



Registered Charity No 701627

Autumn 2021

Holderness Countryside



Alan and Kay Burnham at the eponymous Burnham Meadow

Journal of the South Holderness Countryside Society

No 140 - Free to members. Available to non-members for a minimum donation of £1.50

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MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE ON 1ST SEPTEMBER

Included with this issue you will find a membership form which can be used, if you wish, to renew your membership which becomes due on 1st September.

In these difficult and unprecedented times The Executive Committee hope that you will feel able to renew but, if you are unable to remain a member we thank you for your past support.

Please send your renewals to:

Denise Failey, Demswood, Boreas Hill, Paull. Hull. HU12 8AX

Many thanks

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM of the South Holderness Countryside Society will be held at 2pm on Saturday 23rd October at Ivy House, South Carr Dales Road, Hollym. Parking is available at the end of the road next to the gravel store and recycling centre as gazebos will be erected on the Ivy House car park in which to hold the meeting.

Every member is invited to attend and will be made very welcome. If you have family or friends you are interested in the type of work we do then please bring them along as new members can be signed up on that afternoon. Refreshments will also be available.

If you would like to join our small committee there is a nomination form attached; or if you know of anyone who you feel would like to be a part of this wonderful charity please contact them and invite them to join us. We seem to be the best kept secret of South Holderness!

SHCS meet at Hollym Carrs Nature Reserve.

Reading in the previous edition of the SHCS magazine, the articles about the wonderful wildlife being attracted to HCNR, certainly whetted my appetite for the Society's visit there on 25th June 2021. I realised that it had been almost 5 years since my last visit and on this occasion, my daughter Kim, who had not previously had the opportunity to see the reserve, travelled up from Buckinghamshire to accompany me.

On arrival at the entrance to the reserve, I was immediately taken aback by the height of the trees and how well they were maturing. As we walked through the woodland we noticed how dark it was in some parts, due to the canopies that had now formed. We then came across lighter areas where either trees had failed or not planted, allowing flowering plants and tall grasses to take over.



It was in one such area that our leader and reserve manager Andy Mason, drew our attention to a young Roe Deer, just visible through the grasses. Apart from a Song Thrush in full voice and a family of young Wrens, the animal life was being very quiet, on what was a dull but fine evening, after a very wet day. However, one could sense that animal life was all around us, most probably watching us even if we couldn't see them.



Further along, we found some Common Spotted Orchids in full bloom and then a quite rare Adders Tongue Fern. At one of the newer ponds, the plant life looked to be well established and we learnt that the introduced Water Parsnip was doing well which was proof that the water quality must be in good shape and must be attracting a wide variety of species.

Finally, we arrived at 'the meadow' and once again I could not believe how impressive it all looked. Gazing at the long grasses, my immediate thoughts were that it must support an abundance of wildlife, which gave me personal great joy.

As we came away from the reserve, my daughter said how impressed she was with the reserve and that I must feel very proud of what had been achieved at Hollym Carrs. She is right of course, that even though I only played a very small part in the early years, I do feel very proud that our local Countryside Society, in its few short years, has created such a magnificent sanctuary for our local wildlife and hopefully for future generations of the public to appreciate.



It only remains for me to say a big thankyou to Andy Mason for a very enjoyable and informative tour and to all the other SHCS committee members and members involved in the creation and management of this gem of a reserve.

Alan Burnham

A New Group and a New Orchard – Roos Woodland Group

Estimates vary as to how many of England's old orchards have vanished or are in serious decline. Some say 60% others say as high as 80%. Many have been grubbed up because they are no longer economically viable and have been replaced by housing or intensive agriculture. Of the more than 2000 culinary and dessert apples and hundreds of cider varieties which have been grown in this country on a few handfuls are widely known and used today. Yet thousands have been discovered or developed that are particular to different places and have assumed local names and uses.

Whilst Holderness is not a traditional fruit growing area like the South West many villages and farms also had their own orchards with trees that were suitable for growing in this area. Roos was no exception with only one old orchard and a few random trees surviving.

The Roos Wind Farm Community Benefit Fund was established approximately 12 years ago following the erection of a large wind farm to the south west of the village. The Fund offers grants for the development of community led projects that support education and environmental activities. With this in mind the Roos Woodland Group was established in 2012 with the aim of improving the environment around the parish of Roos for both the community and for wildlife.



Brown Snout



Nancy Jackson

One of our first activities was to try and locate an area of land for the establishment of a new orchard. As we are not landowners this was a challenge but a local farmer agreed to let us plant fruit trees along the roadside near his farm. Hence the Maltas Row Orchard was established. Almost 10 years on the trees are now bearing fruit which is available for local people to pick and use with any excess going into the now well known Roos Juice apple juice.

