manager in Yorkshire, covering Forge Valley, Duncombe Park and the Lower Derwent Valley, amongst other places.

"The job we have to do to recover nature and address the climate change emergency, is both huge and not one that can be addressed without the efforts of all of us. These parish based, local community driven initiatives are exciting models where everyone can do their bit and make a real difference"

Craig alston, Natural England ringing a buzzard chick

reaction. It is giving everyone a chance to be part of making a difference, and it is reassuring that such a depth of interest is present. The Town Council's policy provided the catalyst that was needed.

Most important, all participants are doing it on their own terms and ploughing their own furrow. I suppose you could say it is a form of benign and wholly positive environmental anarchy, with no-one in charge. That might sound chaotic and unplanned. However, if we are to achieve the cultural change in attitude which brings the future of nature on which we all depend to the forefront of collective thinking, in my view this is how it has to be.

GOING BOLDLY

In the Moors, the Autumn event will see representatives of parishes and other groups and individuals invited to a half-day conference at the Danby Lodge National Park Centre on October 14th. The York area event is set for the end of September at the Yorkshire Air Museum in Elvington.

The aim of both gatherings is to provide encouragement and a range of simple ideas, such that other groups can share in this grass-roots approach to protecting our best wildlife and landscapes and enhancing them in villages, towns and across the countryside.

Will this be effective? We will - fingers crossed - find out just how far we can really go.

IAN CARSTAIRS



TRUSTED SOURCES

Recent tree-planting on Fairy Cross Plan, Great Fryupdale, uses native species but alters a favourite view

FOR MANY, the modern world is not just confusing but exasperating. Try these abbreviations found in text messages and emails, for example: afaik, hth, f2f, irl. They mean: 'as far as I know', 'hope this helps', 'face to face', and 'in real life'. Who would know? You need a trip to the Cambridge Dictionary website to find out. A traditional trusted source.

Where can we go to find solid, reliable information in an era where traditional sources such as dictionaries are being usurped by new media and the unscrupulous? A trusted source should be intelligible to the lay person, freely accessible in the public domain preferably without a paywall, balanced - in the sense of being honest about downsides or at least about personal bias - and agreeably written in plain English. Below are some of the trusted sources that I turn to when grappling with some of the problems of the moment. Most of them, but not all, have important things to say about the countryside, our perceptions of it, and what's in store for it.

FROM STATISTICS TO AGROECOLOGY

For statistics, the 'Our World in Data' website should be a first port of call for any of the major topics - population and demography, sustainable development, climate change, and artificial intelligence. Illustrative graphics, charts, and animations, and a measured view of history and the future, are its strong points. As a sampler, try this on how artificial intelligence has evolved: <https://ourworldindata.org/brief-history-of-ai>.

If you need more on artificial intelligence, the machinations of corporate technology companies and on what is likely to come next, John Naughton's thrice-weekly newsletter Memex 1.1 and his weekly column in The Observer are reliable and accessible.

Dale Vince's autobiography 'Manifesto', co-authored with John Robb, is about energy, transport, and food, plus Vince's own unlikely path to creation and ownership of several 'green' energy service companies. Their writing is blunt, clear and passionate. You might also try the Zerocarbonista podcast for more full-on campaigning and straight talking.

On countryside access, Kate Ashbrook has a more measured style of persuasion which is no less effective. CampaignerKate is a monthly autobiographical online diary. Started in 2010, it now has over 150 entries, including all the Covid lockdown period. This is what fighting to save and improve access rights in rural England looks and feels like.

For a clear commentary on railways, try Alan Williams. He is chair of the community group fighting to improve the Whitby to Middlesbrough branch line and a long-standing columnist in the

monthly magazine 'Modern Railways'. He is a strident critic of British strategic rail planning and performance. Also on public transport, author Colin Speakman is a life-long countryside and environmental campaigner with a passion for public transport, majoring on buses. As an active bus and rail user (he gave up owning a car several decades ago), his is a tale of decline and loss as well as praise for those services that still run predictably and to regular service patterns.

There is currently much talk about rewilding and nature recovery. How can we tell the difference between projects which might simply turn out to be superficial approaches which fail to take the 'messy reality' of politics and human development into account, or palliatives - treating symptoms but not causes - and those that truly make a difference in the long term? Take tree-planting, for example. Historically, a rush to plant trees, especially conifers and other fast-growing but non-native species, has sometimes produced unwanted outcomes decades later. Even now, when choice of tree species is generally more sympathetic, large-scale afforestation can be contested. Where can we get balanced information about the consequences and downsides? We need to know more about the risks involved. See for example Fred Pearce's analysis of why some large-scale tree-planting has failed: search for 'Phantom Forests', published online by Yale University.

Fred Pearce was a former editor of 'New Scientist' and an inspiring contributor to UK and international publications on the environment and development issues. Another excellent and accessible science writer is Colin Tudge, who specialises in evolution, natural history, food and farming, often challenging received wisdom and major government policies through his books, articles and blog. He co-founded the Real Farming Trust and is a stern critic of some advocates of re-wilding.

BEHAVIOURAL CHANGE

These trusted sources keep taking me back to a single place. Radical behavioural change. It is down to us as individuals and collectively to take charge, not think that someone else will do the legwork for us. Or, as we might put it in a text message: afaik the answer may be found irl.

ADRIAN LEAMAN

<https://dictionary.cambridge.org>
<https://ourworldindata.org/brief-history-of-ai>
<https://johnnaughton.substack.com> Memex 1.1
<https://zerocarbonista.com>
<https://campaignerkate.wordpress.com/>
<https://www.colintudge.com/>
<https://realfarming.org/>

BIRDWATCHING AT SUTTON BANK

© Sharon Artley



Tree Sparrow

IT'S WARM; still; dark. I wait. Tawny Owls have hooted and quivered. The cars are fewer Quiet; gone quite chilly now. I shiver. Maybe they're not here, a pointless visit.

Then, suddenly, the goatsucker's jar.

