



March 2017

# HOLDERNESS COUNTRYSIDE



Peter Cook supervises work on a new pond at Hollym Carrs Nature Reserve. Autumn 2016 – Peter Martin

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JOURNAL OF THE SOUTH HOLDERNESS COUNTRYSIDE SOCIETY

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## Member's Photographs

Because of the many very favourable comments received following the photographs which appeared in the last issue I have no worries about including two more by the same young photographers. Thanks to everyone for your contributions. Once again we have some great photographs.



Here we have another wonderful shot of a Red Admiral butterfly taken by Kira Abel when she visited Pauline and Harry Bursall's private nature reserve in Thorngumbald with the Young Nats last year. The sharpness and accuracy of this hand held shot has to be admired and something that is very difficult to achieve in close-up shots of this kind.

This beautiful photograph of a Tawny Owl was taken by Society member Paul Fisher. Paul edited *Holderness Countryside* until I took over in 2016. Paul was fortunate enough to be able to take this picture near to his home at North Field Farm, Fitling. In addition to this photograph Paul also submitted more pictures of rabbits and a hare all taken at North Field Farm. Those of us who chase wildlife with our cameras will all be envious of Paul having such beautiful animals close to his home.



This magnificent Hare was photographed by Liam Constantine. Like Paul, Liam took this shot fairly close to home on Sunk Island. Again, Liam is to be congratulated on the sharpness of the shot. Having chased and caught a leveret when I was just ten years old while 'helping' with the harvest on a North Lincolnshire farm, hares have always held a particular fascination for me.

Please email jpeg files of your pictures to me at [peteratthechapel@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peteratthechapel@hotmail.co.uk) A brief note as to where and when they were taken would be very helpful.

## From the Chair

First, if you have not already heard me say it, I wish you all a very happy and prosperous 2017

I started to write this page in December in the hope of presenting a review of 2016 but a comment on Twitter over Christmas caught my eye and added fuel to my thoughts following recent conversations held with friends. There is a growing problem of mocking and bullying that is restricting the development of young people. It is evidently 'uncool' to be capable of playing a musical instrument, be interested in church bell ringing or photography and, in this Society's concern, to be interested in wildlife. Mocking is not a new phenomenon for I remember being ridiculed for suffering acne. Then, 50 years ago, only bricks and stones would break bones and I could escape after school. These days the tirade of insults can continue at home on social media for all friends to see, at a level that is turning young people away from their interests to follow a very shallow norm. There is also a possibility of perceived potential ridicule, i.e. "I won't do that because it won't be cool". Is this why we find it less easy to engage, recruit and retain young people?

Re-engagement with Britain's natural history has never been more urgent. Young people need the skills to name, observe, monitor and record wildlife. It is vital to understand the contribution nature makes to our lives physically, culturally, emotionally and scientifically. There is a need for making interest in natural history 'cool'. A petition to parliament calling for the development of a GCSE in Natural History is currently underway. Please consider adding your name on <https://petition.parliament.uk/petitions/176749>.

The acquisition of land for the purposes of creating a better place for wildlife has been an important aspect of the Society's development in the past and the purchase of land on Hollym Carrs provided a large impetus of recruitment and voluntary effort and county-wide knowledge of our existence. It attracted people of all ages and engaged them in design, planning and planting. However, would another project like this work today? As an optimist I believe so, but who'll do the work?

We have been offered a 1.8 acre established nature reserve only 10 minutes' walk from our Ivy House HQ at a very low asking price. We have a Restricted Fund set aside for opportunities such as this, and we would not need to raise any money. However, we are aware of the pressures of running the Society at its current size and are hesitant to proceed. We are aware that the site is minimal management grassland requiring only a few cuts of the footpaths and that some expenditure on kissing-gate access and hedgerow rejuvenation is needed, but these can be achieved inexpensively. If we did nothing to the reserve it would still be held out of agricultural production in perpetuity to the net benefit of wildlife, which is a principal aim of the Society. Its relative ease of access is a strong plus. We would appreciate comments from our members together with offers of help and support for the project. Could this be a project in which you would like to work with us? Please respond by e-mail or letter as soon as you can.

I am pleased to report that the Society has been granted £600 by The Sir James Reckitt Charity which will be used for general office expenses.

Peter

## The Other Side of Nature

Silken wonder, spinnerets of lace,  
Sticky entrapment, to satisfy taste  
Trespassers beware, before it's too late  
The lightest touch may seal your fate.

