



February 2016

# HOLDERNESS COUNTRYSIDE



Fieldfare, Stone Creek, David Constantine

Chairman's Report 2014-2015

Society News

Beacon Lagoons 2015

Young Nats

**JOURNAL OF THE SOUTH HOLDERNESS COUNTRYSIDE SOCIETY**

Free to members. Available to non-members for a minimum donation of £1.50

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## Chairman's Report for 2014-2015

Presented at the 2015 AGM by Peter J Cook

The Society's progress over the last year has again been due to the continued dedication and experience of our executive team members with the support of subscribing members. I express my personal thanks to Denise Failey for maintaining memberships so efficiently; to Louise Drewery for maintaining our website and organising, with Phil, the craft fair in June; to Andy Mason and Clive Dennison for practical works at Hollym Carrs and Ivy House, and to Margaret and Fred Kennedy and team of helpers for running "Young Nats" as an important, autonomous, self-financing wing of the Society. It is my view that a way forward for the Society is to develop special interest groups modelled on this example.

Paul Fisher has managed to put out issues of *Holderness Countryside* despite his busy times on the farm and we thank him for this important work for the Society. Perhaps you have noticed that we are publishing more of what the Society has achieved and has done and not hide our lamp under a bushel as we have tended to do in the past and I thank all contributors of articles. Our journal distributors also do a valuable job, although more and more people are receiving their Journal by e-mail and we wish to encourage that further.

I also thank David Constantine for his photographic input, especially with the Hollym Carrs newt survey, and for representing the Society's interest in the Little Tern Breeding project in meetings of the Spurn Bird Observatory Trust. The Hollym Carrs grassland maintenance continues to be done free of charge by the Fisher family and we thank them for this heavy work.

I owe special thanks to Harry and Pauline Bursell who handed over to Steve after the close of accounts in January. Steve is now doing a sterling job as Treasurer and keeping us right on cash flow and I thank him for undertaking this important and potentially onerous job. Thanks also to Steve, Lesley, Fred, Margaret and helpers for stewarding our open meetings. Fred has also helped Rebecca get to grips with the post of General Secretary and despite pressures of work, Rebecca has kept on top of Minute taking and we thank her.

We are pleased that Jeff is making good progress back to health and we thank him for his continued advice and support, and for keeping us smiling at meetings.

So, what else has been done? I've continued to represent the Society on the Easington Beach Study Group meetings which were set up to oversee the Kilnsea Wetlands development. The lead part in this group is taken by Faith Spencer of the Environment Agency and she deserves our thanks for maintaining expert input on what has become a site of great interest.

Regarding Hollym Carrs Nature Reserve, Andy Mason moved to a demanding job on Spurn but despite this he has thankfully maintained his interest as Chairman of the Committee. The paperwork for running the reserve into Higher Level Stewardship has been left to me and since the last AGM £25,000 of stewardship funding has started to come on stream. At a time when engaging voluntary workers is difficult we are now able to afford contractors to do some of the heavy work for the next 10 years. Behind the scenes the work of cataloguing all the records of animals on the reserve has been carried out by Mr Bill Dolling, who wrote an interesting series of articles in *Holderness Countryside*. This is important work as it provides evidence illustrating the local wildlife importance of the kind which led to its inclusion in the East Riding of Yorkshire register of Local Wildlife Sites and has enabled Higher Level Stewardship payments.

With a grant of £500 from the Burton Pidsea Windfarm Community Fund and with thanks to Steve and Rebecas' influence, matching support from Centrica, we have bought a new projector that projects high definition pictures together with sound and even 3D if needed. Next we are looking for funds for a laptop computer of sufficiently high performance to drive it and hopefully we will soon be able to deliver better presentations. With thanks to everyone we are well positioned to face the forthcoming year but we need yet more blood and less sweat and tears. We are hatching new ways of attracting attention and interest in what we do and need your help.