Or, in less folkloric terms, a Nightjar starts churring, a mysterious, reptilian repetition of one rather deep, far-carrying note.

They love felled conifer plantations and bred at Sutton Bank, as if on Surrey or Suffolk heathland, for a few years after the felling. Fresher felling a few miles to the east holds more birds now. The belief that they drink the milk of goats and make them go blind (reflected in their species name of 'Caprimulgus') originated well before the many falsehoods circulated on social media - but is equally untrue.

Nightjars are just one of several rare or unusual birds you can see or hear at Sutton Bank. Another, also a summer visitor, is the Turtle Dove.

UK Turtle Dove numbers have collapsed over recent decades, our fastest declining species. Sad, for this is the bird of true love, appearing over the millennia in myth, art and literature: which may have exhausted them all! They were busy pulling Aphrodite's chariot in Greek mythology, popped across the Mediterranean for a Biblical appearance, featured in Chaucer, had a Renaissance with Botticelli, and were still being amorous and strictly monogamous in Elizabethan poems. As for their presence at Harry and Meghan's wedding we make no comment!

Willow Tit



The truth is, their purring song is so distinctive, evocative and beautiful it's no wonder that they've continually caught the human imagination. From late April, listen out for the song from near the top of a bushes or low trees or, at quiet times, look on the ground around the spilt seed from the feeders at the Visitor Centre.

The feeders are good in the winter too. Yellowhammers and Tree Sparrows are common and in February/March there's often a Brambling amongst the many Chaffinches.

Another modern rarity is the unglamorous but fascinating Willow Tit. These too have had a catastrophic decline. You can see these in the woods down to Gormire Lake and sometimes on the bird feeders at the Visitor Centre. This gives you a chance to pick them out from the more numerous Marsh Tits, which they look so similar to. The Willow Tit is unusual in that it excavates its own nest hole, which may be why it has a bull-necked look. It usually carries a pale panel on the wing and more black on the nape and bib than the Marsh, but the call is the best way to tell them apart. The Willow's calls are harsh, the Marsh's typical call is 'pitchou'.

We should also remember some birds that have gone. Sutton Bank, or rather the woods around Lake Gormire, used to hold Lesser Spotted Woodpecker and Wood Warbler. The former has now withdrawn much further south and Wood Warblers to the west, though Redstart can still be seen here. They will hopefully expand as the woods around Boltby to the north have most of the conifers removed. Bizarrely, another loss is the Fulmar, which had a rare inland nesting site on the inland cliffs a few decades ago. Why? Probably puny cliffs, no food, long travel to work ...

Some readers will remember the time when the land around Sutton Bank was still largely moorland. Agricultural intensification and conifer planting ate into the moorland particularly badly in the North York Moors, but Curlew and Lapwing still breed on the gallops and the remaining moorland to the north. One bird-benefit of the conifers is the chance to see Crossbills when the pines are fruiting.



Brambling

Other changes are afoot. As the climate warms, the moorland is becoming more like heathland. In addition to Nightjar and Tree Pipit maybe we will have Woodlark singing around Sutton Bank, a silver lining to a dark and thundering cloud. For northern and upland species however, the future looks grim.

I'm back near Sutton Bank on a summer evening. Again it's dark and still. Suddenly a rapid, whistling, whipping call from an arable field. Quail. These birds, like small partridges, seem too dumpy to fly from Africa, but they have long, strong, and pointed wings. Their strongholds are thought of as Wiltshire and Dorset, but here they are in upland Yorkshire, at Sutton Bank, singing 'wet-my-lips' as their call is normally, while - in my experience - *never* - showing themselves.

ANDY WILSON

To hear a recording of the Nightjar (and other birds), go to <https://xeno-canto.org/> and search - it's best to use the Latin name, in the case *Caprimulgus europaeus*.

© Lasse Nystedt on Unsplash

© Vincent van Zalinge on Unsplash

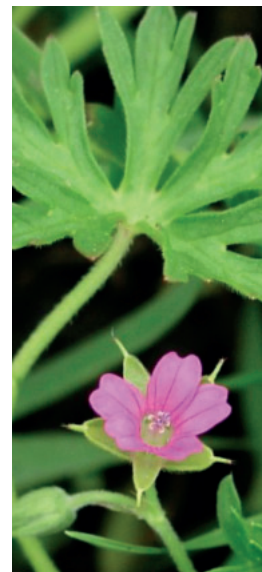
WILD GERANIUMS



G. phaeum



G. molle



G. dissectum

Photos © Nan Sykes

WHEN WE HEAR the word geranium, we probably immediately visualise the gaudy red or pink flowers that adorn our summer hanging baskets or form the backdrop to warm European holidays - not hardy enough for English winters. But we have many species of the family Geraniaceae that are native to this country, hardy ones, though maybe not all so vibrant and colourful. They are the cranesbills and the storksills. Additionally, several hardy garden species have escaped and established themselves in our countryside, on verges and waysides. Others have spread from the countryside into our gardens, especially the ever-present Herb Robert and one or two smaller species that often grow unnoticed in our lawns.

The cranesbills, all except the Shining Cranesbill, are hairy or downy, with five petals and leaves that are serrated, palmately lobed and deeply cut. Most flower in late spring and summer and their fruits are in five segments on a long, pointed beak. These curl upwards when ripe, shooting off the seeds. Some are perennial and some annual. The storksills, on the other hand, are all hairy annuals with pinnate and pinnately lobed leaves, and pink flowers with their seeds on a spirally twisted beak which deposits them into the soil. Both names, naturally, derive from these seed cases.

CRANESBILLS AND STORKSBILLS

Of the cranesbills, the one most commonly found in our area is the Meadow Cranesbill (*Geranium pratense*), a perennial with large, striking blue flowers, found on verges and waysides. The two much smaller annuals, the Cut-leaved Cranesbill (*G. dissectum*), and the Dove's-foot Cranesbill (*G. molle*), both with small pink flowers, can be found in short grassland, lawns and verges. Others that may be encountered are the magenta-flowered Bloody Cranesbill (*G. sanguineum*) on more alkaline cliffs, the Small-flowered Cranesbill (*G. pusillum*), and the Shining Cranesbill (*G. lucidum*). The Dusky Cranesbill (*G. phaeum*), Pencilled Cranesbill (*G. versicolour*), and the French Cranesbill (*G. endressii*) are the three garden escapes that may be seen near habitations.