Boxing hares, an engaging sight,  
Erect in stance, bathed in misty light.  
Madness so fierce until the battle is won.  
There's only one victor left standing in the sun.

Playful feline, crouched and stalking.  
Unwary, is fledgling, happy and chirping  
Feline pounces, feathers fly away.....  
A juicy offering for her owner today.

Lazy cuckoo seeking a bed  
Plunders nests, and pushes for its head  
Ousting eggs and babies, too soon.  
Vacating swiftly once changing its tune.

Piercing vision, targets beware  
The bird of prey has left its lair  
Magnetised by your eyes so bright  
It's likely you'll be on the menu tonight.

Nature can be cruel, but who's to say  
If things were destined to be this way  
The strong with the power, the weak without  
Nothing is certain .....always a doubt.

GILL HART



## BUTTERCUPS

As a recorder I sometimes receive lists of plants by their common name. I would rather have a list than nothing at all, however, entries like, "buttercup", present me with problems and I simply have to ignore the record. There are four different common species of buttercup among a total of about a dozen, some of them very rare. The four for Holderness are Creeping Buttercup, Meadow Buttercup, Bulbous Buttercup and Hairy Buttercup.

Creeping Buttercup (*Ranunculus repens*) grows most naturally as a component of grassland bordering rivers, streams and ditches that are periodically inundated with water. It is also known as an aggressive garden and lawn weed and is possibly our best known and hated buttercup species. It is a low-growing plant with runners (stolons) creeping across the soil surface. Its petals are deep golden yellow, glossy and overlap to form a bowl.



Meadow Buttercup (*R. acris*) is found in old unimproved meadows and on infrequently

disturbed road verges. It is becoming a scarce species due to grassland mis-management such as over-zealous mowing and enrichment (eutrophication) and loss of meadows to other uses. Unlike Creeping Buttercup it stands high above its surrounding associates and has paler, smaller petals. Features helping with field identification where plants are not typical due to grazing or trampling are the facts that Creeping Buttercup always has stolons by the time it flowers whereas Meadow Buttercup never has them. Also, both species have green sepals that support the petals rather than point backwards as in the next two species. There are many other features but these should enable simple differentiation between these two and also four.



Bulbous Buttercup (*R. bulbosus*) is found on dry sandy soil in short grassland on infrequently mown road verges and lightly grazed unimproved grassland. It is therefore scarce in Holderness. I don't advocate digging it up to see the bulbous leaf bases for these can be felt with the finger. The long, hairy, yellow sepals are reflexed backwards parallel to the stem, which is not grooved. These features and the lack of stolons easily distinguish this from small, Creeping Buttercup plants

Hairy Buttercup (*R. sardous*) grows in short grassland and on rough, disturbed ground not far from the sea here in Holderness. It is much persecuted by over-intensive grazing, hard surfacing of paths and general urbanization. It looks a lot like Bulbous Buttercup until studied to note the greenish reflexed sepals and markedly grooved stalk.



Records for any of these 4 species with place would be gratefully received.

Peter Cook

## News

Steve and Lesley Moore are still hard at work decorating their new home ready to move in soon. We miss them both from Society activities while they are so busy, and hope that they will be happy in their new abode. Steve was, of course, our Treasurer until bereavement and other pressures meant that, 'something had to give'. I am particularly grateful to him for handing over the books in good order.

On a sad note we are sorry to report that Mr Norman Sergeant of Patrington has died. Norman and Hilda were mainstay supporters of the Society in its early years with both of them attending every meeting and, for a while, opening the hall and helping to set up ready. They were missed when they could no longer turn out but whenever I met either of them in the street they would converse on Society and wildlife matters. The Society was represented at his Norman's funeral.

We are very sorry to report the death of Mrs Sheilah Bowers who was well known to our longer-serving members of the Society. Sheilah was one of the originals – Member No 10 – who, in her prime, worked hard in the fund-raising team and served refreshments at our meetings.

Botanical Society (BSBI) Local Group meetings. I extend a welcome to anyone in the SHCS who would like a day out with friendly botanists. The programme of events this year may be seen on our website, (<http://www.middleton12.karoo.net/>), but for anyone without such access we meet usually on the second Wednesday of the month. You can contact me on 614466 for details. Walks are usually up to 4 miles and may involve off-track rough terrain; advice will be given.

Peter Cook

### **We're cleaner than average! But only just**



I do not seem to be able to switch on the wireless or venture out of doors these days without hearing or seeing yet another example of how mankind is destroying the planet on which we live.