## SHCS – New ideas

### Chairman

It concerns us that fewer people are attending our meetings, both indoors and outdoors. After the last AGM we had a 'brainstorm' session to tap the hearts and minds of those who stayed behind. To summarise a long and interesting debate, we felt that we should continue the programme of indoor picture shows and talks, but to cut out the usually poorly attended January meeting, and to think harder about what we should do for outdoor events during the summer.

In debate the question was raised, "are our presentations too technical?" We believe we present a well balanced programme at indoor meetings and articles in *Holderness Countryside*. We have to remember that a proportion of our membership is more technical in their interest but if the answer to the question is, "yes" we will have to address the matter and think of other ways of catering for our more technically-minded members.

In the next article below I have outlined one possibility for people with an interest in plants. Maybe someone else would like to volunteer to lead groups interested in birds, mammals, insects or wildlife photography using the wonderful resources that we have access to? Hopefully this might encourage people who yearn the technical without diminishing further attendance at meetings!

We have invested in new projector equipment with which we hope to give more and better presentations to spread the word of our work. We are thinking of other ways of fund raising that will give us a better return for our hard work and if anyone knows of any legal ways of getting summat for nowt, please let us know.

To some extent we have an ageing population perhaps less physically able to do countryside walks and conservation work so perhaps we could plan to do some more sedentary activities, perhaps centred on the Ivy House Centre. Again, would anyone like to lead such an activity? Herewith is an invitation to you to come forward with ideas of what you would like from the SHCS (of course within our charitable objectives - see inside back cover of *Holderness Countryside*) and we will try to cater for you. Also, we would ask you to bring with you at least one friend or relative to our meetings.

The big changes for now are:

1. NO JANUARY MEETING
2. AGM to be held in MAY

## Plant species mapping across SE Yorkshire

### Peter J Cook

For a few years now there has been steady progress made in mapping all plants across Britain in readiness for publication of the Atlas 2020 project of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI). For SE Yorkshire this is being led by Mr Richard Middleton, a University of Hull geographer with excellent knowledge of botany and IT skills, and myself. About 12,000 plant locations were recorded last year and so far, about 11,500 this year.

Two years ago we set up a Local Group of the BSBI and designed a systematic approach to recording by what was then only a very small army of six recorders. This has doubled to a dozen and now that we are nearing the top of the mountain, on what three years ago seemed to be a Sisyphean task, we feel that we can now start to expand this Local Group to include anyone who would like to join us on field recording trips, **perhaps jointly as one of the Society's summer field meetings**. If this idea appeals to anyone, please contact me. We do not bite but if children would like to come, they should be accompanied by a responsible adult in case we get hungry. We wish to encourage others to share our knowledge of plants.

We have set up a Local Group News page on [www.middleton12.karoo.net/news.htm](http://www.middleton12.karoo.net/news.htm) which gives reports of our recording efforts and interesting botanical discoveries, many of which are in the SHCS's recording area. The reports are readable by rather more than experienced botanists – just 'jump over' the unpronounceable words and the news item should still make sense. On this same site (click 'Home' and then 'Meetings'), to see our programme of meetings. This has to be developed for 2016 at the time of writing and I will include some Holderness sites in the June-August period so, **if you are interested, keep your eye on this webpage**.

## **PLEA FOR HELP**

As a member of this Society you are part-owner of the Hollym Carrs Nature Reserve which is a jewel set in agricultural South Holderness. Management of the reserve is now financed by either Entry Level Stewardship or Higher Level Stewardship payments. These enable some capital work on ponds to maintain their suitability for great crested newts, the installation of bird and bat boxes and help us to pay for contractors to maintain hedges, paths, ditches and the meadow areas. Over the last two years we have taken steps to reduce the burden of heavy work for volunteers by engaging experienced professionals, but we still need volunteers to help manage the reserve. You don't have to be elected to the Executive team to help manage the reserve but hopefully your interest will extend over time.