Despite its name, the Common Storksill (*Erodium cicutarium*), of dry stony ground, is not frequently found, whereas the most common of all, Herb Robert (*G. robertianum*), can be seen

nearly all year round with its pink flowers in bloom, its foliage often tinged red in the sun, a plant of woods, waysides, waste or cultivated ground - including gardens.

USES OF HERB ROBERT

Despite this number of species and their contribution to our countryside, they have not greatly entered into folklore or been used medicinally, except for Herb Robert, which is the only strong-smelling one, often called 'stinking Robert' or 'stinking cranesbill'. It has at least one hundred local names, many of them containing the name Robin or Bob. This shows how familiar we have been with it over the centuries; it lives with us, around our houses, like the Robin - in fact it is the plant equivalent of the Robin.

There are many possible explanations for the name Herb Robert. Was it from St Robert, founder of the Cistercian monks, who used it medicinally? Or maybe after Robert of Normandy from his herbal, or even after the medieval St Rupert? But more likely it was named after the folkloric House Goblin, 'Robin Goodfellow', Robin being a diminutive of Robert. The name is similar in English and German and equivalent to the Cornish 'Pisky'. The goblin is said to become upset if the plant is mistreated, and it is sometimes called 'death-come-quickly'! So this common plant needs to be treated well to prevent household problems as it keeps us company round our houses.

According to the 'doctrine of signatures', a theory dating back two millennia which suggests that plants resembling various parts of the body can be used to treat ailments affecting those parts, Herb Robert with its reddish stems or leaves should be connected to blood. Indeed, it does contain much tannin, making it astringent and useful for staunching blood, and it also has anti-inflammatory properties. So, it stops bleeding and soothes both internally and externally for cuts, bruises, and grazes, and it is a good stomach healer, and can also be used for coughs, sore throats and eyes, and kidney and bladder infections. It may also lower blood-sugar levels and is an effective insecticide.

So leave that Herb Robert by your door, it will protect the household and keep you healthy!

ANNE PRESS

HAWKMOTHS

THE HAWKMOTHS are a family of spectacular moths comprised of around 1,050 species globally, with most found in the tropics. Nine species are resident in the British Isles, and several others appear as migrants. One of the most well-known migrant species is the Death's Head Hawkmoth, although it is found very infrequently in Yorkshire; the most common one in our area is the Hummingbird Hawkmoth. In the North York Moors area several other Hawkmoth species can be seen by using a light trap at night. This article describes the more common species you are likely to encounter in and around the Moors.

Photos © Martin Partridge



Hummingbird Hawkmoth

Hummingbird Hawkmoth: This really does resemble a hummingbird as it flits rapidly between plants, hovering to feed at tubular flowers of such species as Viper's bugloss, Red valerian, Phlox, jasmine, Buddleias, Petunia and Lilac. It is one of the most frequently spotted as it flies during daylight hours. Most Hummingbird hawkmoths arrive between April and December from southern Europe and north Africa. Its forewing is approximately 20-24mm in width.



Lime Hawkmoth

Lime Hawkmoth: There is no other Hawkmoth in the British Isles with a wing shape and markings like this species. It flies

between May and early July and is sometimes found at rest on tree trunks, walls, and amongst lime foliage. It comes to light traps often earlier in the night and is a species which does not feed as a moth, while its larval foodplant - not surprisingly - includes limes as well as elm, silver birch and alder. The forewing is between 23 and 39mm long.



Eyed Hawkmoth

Eyed Hawkmoth: This hawkmoth is unmistakable if you can see the eye-spots on its pink hindwing. When the Eyed Hawkmoth is disturbed, it exposes these eyes and rocks to and fro in an effort to deter predators. There is usually only one generation each year. It flies between early May and mid-July, and to have the best chance of seeing it a moth trap is required as it does not typically fly during the day. Its caterpillars feed on willow and sallows, so the moth is found where these foodplants are found in gardens, riversides, scrub and woodland. The moth has a wing span of 36 to 44mm.

Poplar Hawkmoth: The Poplar Hawkmoth is similar to the Eyed Hawkmoth but without the eye-spots, and it has characteristic chestnut-brown patches on its hindwings. At rest the hindwings project forward well in front of the leading edge of the forewings, which is also diagnostic of this species. This hawkmoth typically flies between May and July into early August and frequently comes to lights later on at night, after midnight. This species also does not feed as an adult, with the caterpillars feeding on poplars and frequently found on Goat willow and Grey willow, and in gardens, woodland, heathland and moorland. The forewing of this species is typically 30 to 46mm in width.

Elephant Hawkmoth: This is a stunning moth whose pink colour really makes it stand out. This species flies between May and early-August, generally from dusk onwards, feeding on the wing at Honeysuckle and some other tubular nectar flowers. They are attracted to light and can sometimes appear in great numbers. Its most frequently used larval foodplant is the Rosebay Willowherb. The caterpillars can sometimes be found on Rosebay or on Great Willowherb - they grow to quite a size so often give themselves away. The forewing is between 28 and 33mm long. The similar Small Elephant Hawkmoth is also found in our area but it is much less common and very much smaller than the Elephant Hawkmoth, with the forewing being between 21 and 25mm in length.

MARTIN PARTRIDGE

To learn more about the moths of Yorkshire and see their distributions, please visit the Yorkshire Moth Atlas at yorkshiremoths.co.uk

MONITORING REPTILES IN THE MOORS

© Mark Stevington



Common Lizard

AFTER READING reports that our reptile numbers are declining, and as someone that spends a huge amount of time outside in our beautiful countryside and in particular our splendid national parks, I decided to do some further investigation.