Care was taken in choosing varieties that were traditionally grown in this area or were suitable for a northern climate and easterly aspect. It's been challenging with deer damage and the odd tractor incident breaking branches but many of the varieties are thriving. Some of the notable one include several cider varieties such as Brown Snout, 1850 from Herefordshire and Browns, 1930 from Devon. Both of these have bittersweet apples that are excellent for cider. The Brown Snout took nine years to fruit and has a great crop this year.

Other more traditional Yorkshire varieties include Green Balsam, 1750, known as the farmer's wife's apple that was common in many Yorkshire farmyards; Nancy Jackson, 1875, a late season cooking apple from Yorkshire; Yorkshire Greening, a cooker that is one of the oldest in Yorkshire and of course our very own local Hornsea Herring. Only one pear was planted. Again a local

variety called the Hesse pear which produces small hard cooking pears. Other trees planted in this first batch include cherries, May Duke, Celeste and Morello (the birds get most of these!) and damsons such as Merryweather and Farleigh.

Such was the success of our first planting we have now expanded with more trees at Hilston such as Denniston Superb Gage, Reine Claude de Bavay Gage and Pears such as Winter Nellis, Concorde, Louise Bonne de Jersey and Doyenne du Comice. So if you are ever driving towards Hilston from Roos take a look at the trees on the left and see if you can spot our little orchard.

Madge Moore



Hesse Pear

VISITOR AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE.



A couple of weeks ago John and Elaine – residents of Burton Pidsea were somewhat surprised- nay- shocked to have a Sparrow Hawk fly through their kitchen door and land on the window ledge. John – being John, casually commented “He’s come for tea and toast”. I presume the Hawk was chasing a tasty sparrow so speedily, it could not stop in time and flew straight into the open kitchen door.

A real surprise for John and Elaine, but also a bit special. Not something that happens every day.

Gill Hart

Laggies to Six-ers.

We will soon be in conker season. The drive through Thorngumbald becomes more like a military assault course during these months, especially when windy, with the risk of your car roof becoming bombarded with the prickly green casings as they cascade down like renegade SAS hedgehogs!

The fruit of the Horse Chestnut is not suitable for human consumption but they are happily eaten by pigs, cattle, and horses. In the past they were ground up and given to horses to treat cough and to give them a shiny coat. This, along with the leaf scars in the shape of horseshoes, even with little nail holes, quite possibly helped to give the tree its name.



Our Young Nat's love to collect conkers, the fruit of the Horse Chestnut, and break open the prickly green outer-casing to find the brown, shiny nut inside. Adam especially hopes to find either the weeniest, or the largest, and fills his pockets when he visits the woodland. The following summer we always find the ones that the squirrels have hidden, and forgotten about, as they sprout up in the most unusual of places.

The Horse Chestnut tree was only introduced to Britain towards the end of the 1500s with the use of the horse chestnut fruit first recorded as being used to play the game in 1848. A similar game had been played before this but using snail shells or hazelnuts. Various names have been given to the game around the country including cobblers, cheggers, and conkers. It is thought that this latter name may have Greek, Latin or French connections, from *Konkhe*, to *concha*, and then to *conche*. (The ch being pronounced k.) *Conche* is a shell, or possibly *cogner* (the verb to hit), or even just good old 'conqueror'. Whichever etymology, over the following century the game became widespread across Britain, school playgrounds being covered with the shattered remains of defeated, broken, blasted fruits and fragmented shells. Tearful children holding pieces of string, with knot at the end, dreams on their 'none-er' becoming a 'sixer-er' destroyed as surely as their once prized conker.

This, potentially, is when thoughts turn to cheating, and conkers were doctored to harden the fruit. This, despite being frowned upon, was very much rife in primary school conker wars in the 1970's. Recipes for soaking in vinegar, hardening in the oven, coat with clear nail varnish or glue, even soaking in paraffin were all tried. I still maintain that the very best conkers, the champions, should be nurtured – not doctored. Choose an evenly round nut, carefully drill your hole, and leave in a dry drawer for a year. If there is any damp at all you risk the nut turning into a green powder as it deteriorates. This type of nut is known as a 'laggie', for last year's nut. It can create havoc amongst the current year's fresh nuts.

I remember, as a child, collecting the nuts to play 'Conkers', a favourite playground game for many generations of children, although not seen so much now with Health and Safety concerns in schools. Despite this, the World Conker Championships have gone from strength to strength with organisers donating each year to visually impaired charities. With their increasing number of participants, classes and spectators the championships moved from Ashton, Northamptonshire, where they started in 1965 in place of a cancelled fishing trip, to Southwick in 2013. It has become an international event, with competitors from all over the world.

As a side note, it has been said that placing conkers in the corners of rooms can keep spiders out of a house. The jury is still out on this one – and someone needs to tell the spider that created a home inside a horse chestnut shell at my mum's house!