The photograph accompanying this article was taken in March 2017 on the foreshore of the River Humber close to my home in Kilnsea. The Marine Conservation Society says that more than 8,000 bottles were picked up during its Great British Beach Clean Up in September, up 43% on 2014. Another survey

published recently said that on average 160 plastic containers can be found on every mile of our coastline. Almost every day I walk my dogs for one and a half miles along the north bank of The Humber. I wondered how my corner of South Holderness would compare with the national average. Instead of the projected 240 plastic containers I counted only 223. Isn't that good? On reflection perhaps the words of my last sentence should be rearranged. THAT ISN'T GOOD!

Peter Martin

## Shout It From The Highest Hill

Yes, and you can even tell the golden daffodils if you wish. Older members of this society might remember the popular song of the early 1950s sung by Doris Day that used these words. In 2017, I am writing this article about one of my own not so secret loves, The South Holderness Countryside Society. The society needs help.

Those of us (and usually there are not very many) who attend the monthly meetings of the society held in Patrington will have noticed that the majority of the audience are not young. We are friendly, we are interested in natural history, we enjoy a good natter and the tea and biscuits provided but we are not, in the main, young.

If you, like me, have visited Hollym Carrs Nature Reserve, you will have noticed that the saplings planted 30 or more years ago are now mature but young trees. Those members who planted them are no longer young although usually very mature and they are certainly not as active as they were in those days when they wielded shovels and other tools to create HCNR. Unfortunately the work needed to keep the reserve in a good state is probably increasing. Sometimes the work that has to be done is beyond the scope of voluntary help and has to be carried out by contractors as happened last autumn. Frequently however the work needed on the reserve calls for the help of our active members to do such tasks as mowing footpaths, cutting back brambles, putting up, monitoring and cleaning out nest boxes, recording and much more.

If our society is to survive and, dare I say it, expand and become stronger it must have new members. It must have new members who are prepared to offer the practical help I have outlined. Currently the brightest stars in the SHCS sky are the Young Nats our young members who are so ably looked after, coached and encouraged by Margaret and Freddie Kennedy (See p.8). Could these budding naturalists grow up into Inter Nats before becoming adult members? Of course they could and I would argue should do so. But who will take them under their wing?

What if we wanted to expand? At the moment we are finding it hard enough to manage the land we own. How could we manage more land for the benefit of wildlife if it became available in the future? Personally I do not think we could manage more work with our current membership.

What I am suggesting is that we all make a really determined effort in the months to come to encourage friends, relatives, acquaintances or anybody we think will be a help to the society in the ways we need. People who are simply willing to come along and help with working parties would be most welcome even if they cannot become members.

If the South Holderness Countryside Society with its proud history is to survive it must have new members. I would therefore ask everyone reading this edition of *Holderness Countryside* to put on their thinking caps and send me their suggestions for ways we could use to attract new and enthusiastic members. Please write or e-mail your suggestions to me at Chapel Cottage, Kilnsea Road, Kilnsea , East Yorkshire , HU12 0UB or [peteratthechapel@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:peteratthechapel@hotmail.co.uk) . I look forward to reading your suggestions.

Peter Martin

Editor

## The Pioneers

Have you ever considered writing a book? Perhaps it would be a book about your favourite aspect of natural history such as the birds in your garden or the flowers you have seen on your walks around Holderness. Whatever the subject, ask yourself where your knowledge of those birds or flowers came from. The youth of today might well give the internet as their answer but for most of us the answer would be that our knowledge came from books.

I spent a large part of my life in Halifax and so, having an interest in natural history it was inevitable that I should learn about James Bolton. James Bolton was born in Halifax around 1735 and was interested in fungi. Today he would be called a mycologist, but I have no idea what he would have been called in those far off days. When I lived in Halifax those who, quite literally, followed in Bolton's footsteps were called Fungus Freaks.

James Bolton knew a great deal about mushrooms and toadstools and the like but his knowledge didn't come from books. It didn't come from books because when he lived there were no books on fungi. The subject of the fungi of the British Isles had never been tackled. James Bolton wrote the first illustrated book on fungi ever produced in England, a four volume work covering 231 species entitled "*An History of Fungusses growing about Halifax*".

Some years ago I attended the opening of an exhibition of the work of James Bolton in Liverpool. The museum there brought together a dozen or more first editions of this memorable work. The quality of the illustrations and the condition of the books was unbelievable. Ever since that time I have had a love for old books on natural history.