I discovered very few scientific reports on the topic, although the Amphibian and Reptile Conservation charity (ARC) has a monitoring programme and hosts the National Amphibian and Reptile Recording Scheme. I did find reports that the decline is due to game birds, although these were more journalistic than scientific. As game birds are also blamed indirectly for the decline of another species that I am passionate about – the Curlew – I thought this was an opportunity to do my own research.

METHODS AND FINDINGS

I was granted permission from three estates within the North York Moors National Park to place 1m x 1m black corrugated iron sheets to act as monitoring stations. There were 12 of these in total, placed in various locations in early March 2022.

By the end of March several of the stations had shown signs of wildlife. On top of them I regularly saw Adders basking in the sun, which would quickly move away once they sensed my presence. The underside was actually more interesting: colonies of ants had taken up residence under a third of them and voles had chosen to make their homes under another third, while the remaining third remained as they were.

During the particularly dry and warm spring of 2022 sightings of adders on the stations decreased, though I would often see them in nearby vegetation, while sightings of Slow Worm and Common Lizards increased. In fact, the species seen with most

Female adder



© David Nicholls

abundance was the Common Lizard. There was a huge variation in colour and size of these, from jet black through to bright yellow and from as small as 10mm long up to around 200mm. Often seen in groups, the largest group witnessed on one station was 12, while I frequently saw groups of around five. These would often remain on, around, or under the stations even whilst I was present.

When visiting the stations, I would watch from a distance with my binoculars before approaching, in particular observing the behaviour of the lizards, how they would bask in the sun – and the speed at which they could move when they wanted to, such as if a hawk, Buzzard or Red kite was in the vicinity.

In July I purchased some camera traps to place near the stations with the hope of getting some pictures and finding out exactly what was in the area. I set them up to record short film footage and to take pictures day and night. This increased my excitement each time I visited to view what had been caught on camera.

With very warm nights during the summer, I was astonished to find some nocturnal activity from our reptiles, especially the Slow Worm. They seemed to be popping up onto the stations for a top-up of heat, spending around 15 minutes before moving away into the blackness of night. I contacted ARC regarding this and they confirmed that due to the warm nights quite a lot of nocturnal activity was being recorded in other places too.

The camera traps remained in position until September, a time when game birds would be at their highest density. I regularly saw game birds near the monitoring stations, yet never actually caught them on camera. I did capture a photo of a Tawny Owl on one of the stations; however, as I didn't see it with prey items it could have been after either the voles or the reptiles.

EARLY DAYS

The increase in human population over the past 50 years, coupled with intensification of agriculture, fragmentation of habitat, and increasing recreational pressure on the countryside, seems likely to have caused a decline in our reptiles. This is borne out by a 2021 ARC research report on Britain's amphibians and reptiles, but further good-quality research is needed on local populations and the impact of game birds on reptiles.

It is early days yet for the study and I hope to monitor them for several years to come. Having said that, my evidence can only be considered as anecdotal but should demonstrate some good observations.

JOHN CAVANA

Slow Worm



© John Cavana



FROM SUCCESS TO STRUGGLE: MOORSBUS HEADS DOWNHILL

Hull-Danby Moorsbus in Pickering in 1993

25 YEARS AGO, the North York Moors was the focus of a major initiative. Moorsbus – the service enabling access to the National Park from surrounding towns and cities – had already been operating for 18 years and had built an enviable international reputation amongst other National Parks, transport gurus, and passengers. The North York Moors led the way with what was then described as: “perhaps the most successful fully integrated network of leisure bus services in any UK National Park and arguably one of the best such networks within any protected landscape in Europe”.

The new Labour government of 1997 had been incredibly supportive of new public transport initiatives and as the National Park Authority (NPA) strove to encourage visitors to abandon their cars and catch the bus, support followed from North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) to the tune of £50,000 per year, the Countryside Agency and others.

ENABLING ACCESS

Throughout the summer of 1998, a daily network of Moorsbus services enabled people to get to the National Park from surrounding urban areas such as Bishop Auckland, Hartlepool, Hull, or York, without the need for a private car. It cost just £2 for all-day travel in the Moors, and for people who did arrive by car, the parking fee in a National Park carpark was refunded when a Moorsbus ticket was purchased. Guided walks were free to bus users (£2 for others), and Moorsbus passengers enjoyed a range of discounts from two-for-one meals to 10% off hotel tariffs and reduced admission at many attractions.

This was joined-up thinking: a bid to switch priority away from the car to the bus, acknowledging a key phrase in the original National Park legislation that Parks should be ‘for all, regardless of wealth or social class’. Incremental improvements followed, including the Cleveland Way Explorer, a Farndale Daffodil shuttle-bus every 15 minutes, a Howardian Hills service, Moorslink combined bus and rail tickets, a Vintage bus service, Woldsbus, and the Forest Bike Express carrying passengers and bikes to Dalby Forest. A team of Moorsbus co-ordinators welcomed users and was there to troubleshoot issues on the day. A new bus shelter was built at Sutton Bank Visitor Centre,

and road signs on the A170 implored drivers to use the Visitor Centre as the Park & Ride base for the Moors. NYCC transport officers were fully supportive, too. Their Local Transport Plan began to show that there were more sustainable priorities than simply ‘improving’ the road network.

The NPA worked in partnership with the RAC Foundation, academics, national agencies and the NYCC to explore innovative ways to persuade car drivers to change mode in the Moors. It basked in the glow of national acclaim, with Moorsbus the keynote feature at national tourism conferences and an exemplar of best practice in government transport reports.

By this time, the Park’s public transport budget topped £250,000 and the network had grown to feature many more routes and buses – double-deckers, single-deckers and minibuses, depending on passenger demand and the road network. Up to 18 buses provided by 10 different operators carried people into, out of, and around the National Park. For smaller local bus companies, Moorsbus became a vital income stream. Buses ran to Sutton Bank every hour and Danby Lodge had 11 buses a day. Passenger numbers varied: there was standing room only on early and late buses, but fewer in the middle of the day. This simply reflected visitor patterns and the volatility of demand, dictated by factors such as the weather.