Beacon Lagoons Little Tern Colony Update

This year's head warden is Toby Phelps who also helped out with volunteer wardening in 2017 and 2020. He was joined in June by assistant wardens Mick Turton, who has taken this role for several years, and Lucy Mortlock. Lucy was employed as an extra warden to focus on human presence on the beach and a projected increase in human disturbance. Funding for this year's project has been generously provided by GrantScape, the Environment Agency, Yorkshire Water Services and the Humber Nature Partnership.

Little Terns started to return to Beacon Lagoons in late April and 32 birds were seen on 10 May. This date was when a rota of daytime wardening was started so that maximum presence at the colony could watch for potential predators and human disturbance. The rota was possible because several volunteers offered to give their time. Shortly before the first eggs hatched in June, 24 hour wardening began. This was due to continue until fledging of the final chicks.

During the last two weeks of May about 60 Little Terns were present and some were showing signs of nesting with mating and scraping of shallow depressions in which to lay eggs. On 4 June the first Little Tern was seen incubating and by 9 June there were at least nine more. This was a later date than usual but after a very slow start to the season, nesting momentum accelerated and a careful walk-through of the colony on 29 June revealed 38 nests containing 77 eggs. Following poor weather another walk through on 9 July found six dead chicks and three dead adults although 20 nests were still active. The first fledged Little Tern was seen on 24 July and observation of the colony from distance indicated that there were at least 10 other chicks. The previous day saw a count of 134 adult Little Terns at the colony but this number will likely have included birds from colonies elsewhere. At the end of July there were at least 13 chicks seen in the colony and two adults still incubating. It is likely that the colony will produce about 15 fledged young this year.

As in previous years, a protective electric fence was installed around the area of dunes and beach normally used by Little Terns. This was to prevent mammalian predators, such as foxes and otters, from entering the colony – both have been seen during this and previous breeding seasons. However, this fence did not prevent avian predators from entering the colony. These included Carrion Crow, Sparrowhawk, Short-eared Owl and Little Owl. Regular sightings of nearby Kestrels and the occasional Peregrine added to the potential threats to nesting birds and their young and there was evidence of predation of Little Terns, Oystercatchers and Ringed Plovers. An additional rope fence, with explanatory signage attached to some of the posts, was erected outside the electric one to minimise disturbance by people and their dogs. Despite the fear that the beach adjacent to the colony would be more busy than usual, there have been very few instances of possible disturbance to the nesting Little Terns and waders.



The first Oystercatcher and Ringed Plover nests appeared in the week ending 17 May. The Oystercatchers have had a poor breeding season with only one successfully fledged young from at least four nests. This was due to predation of eggs, probably by crows, and chicks dying, possibly due to poor weather or starvation. Ringed Plovers fared much better, partly because mesh cages were placed over newly discovered nests. These allowed the birds to enter and leave while protecting eggs from crows. About 20 nests have been located, some probably involving re-lays, and many of these produced chicks which fledged successfully.

A more complete report of the season will appear in a future edition of Holderness Countryside.

David Constantine

Sharks are friends not food!

A strange title but bear with me. Last September Magnus Johnson from Hull University asked me to take part in a pilot scheme to begin the tagging of Elasmobranchii on the Holderness Coast.

These are the ray and shark family. We have a surprising number of these fascinating fish present on the Holderness Coast during the summer months. The species of Elasmobranchii we see are mostly: Lesser Catshark (Doggies), Smoothhound (Hounds), Tope, Thornback Ray, Spotted Ray and Blonde Ray. Occasionally we catch Spurdog and Bullhuss .

Lesser Spotted Catshark



Many anglers see 'Doggies' as a nuisance fish but I think they are so cool and should be respected as a part of the natural order of the seas. The main reason for tagging all shark species is to allow marine and fishery scientists to survey the populations and movements of these fish.

Thornback Ray



Most shark species in our oceans are over-exploited and endangered due to poor fishing practices and the demands of certain cuisines! Shark finning is a terrible thing and must be prevented.

Another reason to respect and check on the populations of sharks is that they are among the top predators in our seas and help to keep a balance in the natural environment.

The actual tagging involves catching a shark or ray using a crustacean or fishy bait on a barbless hook. Barbless hooks reduce any chance of damaging the fish. When the fish is landed it is measured, photographed, weighed and a small T bar tag, with a unique number, is inserted below the dorsal fin or wing. I use a special tagging gun (pictured). The fish is quickly returned to the sea to keep stress minimal.

It is amazing to know that just feet from people paddling in the North Sea there are (small) sharks and rays being part of the wonderful ecosystem that we seem to ignore because it is hidden beneath the waves. The more we know about it the greater protection Government will bestow on it.