Imagine my delight then when I was given a very soggy and bedraggled bundle of paper which turned out to be an original copy of, "*The Birds of Huddersfield*" or more accurately, "*An account of The Birds of the Huddersfield District*" by S.L.Mosley FES and F.O.Mosley FRMS, printed in 1915.



The picture of a pair of Kestrels to the left is an illustration from the book. Note the initials SLM in the bottom right corner.

Seth Lister Mosley did actually have an existing work on the same subject to which he could refer, that of Charles P. Hobkirk who included a list of the birds of the Huddersfield area in a book written in 1859. What is most remarkable about the book I own is the sheer determination of Seth Moseley to publish the work. At the bottom of the title page is the telling line "*Published privately to subscribers only*". Seth Mosley ran his own museum in his home and it was probably to the patrons of that museum that the book was aimed.

Another telling example of Mosley's determination is given in the first paragraph of his preface to the book; "*This book is sent forth as the crystalised (his spelling not mine) spare moments of a busy man. To have produced it in anything like its present form*

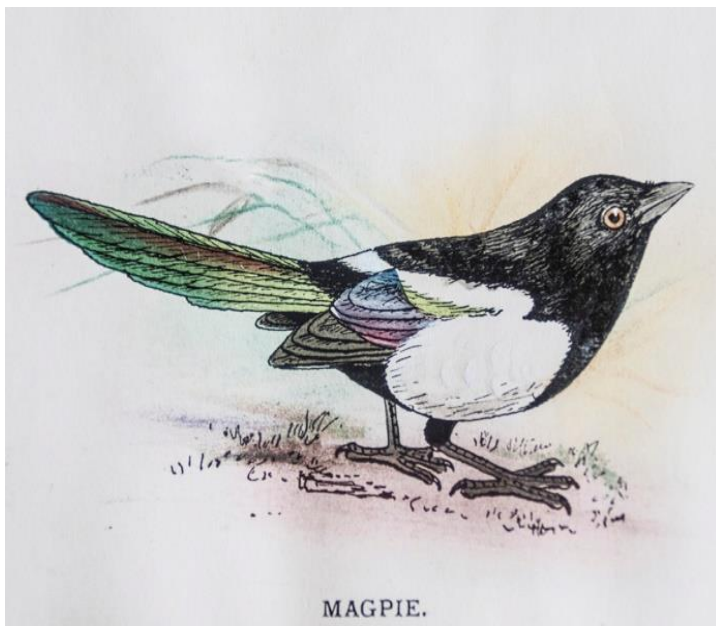


*at the price would have been an impossibility on commercial lines, and my only alternative was to print it myself on a small hand press. I am conscious of its many defects, but there were only two ways – do it this way or not at all.”*

I imagine there are few modern would-be authors who would take a similar course of action if a publisher rejected their work. Incidentally the illustrations in the book are all hand coloured and many bear the initials SLM.



Another insight into the determination of Seth Mosley comes in the following extract from the book. It also gives an insight into the methods the birdwatchers of those days used to get a close look at a bird before the advent of today's high powered, high cost optics. It also explains the phrase – *What's hit is history and what's missed is a mystery.*



The following extract is Mosley's account of a Baillon's Crake which is included on the list of Huddersfield birds, and is still the only record of this bird in the area.

*On Sunday, May 30, 1874 when walking out with my father, and passing Horne Dam, Kirkheaton, the man living at the farm – George Challand – came out and called my father, who was well known in the district. Challand showed him a bird of this kind which he had shot the day before on the dam. And asked him if it was any good? My father gave him 6d for it, stuffed it, and gave it to me, having begun to make a collection. When my museum had reached over 100,000 specimens, and the Corporation finally*

*declined them as a free gift, temporarily downhearted in my life-long efforts to raise a Town Museum, I sold a number of rarities, and this bird unfortunately left the district.*

Yes, S.L.Mosley was a very determined man and six years after producing his book his determination was rewarded when he was made the first curator of the Tolson Museum at Ravensknowle in Huddersfield., which would have been a happy ending to this piece but for the fact that the museum is likely to be closed by Kirklees Council because of the cost of necessary repairs.

Peter Martin

## The Young Nats

2017, and the young Nats Club starts on its SIXTH year of operation. To date Margaret and her team have had some 24 children throughout the years. Some of those early members, now in their teens, still keep in touch, and when their school work permits, sometimes accompany the present young



members on our organised outings. It's a good feeling. To be able to say that the club has really meant something to them in their early years, and it's all been worthwhile. Fantastic!!