Moorsbus at Hutton-le-Hole



© Bill Breakell

© Margaret Grant

Previous research had demonstrated that most visitors ‘grazed’ the area: take a short walk, visit an attraction, enjoy the view (punctuated by tea and toilet breaks). The Moorsbus concept understood these patterns and replicated them through a network which offered choice, simple pricing, reliability and continuity.

Impact surveys showed passengers contributed significantly to the local economy, whilst reducing environmental costs. 1,561,614 car miles were saved in 2005 by people who chose to abandon their car and use Moorsbus instead, representing 562 tonnes of CO₂ that would otherwise have been produced. Passengers gave a 5-star rating and it topped any other UK bus service for quality. A survey showed that there was a much wider socio-demographic mix on Moorsbus compared with those arriving by car.

© Eden Blythe



Moorsbus passing Rievaulx Abbey

GRADUAL DECLINE

But continuity – which most passengers demand – was under threat. By 2010 the bespoke Moorsbus website had been closed down and subsumed into the complex National Park corporate site, with the green Moorsbus triangle – in use since 1998 – replaced by a corporate maroon colour (despite the bright green triangle being designed for high visibility on a bus travelling through moorland mist and rain!). Within the NPA, reduced enthusiasm for providing equality of access, coupled with reduced budgets, saw service reductions and other changes such as severing the direct link between carpark charges and Moorsbus.

NYCC stopped its grant for Moorsbus in 2011 and the following year the NPA scaled back its commitment from daily services from July to September to weekends only. In 2013 the Park axed Moorsbus completely. Instead, £100,000 was promised to support ‘targeted transport’ intended to bring a few organised groups from places such as Catterick into the North York Moors for a one-off minibus trip.

Regular passengers were distraught. A small band of volunteers tried to get the NPA to change its mind, or at least mitigate its action on the grounds of environmental damage and the desirability of providing access to the two National Park Visitor Centres for anyone who didn’t have a car (or powerful legs). But the door was firmly bolted.

The Dales & Bowland Community Interest Company (CIC) facilitated a skeleton Moorsbus service in 2014 while Moorsbus established its own CIC. Thanks to funding from NYMA, parish and town councils, individual donations and some one-off grants, Moorsbus was reborn incrementally, with core routes and a season from May to the end of September. Innovations continued, such as the ‘Donate Ticket’ which enabled passengers to make a card or cash contribution to Moorsbus on the bus.

Roger French, doyen of bus and train users wrote: “It’s great to see the brilliant Moorsbus network of routes across the North

York Moors make a welcome return” and further commented that what the Moorsbus volunteers achieve on a voluntary basis put some well-resourced bus companies to shame.

The CIC has run Moorsbus against a background of little support from the NPA or NYCC nor, seemingly, an understanding of the major impact which traffic has on congestion, noise, accident risk, community severance and the environment. Road traffic is now the biggest single cause of greenhouse gases in the Moors. The NPA and the Council have adopted the Local Enterprise Partnership 2030 ambition to reduce private car usage by 48%. What a task, as over 90% of visitors to the park come by car!

What more cost-effective way to provide sustainable access than through a creative, community-based, not-for-profit organisation, striving for quality and equality? Surely it demands some public sector investment, for reasons too numerous to explore here: much in the same way that society has agreed to pay for other cultural and health assets.

AN UNCERTAIN FUTURE

In March 2023, the Park Authority had a windfall grant of £440,000 from Defra to ‘help protect vital assets... and provide more opportunities for people to enjoy National Parks’. Moorsbus sought a tiny proportion of that to enable services to operate for 3 months this summer and ensure some forward planning for a 2024 season. The NPA refused, instead suggesting that Moorsbus could be included in a £15,000 review of the Park’s ‘Targeted Transport’ scheme, which organises one-off trips for under-represented groups. It seems the Park hadn’t realised that consultants paid for by NYCC had already undertaken a detailed and wide-ranging study of Moorsbus in 2020.

The NPA appear convinced that transport-related climate change or social equity are unimportant. They would deny the elderly access to the Moors if they can’t drive; or ramblers being able to undertake linear walks. How will overseas visitors enjoy our spectacular landscape and culture? And what happens when the countryside is available only to limited members of society? In our urban hinterlands, a third of people are car-less, so how are they to experience their national heritage?

The dilemma now facing the Moorsbus volunteers is whether it can operate without support from the public sector. Or is that it – the end of over 40 years of encouraging access for all? Although Moorsbus has arisen phoenix-like from the ashes before, today’s struggle is beyond selling a few more jars of jam to safeguard what could be considered a basic human right.

BILL BREAKELL

Tees Moorsbus in the early 80s



© Bill Breakell

ACCESSIBILITY MATTERS IN THE NORTH YORK MOORS

THE FORMATION of national parks in England and Wales was the result of the 1949 National Parks and Access to the Countryside Act, and so it stands to reason that 'access', in all its forms, remains pivotal to our work at the North York Moors National Park Authority (NPA). But what makes a place accessible? And how do we identify and remove possible barriers to entry when they're not always plain to see?

BETTER ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES

Over the last few years, work to open up the Moors to more people with disabilities or mobility impairments has included removing hundreds of stiles and introducing easy-to-use surfaces along rights of way. The Cleveland Way National Trail became stile-free in 2021 (there were 127 in 1989) and a dedicated page on the National Park website provides information on 'easy access' routes in locations from Osmotherly to Hawsker.

This year, our work has been recognised with a national award. The Accessible North York Moors project, led by VisitEngland, scooped Digital PR Campaign of the Year for its collaboration with local businesses and attractions to encourage more people with accessibility requirements to take short breaks in the region.

At the same time, the NPA has been working with Outdoor Mobility to introduce trampers (all-terrain mobility scooters) in more places around the Moors. Forest Holidays at Keldy has become the fifth location in the National Park with its own trumper, along with Sutton Bank National Park Centre, Ravenscar Visitor Centre, Dalby Forest Visitor Centre and Forest Holidays at Cropton. Each of these has at least one, if not two, scenic trails for users to enjoy.