Reserve management is administered by a very small team of volunteers, some of whom are still in employment and have very little available time whereas others are no longer as physically fit as we used to be. There are several jobs that we need help with, none of which are physically demanding or require any particular skills, but 'cut-across' our time availability. At the moment these are done largely by me (Peter) and Andy Mason. They are:

- *Periodic patrol to check for obvious hazards and evidence of vandalism and to act on findings*
- *Open the gates for contractors and for National Powergrid staff who periodically check power lines*
- *Accompany contractors and guide visitors away from work in progress in compliance with out health and safety arrangements*
- *Tidy brash/fallen branches off pathways and cut back branches overhanging paths. Bag up and remove litter. Cut around, clean and varnish seats as necessary. Maintain locks in working order!*
- *If wished, but not to be pushed, be part of the reserve's management team by attending 2 or 3 meetings per year and contributing ideas and support to decision – making.*

We need at least four people to volunteer please by contacting Andy Mason or me (see inside back cover) and we will arrange a get-together.

Peter (Chairman)

## **GARDENER FOR IVY HOUSE CENTRE**

We are very pleased to announce that we now have a volunteer to maintain the gardens and grounds at Ivy House Centre. Don has joined us after working as a gardener and grounds-man on a large estate in Scotland so is no stranger to machinery and hard work. He will start to make his mark with a bit of tree surgery in the interest of health and safety over the next couple of months.

## **GAZETTE COUNTRYSIDE COLUMN – NO MORE**

As many of you know I used to write the weekly *Countryside Column* in the Holderness Gazette, a job I did for about 20 years. Latterly I found it increasingly difficult to find new material. Many people, including members of this Society, have contacted me or stopped me in the street to say how much they miss my column and I thank you for that. However, one of the problems I had was that some people could not appreciate that my comments and views were my own and were not representative of this Society. It also meant that I could not comment for or against planning proposals without them being interpreted as coming from this Society. This was a potentially dangerous problem for the Society.

## **JOHN CUDWORTH R.I.P.**

Older members of the Society will be saddened to learn that Mr John Cudworth has died. John was a founder member of the Spurn Bird Observatory and loved Spurn where he was interested mainly in bird studies but also held broad knowledge across natural history. He contributed significantly to knowledge of Spurn through his observations and was a respected and good friend to many local people.

#### **DAVID BONE, R.I.P.**

It is with much sadness that we report the death of David Bone of Elstronwick. Both David and Jane have been keen supporters of the Society for many years helping way back with work on Hollym Carrs and more recently with the Ivy House development. They attended most meetings when not away in Kent. We extend our heartfelt condolences to Jane and hope that she will continue to visit us when she is in Elstronwick.

#### **MARGARET GRABURN, R.I.P**

It is with much sadness that we report the death of Margaret Graburn of Camerton. Margaret was a very active supporter of the Society helping in whatever way she could at meetings and events. She was a great help in the Young Nats team and altogether she will be greatly missed, not least for her cheerfulness.

#### **NEW PROJECTOR GETS FIRST PUBLIC AIRING**

With generous support from the Burton Pidsea Windfarm Community Fund (£500) and Centrica (£300) the Society has acquired a new powerful projector for digital displays. It will take several different output formats, (including High Density and 3D) from computers and also project photographs direct from a camera or memory stick via a USB port. This gives us a wide versatility in giving shows to our membership and other groups.

On 13<sup>th</sup> January Peter Cook gave a one hour illustrated talk on the source and history of weeds in the countryside – introduced plants that have escaped and become a nuisance such as Japanese Knotweed and Floating Pennywort. This talk was timely because from the 1<sup>st</sup> January this year it has become illegal to harbour a number of aggressive plants.

This talk was appreciated by 51 members of the South Holderness Garden Club who donated £70 to the Society.

#### **PLANT IDENTIFICATION RESOURCE**

In 1994 I found a huge collection of preserved plants comprising the larger part of the Herbarium of Mr F R Browning, Head of Science at Pembury Girl's School in Kent. This was a major find as Mr Browning had properly ordered one or more specimen of almost every species of plant including more than 250 microspecies of hawkweeds. The collection was known about but listed as 'missing'. With an amazing amount of luck I was led me to a stack of cases under the leaky roof of a pigsty near Bedale.