The club started this year on March 11th with a further task towards the RSPB Silver Award. And, to the delight / dismay of the members, we were making Bird Food cones by melting lovely slimy finger sticking lard, mixing it with scrummy mealy worms and seeds etc. and persuading the resulting mixture to slide between the scales of some large pine cones. (We didn't use any peanuts because one of our young ladies has a nut allergy)

Have you ever tried "Crumple Pastry Maggots"? Scrumptious, they tell me, when you like that sort of thing. Flour and lard rolled into maggot shapes with raisins etc. "shoved" into the thing until they looked like some sort of pre-historic baby chipolatas with humps. Doesn't matter what they looked like, so long as the birds like them.

A requirement of the Wildlife Garden Award is to make, and make use of compost. We'd been making our own compost for some time now, and the two older girls took a barrow full and spread it onto our garden mixed with some new soil, and at the next meeting, weather permitting, we'll be planting seedlings of plants which will later attract bees and butterflies etc.

Last year, we asked the members if there was anything that they would like to look into during the 2017 term, and the resulting list was quite interesting. But, you will have to wait for a while to find out ("Cos it's a secret")



Freddy

## **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 Peter Martin. Items for publication may be posted in manuscript or e-mailed to the Editor:

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 Naturalists' ("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 Editor 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)

## **MEMBER SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

Single Adult: £12. Family: £14. Corporate and

Affiliate: £20. Schools: Free

## **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	VACANT	
Acting Chairman	Peter Cook	614466
Vice Chairman	VACANT	
Treasurer	Peter Cook	614466
Editor	Peter Martin	650477
Elected Member	Jeff Marshall	630045
Elected Member	David Constantine	631354
Elected Member	Fred Kennedy	671492
Elected Member	Margaret Kennedy	671492
Gen. Secretary (Non-Executive)	VACANT (Peter Cook acting)	614466

### 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	VACANT
Member Secretary	Mrs. Denise Failey, Demswood, Boreas Hill, Paull, HU12 8AX. 01964 622576
Young Nats	Margaret Kennedy
Treasurer	Mr Peter Cook
WEBSITE	VACANT

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

### New Equipment

We are in the process of acquiring new equipment using a grant of £1500 from the Sir James Reckitt Charitable Trust and £500 from Centrica, donated last year. Two years ago we bought a new high-resolution digital projector and have depended upon individual speakers’ own laptop computers and software to drive it. We have suffered compatibility problems with embarrassing waits before presentations.

We are investing in a laptop computer and software that we know should ‘shake hands’ with the projector and also our printers for hand-out generation. It will also talk via the internet and enable us to update our web page more frequently. Another innovation is that it will ‘blue-tooth’ to a sound bar that can be placed strategically in a hall to enhance a presentation. The primary purpose of this leap into the future is to resume the promotional talks that we used to give to schools and local groups as part of our recruitment and educational brief. To this end we hope to develop new digital presentations and hope that we can muster the personnel to go out and use it to sell the SHCS.



## 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

**APRIL 14TH** – NO MEETING (GOOD FRIDAY)

**MAY 12TH** – ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING starting 7.30. This is an important occasion for the Society at which the Trustees crave to admit new blood onto the management team. This year we will place before you a proposal to buy, subject to price and contract, an established 1.8 acre nature reserve in Hollym and sincerely hope that you will be there to help us make a decision in the Society's best interest. Refreshments and a brief illustrated talk will follow.

**MAY 17TH** 11 am meet – Botanical day a Wheldrake Wood. An intensive recording session with opportunity to learn plant identification skills and recording techniques with local experts. You are invited to join a team working on the 20-year long plant atlas project. Enter <http://www.middleton12.karoo.net/programme.htm> in your browser for more details and contact Peter 01964 614466 to book your place. Please note that places are limited to 5 and there will be a long walk over rough terrain.

**JUNE 17th** – ANNUAL OPEN DAY AT IVY HOUSE, 13.00 HRS ONWARDS. Come and see the work of the Young Naturalists' Club and speak to veterans about the history of the Society and its achievements. Please bring as many friends, neighbours or relatives as you can. Weather permitting there will be a late afternoon/early evening led walk to Hollym Carrs Nature Reserve.

**JULY 26<sup>TH</sup>** - 11 am meet – Botanical day at Allerthorpe Common. See text for May 17th for the same detail.