This is valuable work that can make a big difference to individuals and families affected by mobility-related conditions. However, it's important also to look beyond the physical barriers and to reduce the economic, social and cultural hurdles that limit the diversity of those visiting the National Park.

ENCOURAGING MORE DIVERSITY

Research commissioned by the British Mountaineering Council earlier this year found that a fifth of UK residents never visited the countryside or did so less than once a year. Moreover, it was

Muslim hikers on Cleveland Way



Tramper on White Horse Trail, Sutton Bank

Yorkshire - with its three National Parks - where people reportedly spent the least amount of time in the countryside.

For many of us, enjoying the countryside comes as second nature. The knowledge and skills that help us navigate these landscapes with confidence come from a lifetime of experience - but we know that the North York Moors does not feel open and welcoming to everyone. Recently we've been expanding our programme of free guided walks with events that bring together people not only to enjoy the Moors but also to walk alongside others whose lived experience might be similar to their own. These events can be a first step to further adventures in the great outdoors.

For the last two years, the NPA has partnered with Muslim Hikers to host one of their fantastically uplifting walking events. I encourage you to visit the Muslim Hikers social media or YouTube pages - the sense of enjoyment and achievement is palpable. Other partners for our guided walks include Scarborough Pride and Changing Lives York. We are also actively seeking walk leaders from more diverse backgrounds so that as many people as possible see themselves represented in our outdoor activities.

The lockdowns of the Covid-19 pandemic demonstrated just how important green spaces are to our physical and mental wellbeing. Moreover, the future of our climate and habitats is dependent on people caring about them enough to want to save them. How can we expect people to take action to stop and reverse nature decline if they've never experienced it in its natural state?

This summer, the 'Championing National Parks for Everyone' project will be launched, led by the charity Peak District Mosaic and funded by a grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. In the Moors, we plan to work with Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic communities who live in Teesside, supporting more people to connect with nature and enjoy our National Park.

Since 1953, the NPA has worked to facilitate access and enjoyment of the North York Moors. The barriers we see now are more diverse and complex than a steep set of steps or traditional stile - but ultimately the goal remains the same.

NINA BEADLE
NORTH YORK MOORS NPA COMMUNICATIONS OFFICER

STAITHES VIA DALEHOUSE AND THE COAST



Dalehouse

THIS CIRCULAR walk is a little over 5 miles and combines countryside, woodland, villages and coast with wonderful views.

Park at the main carpark in Staithes and allow 3-4 hours as you pay, especially if you plan to visit the village and harbour, where there are refreshments, at the end of your walk.

Leave the carpark by taking the road to the left away from the coast. This leads to the A174, which you cross to reach the minor road to the village of Dalehouse.

After passing the Fox and Hounds, you arrive at a bridge where you turn left along the lane towards the caravan site, passing carved figures on your left. Follow the lane to the right, where it crosses a plank bridge, then turn left and up a short incline to follow the signpost to Hinderwell. The path passes through the Oakridge Wood Nature Reserve, where a carved owl confirms that you are on the right path. (You may spot an old sign claiming that there are over 65 species of oak tree here, although in fact there are only two native species in the British Isles.)

Follow the path through the woods until you come up alongside a fence beside a field. Continue along this path until it becomes a farm track and then a minor road near Townlands Farm in Newton Mulgrave. Soon on your left you will see a footpath sign to 'Hinderwell ¾ mile'. Cross two stiles close together into a grassy field and walk diagonally to the right towards the woods and over another stile which leads down some steps to a footbridge (take care in wet weather). Cross the bridge and ascend the other side of the valley.

Now, follow the footpath along the side of the arable field until you reach Back Lane, Hinderwell. Turn left and follow the lane to the T-junction. Turn right and pass through some farm buildings. This path leads to a flagged pavement which passes Strawberry Cottage and Chapel Garth and a thatched house on your way to the main street of Hinderwell.

Refreshments are available in the village. The Old School Tea Room and Village Hub is open daily 9.30-3.00, except Saturdays.

Cross the A174 and follow the minor road to Port Mulgrave, which has an interesting history linked to the ironstone industry. It's hard to imagine it now, but in the second half of the 19th century this was a busy port exporting ironstone from mines on the coast and inland to Jarrow, on Tyneside. The harbour ceased to operate in 1920, and during WWII the



Carved Owl

harbour wall was destroyed by the Royal Engineers to prevent it being used during a possible German invasion.

Where the road meets the Cleveland Way, which runs along the cliff-tops here, take a few minutes to look down to the Fishermen's Huts in the old harbour. Then turn left follow the coastal path / Cleveland Way back to Staithes, enjoying the sea views. After about half a mile you reach the crest of a hill where you can choose to follow the Cleveland Way along the clifftop, or follow a broad track directly to Cliff Farm where both paths meet. From here the Cleveland Way drops down into the village.

If you want to miss the village and return straight to the carpark, take a left turn across a small field before you reach Cliff Farm and walk to a concrete road. Turn right and follow this to the remains of a railway bridge. Take the narrow footpath on the right immediately before the bridge and follow it to the carpark, passing alongside allotments and the fish factory.

TIM AND JANE DUNN

Oakridge Woods path



DO I HAVE TO PAY INHERITANCE TAX?

YOU MAY be surprised by whose estates do and do not have to pay inheritance tax on death.

The greatest liability of Inheritance Tax (IHT) falls on unmarried people without children. Only the first £325,000 (the Nil Rate Band or NRB) of their estate is exempt from IHT, while the rest is taxed at 40% unless it falls into specific exemptions. The NRB has been unchanged since 2009 and is unlikely to increase until 2029, yet since 2009 the average house price in Yorkshire and the Humber has risen from about £126,000 to its current level of £226,000.