To date I have managed to 'curate' and catalogue all the grasses, sedges, rushes and ferns but there remains 6 cases, each 10" deep, to catalogue. In January, Dr Rohan Lewis and Mrs Gabrielle Jarvis, local members of the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland, started to work through the boxes primarily to further their own identification skills. However, they are also cataloguing the collection so that I can create a spreadsheet that cross references old names with new names, and reference numbers, to make species easier to find in the collection. When complete, and until I can find a permanent home for the collection, these will be made available to any Society member wishing to use them for private study.

*If you feel a need to learn from this very valuable resource let me know and for a donation towards the running of Ivy House I will make relevant sections available to you together with microscope, lens and modern books.*

**NB NEXT AGM MAY 13<sup>TH</sup> ... .. NB NEXT AGM MAY 13<sup>TH</sup> ... .. NB NEXT AGM MAY 13<sup>TH</sup>**

## Beacon Lagoons Nature Reserve 2015 – another successful year

### Little Tern

The Little Tern colony at Beacon Lagoons enjoyed another successful year with the third highest number of chicks fledged since the 2002 breeding season. There were 46 nesting attempts, involving 37 pairs, which resulted in 30 chicks fledging successfully. Although these figures were lower than in 2014, when 60 chicks fledged from 45 pairs, the productivity of 0.81 chicks per pair was still one of the better results of the last 25 years. A maximum count of 112 adults in June suggested that there was still potential for more breeding pairs.

The 2015 breeding season was characterised by periods of wet and windy weather in June and July, a time when some newly hatched chicks were found dead in nests. This weather was probably the cause of an extended breeding season where the last chick to fledge did so 51 days after the first, an unusual time span in a colony where birds generally breed in relative synchrony. Another factor which influenced the productivity of the colony was the large number of clutches with only two eggs. Only three nests contained the maximum three eggs but it is difficult to explain the reason for this.

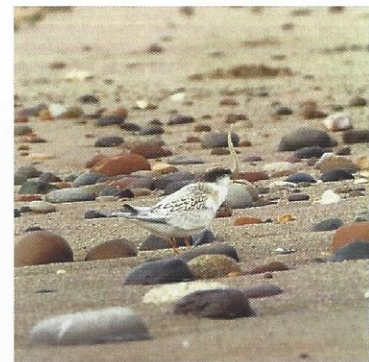


As noted in the last edition of *Holderness Countryside*, other colonies around the country suffered a very poor breeding season, apparently due to a lack of food to feed chicks. The success of the Beacon Lagoons colony was therefore noteworthy. During periods of rough weather when fishing for sand eels in the sea is difficult, Little Terns have the option of fishing in the lagoons or at Kilnsea Wetlands where sticklebacks are plentiful. A supplementary diet of sticklebacks may well have helped ensure the observed productivity of the colony in 2015. Credit must also go to the diligence of the Lead Warden, Ed

Melmoth, and Assistant Warden, Mick Turton, who both managed to survive numerous



night shifts keeping the local foxes away while chicks were still present in the colony. They could not, however, do anything to prevent a Peregrine from taking one of the adults!



The management of Beacon Lagoons for the protection of Little Terns has also benefitted other bird species, notably the breeding waders:

### Ringed Plover



A minimum total of 26 young were fledged from 9 nesting pairs. Six of these pairs nested within the electric fenced area erected to protect the Little Tern nests from ground predators.



Their relative protection undoubtedly contributed to this high fledging rate, a particularly important fact since the recent admission of Ringed Plover to the Red List of *Birds of Conservation Concern*.

### Oystercatcher



Five chicks from six pairs of Oystercatchers were reared to the flying stage. Five nests were within the protected area but when the adults led chicks to other areas of the lagoons to feed they became more vulnerable to fox predation.