Smooth-hound (Starry sub.sp)



The commercial demand for Thornback Ray and Spurdog means we need to look after the population so that these fish are not wiped out. I remember the terrible slaughter of Spurdogs on this coast in the 1970s, when commercial long-liners depleted the population of Spurdog on the Holderness Coast. It never recovered and this fish is seldom caught here today. I have recently seen dried Catsharks sold as doggy chews in pet shops – ironic!

Maybe with more tagging and recording we can look after our sharks in the North Sea and understand them more.

Andy Mason

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.

Items for publication may be emailed to the Editor (brian.gill60@btinternet.com). Please ring the Editor to discuss items in manuscript. The Society welcomes articles of general interest in the genre of natural and social history pertaining to southern Holderness. These must have educational value under the terms of our Charitable Objectives (see below). 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 email or a telephone call to arrange 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.

MEMBER SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Single Adult: £12. Family: £14.
Corporate membership will be considered.

CHARITABLE OBJECTIVES

The South Holderness Countryside Society was first registered as a Charity No 701627 on 30th 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.

The restoration of Ivy House, our headquarters, was part funded by the National Lottery.



THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Position	Name	Telephone
Chairman	Tracey Netherton	01964 623261
Vice Chairman	Margaret Kennedy	01964 671492
General Secretary	Fred Kennedy	01964 671492
Treasurer	Peter Cook	01964 614466
Journal Editor	Gill Hart	01964 671499
Elected Member	Andrew Mason	01482 817835

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Demswood, Boreas Hill, Paull, HU12 8AX
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All membership payments to Denise please.



SOUTH HOLDERNESS COUNTRYSIDE SOCIETY

Reg. Charity No: 701627



AGM NOMINATION FORM

The Officers of the Society (Chairman, Vice-Chairman and Treasurer) are elected annually. Committee Members (who are Trustees in terms of Charity Law) are elected for terms of three years at a time, but with one-third of the Committee retiring each year. Any paid-up member may be nominated for any of the Officer posts or any of the available Committee positions.

This is the official form which must be used for all nominations.

NAME OF CANDIDATE:

Address of candidate:

Telephone number:

Email address:

SIGNATURE OF CANDIDATE:

(To signify that this application is being made with their knowledge and agreement)

Membership number of candidate:

Position for which nomination is sought (please tick)

- CHAIRMAN
- VICE-CHAIRMAN
- TREASURER
- EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBER

NOTE: If a person is nominated for an Officer position, it is advisable to also nominate that person for a position as an Executive Committee Member (if the nominee so desires). This is because if the nominee fails to win the desired Officer position, here having been more than one nomination for that post, the nominee is not automatically elected to the Executive committee.

PROPOSER for above candidate (Block Capitals).....

Membership number:

Signature:

SECONDER for above candidate (Block Capitals)

Membership number:

Signature:

Please send the completed form to:

The General Secretary, 18 Glebelands, Burton Pidsea, HU12 9AS.

SOUTH HOLDERNESS COUNTRYSIDE SOCIETY

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM FOR YEAR

NAME

ADDRESS

.....

POST CODE

TELEPHONE NUMBER

Email



Registered Charity

No: 701627

Please indicate by putting X in the box: NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

Type of membership	Annual Fee		
Single Adult	£12	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Family	£14	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number in Family <input type="checkbox"/>
Affiliated Organisations	£20	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Corporate	£20	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Schools and Children's Groups	Free	<input type="checkbox"/>	Number in group <input type="checkbox"/>

Please would you consider making a donation towards the Society's work:

Total Enclosed

Cheques to be made payable to "SOUTH HOLDERNESS COUNTRYSIDE SOCIETY" and sent to: **Mrs Denise Failey, SHCS, Demswood, Boreas Hill, Paull, Hull, HU12 8AX**

DO YOU GIVE US YOUR CONSENT TO HOLD THE ABOVE INFORMATION ON A COMPUTER? YES NO

GIFT AID – PLEASE REMEMBER TO TICK THE BOX

Increase your donation without spending a penny. Tick the Gift Aid box and for every £1 you give, SHCS will receive an extra 25p from HM Revenue & Customs.

Yes, I want all donations I have made over the past 4 years and all future donations to be treated as Gift Aid, until I notify you otherwise.

Title (please print) Full Name Date

To qualify for Gift Aid, you must pay UK income tax or capital gains tax at least equal to the amount SHCS will claim in the tax year. Please let us know if your tax status, name or address changes.

I do not pay tax.

The South Holderness Countryside Society is committed to the protection of your personal data. The personal data you provide on this form will only be used by the Society for the purpose of administration of your membership and for communicating with you with regard to the business of the Society to keep you informed about news, events and activities. This data will be held until December 31st each year whereupon it will be securely erased from our records. Processing is also necessary for carrying out legal obligations in relation to Gift Aid. This data must legally be kept for a period of six years.