Marriage can significantly reduce the IHT bill. Everything you leave to your spouse or civil partner is exempt from IHT, and your NRB can be transferred to your spouse's estate so that it can be used alongside their NRB on their own death. This means that on the second death £650,000 of assets can be left without paying IHT.

If you live together but are not married, you may well be caught out by this: will your partner be able to afford your death? What can you do? Getting married is one possibility, as that would mean any assets passing to your spouse would pass tax

free. If marriage is not for you, it may be worth considering creating a discretionary trust when you die. It may not save money straight away but over time (e.g. after the death of a surviving unmarried partner) could give a considerable saving.

If you leave your home to your children, grandchildren or stepchildren, there is an additional IHT allowance of £175,000 per person. Again, if you die before your spouse the allowance can be used on the survivor's death. As a result, you can leave up to £1 million to your children with no IHT liability at all. This is significantly more than what an unmarried person without children can leave without IHT.

Further allowances may be secured if you have been widowed and remarry. In that case it may be possible to use more than two NRBs - but you need to think carefully through your Will and inheritance planning to achieve this. It can be easily lost.

IHT can be avoided by saving into pensions rather than ISAs or other such investments, but beware! Income tax may be payable instead, so there is no guarantee of a full saving. You should speak to your Independent Financial

Advisor about this. Privately owned businesses and farms are usually relieved from paying IHT - their continued income and productivity is worth more to the Treasury in the long run. Again, this needs careful consideration.

We hope you will use your funds to live your best life, and solicitors can help you construct a Will to save IHT if possible and to ensure that the people you choose benefit to the fullest extent.

Contact a member of the Private Client team at Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors for advice, and don't forget that NYMA members benefit from a 12.5% discount on legal fees through the Discount Law Club - let the legal advisor know you are member of NYMA on making your enquiry.

CROMBIE WILKINSON SOLICITORS



GOATHLAND PLOUGH STOTS

THE GOATHLAND PLOUGH STOTS are a traditional Long Sword Dance team located in the moorland village of Goathland.

Sword dancing is the traditional dance of North Yorkshire. In the first half of the 20th century teams could still be found in many villages in the area, as well as in East Cleveland. (The latter owe their existence to Tom Ventress, a Goathland dancer who moved to Egton in 1840 before moving on to the new ironstone mine at Loftus, taking the dances with him.)

Even by the late 19th century, however, the tradition was declining. The social changes within Goathland as it became popular with tourists and internal conflict within the team meant that it disbanded in 1888. But regarded as representing the oldest longsword dance tradition in Britain, the village's team was revived in 1922 by schoolteacher Francis (Frank) Wrightson Dowson, born in Goathland at New Wath, who counted amongst his many friends Cecil Sharp, a prominent collector of folk songs and dances. Thanks to Sharp's influence and the efforts of Frank Dowson, aided by Major John Fairfax-Blakebrough of Westerdale Hall, the team has flourished ever since.

THE FORM OF DANCES

There are five circular dances with six men and one eight-man dance, referred to as No Man's Jig. All of them culminate in a



sword-lock (a star-shaped figure of interlocking swords) held aloft by the tallest dancer, known as the King. The swords are semi-rigid (and blunt!) longswords. The dancers wear equal numbers of pink and blue tunics with white cuffs and collars set about with a white sash, taken from the 17th century political colours of the Whigs (pink, at least in Whitby) and Tories (blue); the trousers are grey with a red stripe down the leg, a reference to the Crimean War; while the musicians' tunics are half pink and half blue.

Each year commences with the Blessing of the Plough service in St. Marys Church, held on the first Sunday after Twelfth Night (January 6th), moving to the next Sunday if Twelfth Night itself is a Sunday. The 'Day of Dance' on the following Saturday is when teams travel around the parish dancing and collecting money, with the final dance outside the Birch Hall Inn in Beck Hole. The day finishes with the Annual Plough Stot Rosh – a dinner of roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, which until recently was held in a local hotel but now takes place in the Community Hub. This also houses an exhibition of memorabilia of the Goathland Plough Stots and of teams from other villages such as Sleights and Ugthorpe (sadly these are no longer in existence).

While it was once a men-only group, the team recognised the need to change and took the decision in 2010 to open itself to everyone. This move meant that it was evicted from the Morris

Ring (the association of Morris, sword and mummers groups), not that this bothered us since we had already had female musicians playing for the team for a number of years.

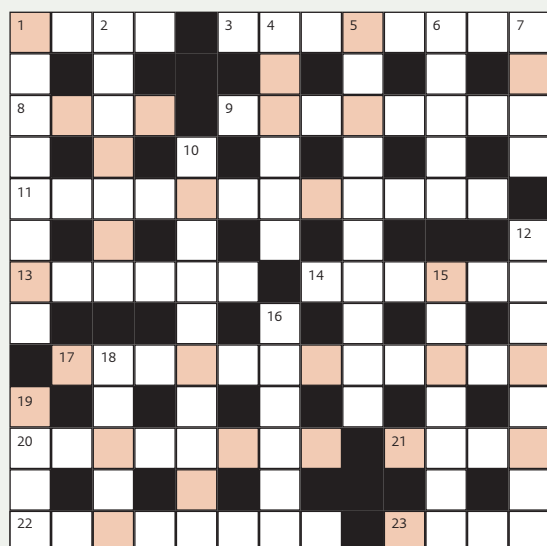
The team regularly performs at folk festivals and other events within the UK and has travelled extensively across other parts of Europe and in North America.

KEITH THOMPSON



CROSSWORD 101 BY AMANUENSIS

This puzzle is a random mixture of cryptic, synonymic, anagrammatic, and general knowledge clues.