Unlike the Ringed Plovers, adult Oystercatchers actively feed their chicks so it can be quite entertaining watching them probing for food items such as large lugworms and then seeing the chicks trying deal with them.

### Avocet



The raft which was placed to try to attract terns to nest was colonised by Avocets before the Little Terns returned in late April. Of the 26

chicks reared by 13 pairs in the Kilnsea Wetlands and Beacon Lagoons area 9 chicks fledged from the 7 pairs that nested on the raft.



If you would like to receive a copy of the full report of the 2015 breeding season at Beacon Lagoons email [shcs25@aol.com](mailto:shcs25@aol.com)

David Constantine

# The Young Nats Page

The Young Nats have worked hard this year. They have been engaged in entering for the RSPB Bronze Award, for which a whole list of tasks must be accomplished along with certain more academic work.

These children, aged from 6 to 13 years of age have, in order to complete the necessary requirements for the award, built nest boxes, *Some of which were inhabited within just a few weeks of being fixed onto trees.* They constructed “Bug Hotels” from old wooden pallets stuffed with straw, sticks and dead leaves, and, of course, the pond dipping which taught them about some of the strange creatures who live beneath the water.

Hedgehog houses were next on their agenda, made ready in time for the winter for at least one mysterious inhabitant who certainly spent some time in residence, then disappeared before it could be identified. A whole half day of litter picking resulted in three large sacks being filled with metal, plastic, and unidentifiable rubbish. Altogether an educational, interesting and enjoyable experience for the children who then designed, as their last task, a display on a large notice board complete with drawings, photographs and written work to show what they had achieved.



Their awards, special certificates from the RSPB were presented to them by Margaret, our club leader in late October after a very busy year, although this project was only a small fraction of their environmental studies over the four years of the club's existence. We look forward to next year.



## PUBLICATIONS

*Holderness Countryside* is the journal of the South Holderness Countryside Society, and is issued free of charge to members, up to four times per year. All Rights Reserved.

*Holderness Countryside* is edited and printed by Paul Fisher. Items for publication may be posted in manuscript or e-mailed to the editor or to the General Secretary.

The Society welcomes articles of general interest in the genre of natural and social history pertaining to southern Holderness. The views expressed are those of the contributor. Contributions are acknowledged along with the relevant articles.

Other publications may be produced from time-to-time.

## YOUNG NATURALISTS CLUB

The Young Nats Club meets twice monthly at our Ivy House Centre in Hollym. Supervisors have Enhanced DBS certification.

Members must be of primary school age, 5-11 years. Young Nats are taught and encouraged to take a more positive interest in natural history and to publish articles in *Holderness Countryside*. Articles should be sent to the General Secretary via E-mail or, a telephone call to organise collection.

## SCHOOLS

Copies of *Holderness Countryside* are distributed to local schools. Schools are permitted to photocopy extracts from the Journal for educational use within their school. All other reproduction in whatever form is subject to copyright.

## WILDLIFE RECORDS

The Society tries to encourage recording of wildlife in National schemes and publish records in *Holderness Countryside*. Records submitted for publication by the SHCS should be referenced at least to OS 10 km grid squares. Any records from the Society's reserves should be sent to the Society's Office.

## NATURE RESERVES & CONTACTS

Beacon Lagoons Nature Reserve (Chairman)

Hollym Carrs Nature Reserve

(Andy Mason; andymace2305@yahoo.co.uk)

Kilnsea Wetlands Reserve (Chairman)

(by affiliation and lease of land to YWT)

Little Tern Protection (David Constantine)

(by affiliation with Spurn Bird Observatory)



The SHCS is funded through member subscription and generous private, commercial and charitable donations. The Ivy House Centre received Lottery Funding

## CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

The South Holderness Countryside Society was first registered as a Charity No 701627 on 30<sup>th</sup> May 1989. Defined objectives of the Charity are;

(1) *Work principally within the area of Holderness, (East Riding of Yorkshire), for the region's natural and local history.*

(2) *Educate the public in the natural and local history of the area.*

(3) *Secure the preservation and protection and improvement of natural history.*

Management of the Society's affairs is by elected Trustees. Trustees meet on the first Friday of the month at 19.15 hrs in the Society's Office. Members may attend but may contribute to the meeting only if invited to.

## THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Position	Name	Telephone (01964)
Chairman	Peter Cook	614466
Vice Chairman	Vacant	
Treasurer	Steve Moore	624313
Editor	Paul Fisher	527306
Elected Member	Jeff Marshall	630045
Elected Member	David Constantine	
Elected Member	Fred Kennedy	671492
Elected Member	Andy Mason	01482 817835
Gen. Secretary (Non-Executive)	Rebecca Sunshine	

## KEY ADDRESSES

SHCS Office	The Ivy House Centre, South Carr Dales Road, Hollym, HU19 2SQ. E-mail: shcs25@aol.com. (NB NO TELEPHONE - 614466 for now)
Gen Sec'y	Mrs Rebecca Sunshine Rebecca.Sunshine@centrica-sl.co.uk
Membership Secretary	Mrs Denise Failey, Demswood, Boreas Hill, Paull, HU12 8AX. 01964 622576 <b>(ALL payments and membership correspondence to Denise please)</b>
Young Nats	Mrs Margaret Kennedy, 18 Glebelands, Burton Pidsea, HU12 9AS. 01964 671492
Treasurer	Mr Steve Moore, 14 Trinity Close, Burstwick, HU12 9HQ.
Editor	Paul Fisher fisher5@btconnect.com
WEBSITE	Vacant

[www.southholdernesscountrysidesociety.co.uk](http://www.southholdernesscountrysidesociety.co.uk)

## MEMBER SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

Single Adult: £12. Family: £14. Corporate and Affiliate: £20. Schools: Free.

## PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

Unless otherwise stated the venue is PATRINGTON CHURCH HALL at 7.30 pm.  
The hall is situated behind the HOLDERNESS INN on HIGH STREET.  
Alternative access can be gained from Northside Court but car parking is limited.

**FEBRUARY 12<sup>th</sup> – ALAN JONES** from the Humber Nature Partnership will deliver a presentation on, "Wildlife in Industry".

The theme is about how nature colonises industrial sites, e.g. amphibians in fire water ponds, foxes, rabbits, hares, birds etc. making homes in tank farms and on high rise structures on chemical sites.

**MARCH 11<sup>th</sup> – LARRY MALKIN.** Local artist, historian and raconteur will give an illustrated talk on the, "Fables and Folk-lore of the East End".

The 'East End' of Holderness is defined as land beyond the Boggle-Bush, a bush on the roadside between Patrington and Welwick. The Society has a brief to work on both natural and local history and Larry's well-researched talks are packed with fascinating facts presented in an entertaining way.

**APRIL 8<sup>th</sup> – PETER COOK & DAVID CONSTANTINE.** "Wildlife in the Wrong Place".

Peter will give an illustrated talk on plants deliberately or accidentally introduced into the countryside which have become pests - some of them now controlled in European law from 1<sup>st</sup> January. David will follow this with an illustrated talk on 'foreign' birds that occasionally arrive here by mistake and are regarded by some people as 'rare'.

**MAY 13<sup>th</sup> – SOCIETY ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.** Note that this is the revised date of our AGM following discussion at the last meeting.

After the meeting there will be refreshments followed by photographic shows by members and exhibitions illustrating some of the work of Society members.

**JUNE 18<sup>th</sup> – SUMMER FAIR AT IVY HOUSE CENTRE.** Fund raising and membership recruiting activities at the Ivy House Centre. Details to be confirmed.

*We are pleased to announce that we have acquired new projection equipment for use at our meetings to enhance the variety and quality of our presentations. This has been achieved with donations and help from the Burton Pidsea Community Wind Farm Fund, Centrica Ltd, The Sir James Reckitt Charitable Trust, Stephen Moore and PJ Cook T/A Chemical&Ecological Services.*