ACROSS

- 1 Wander about the capital city, one hears (4)
- 3 Animal that always comes first (8)
- 8 Emus scatter creative force? (4)
- 9 Releases eggs (8)
- 11 Includes absolutely everyone (3, 3, 6)
- 13 Prior to this time (6)
- 14 Reddish-brown but with gold at the front
- 17 Sweet sixteen – make your mind up time? (3, 2, 7)
- 20 Liquorice stick for jazz musician? (8)
- 21 Language written in verses (4)
- 22 Daffodils, perhaps? (8)
- 23 Never gets off the ground (4)

DOWN

- 1 Incline to grow older and run amok (8)
- 2 Free from guilt and blame (7)
- 4 Helpfully suggest (6)
- 5 Badly behaved (10)
- 6 Make a change later (5)
- 7 It may come as a blow (4)
- 10 The year of the Lord (4,7)
- 12 An odious dislike (8)
- 15 Discover a buried secret, perhaps? (7)
- 16 The way in (6)
- 18 The white of an egg sounds dazzling (5)
- 19 Look carefully at damaged cans (4)

Anagram: take the letters from the coloured squares and rearrange in the boxes to solve the anagram.

Clue: Three of four vessels used by the great sea-captain and world circumnavigator and cartographer, James Cook (1729-1779).

Answers on back cover

You'll remember that we printed a Prize Crossword in the Spring edition of Voice of the Moors as it was the 100th one compiled by Amanuensis. The first-drawn correct solution was submitted by NYMA member Wendy Smith of Stokesley. Congratulations! Wendy receives a prize of a bottle of champagne.

The answers are as follows:

Across: 1 grouse, 4 Farndale, 10 mousetrap, 11 steer, 12 beehive, 13 oil lamp, 14 lithe (Lythe), 15 theatres, 18 apostles, 20 Bible, 22 panacea, 25 heeding, 26 abide, 27 probation, 28 senility, 29 etches

Down: 1 game ball, 2 opulent, 3 specimens, 5 approved school, 6 nasal, 7 average, 8 enrapt, 9 oriental carpet, 16 table salt, 17 eagents, 19 pension, 21 British, 22 sprags, 24 creel

Anagram answer: **LAGOPUS LAGOPUS SCOTICA** (the moorland game bird, red grouse)

CONING'S BIRKS, BRANSDALE

WE ARRIVED in Bransdale on a cold day with multiple tasks ahead of us. The overall plan was to improve the right-of-way which runs between the roads leading into Bransdale from Helmsley/Carlton and Pockley, at the northern end of Riccaldale.

First was the digging of a run-off near the start of the bridleway, just north of Cowhouse Bank, to drain standing water from the path leading to a field gateway. This involved cutting down several saplings that had taken root. The gateway itself had become clogged up with large clumps of sedge, and once this had all been cleared back the gate could now open fully, providing access to horse-riders.

The second part of the task was clearance of a stretch of the bridleway on the northern fringe of Coning's Birks ('birk' means 'birch'). Large clumps of gorse bush had been left to grow across the bridleway, as had holly bushes and blackthorn. Once all this had been severely cut back there remained the removal of a number of large stones that had, over time, come away from long-abandoned dry stone walls. The 'before and after' photos show a route once again fit for purpose.

As an interesting aside, Cowhouse Beck and Bonfield Gill meet at Coning's Birks, just south of where we were working, to form the River Riccal. This flows south and east and eventually joins the Rye.

DIGGER & CUTS



Before



After

NYMA WALKS & EVENTS



© Ray Clarke

Saturday 8 July - SWAINBY CIRCULAR

Meet 10.30 at Holy Cross Church, Swainby (DL6 3DG, NZ 477020, W3W: internal.landmark.suitably) for a gentle 5-mile walk on level ground.

Walk Leader: Kath Mair. Please let Kath know you're coming on 07975 288056 or kathmair@icloud.com.

Saturday 5 August - SUTTON BANK TO RIEVAULX

Meet 10.50 at Sutton Bank Visitor Centre having arrived on M4 Moorsbus from Guisborough, Stokesley, or Helmsley (see Moorsbus website for full timetable). Walk just under 6 miles mainly downhill to Rievaux via Cold Kirby and Old Byland, then there's a choice of buses back to your starting point, with time for tea if you wish.

Walk leader: Wendy Smith. Please let Wendy know you're coming on wpsmith7a@gmail.com or 01642 711980.

NB NYMA sponsor Moorsbus which this year is only operating at weekends in July and August. Please try and use the services.

Saturday 26 August - HUTTON RUDBY CIRCULAR

Meet 10.30 at the bottom of the village green, Hutton Rudby (TS15 0DD, NZ 470 063, W3W: graph.action.smoothly). An easy 5-mile walk on level terrain.

Walk Leader: Kath Mair. Please let Kath know you're coming, contact details as above.

Saturday 23 September

A walk organised by Albert Elliot to explore some of the many standing stones and other archaeological artefacts which abound in the Moors. The walk will be around 5 miles, starting on Blakey Ridge, with a drink at the Lion Inn to finish off. More details to follow by email, or keep an eye on the Walks & Events page of the website -

<https://www.nyma.org.uk/walks-events/>

Numbers are limited so please contact walk leaders to book onto a walk, or email walks@nyma.org.uk, 01287 669648.

Saturday 14 October - NYMA AGM

Nature Recovery networking meeting at Danby Lodge National Park Centre, followed by a buffet lunch and the AGM. The day will also include the option of a walk. Save the date!

CROSSWORD ANSWERS (see page 15)

(Cook's fourth ship was Discovery)

ANAGRAM: ENDEAVOUR, ADVENTURE, RESOLUTION

Down: 16 access, 18 glair (glare), 19 scan

7 kiss, 10 Anno Domini, 12 anathema, 15 unearth, 1 rampages, 2 absolve, 4 advise, 5 delinquent, 6 alter,

Down

22 narcissi, 23 rhea (flightless bird)

(au = gold), 17 age of consent, 20 clarinet, 21 Erse, 9 ovulates, 11 all and sundry, 13 ernenow, 14 auburn

Across

1 Roam (Rome), 3 aardvark (alphabetically), 8 muse,



OFFICERS OF NYMA

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Walks Coordinator: Dave Moore, walks@nyma.org.uk

NYMA: Glen Cottage, Carr Lane, Scalby, Scarborough YO13 0SB

The North Yorkshire Moors Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registration no. 1169240

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