

THE CHILTERN NEWSLETTER

Wildlife Trust news, views and event information from the Chilterns Group, College Lake and around Buckinghamshire.

Issue **99** Spring - Summer 2019

PLEASE SUPPORT THE BBOWT PLANT AND PRODUCE CHARITY MARKET

GREAT MISSENDEN

Memorial Centre, Link Road,
Great Missenden HP16 9AE

Sunday 19 May 10 - 12 noon

- Excellent value plants
- Tasty homemade produce
- Tea, coffee, cakes,
- Free entry, free parking (1hr)

For contributions & queries
please contact John Catton
on 01494 722737 or
richard.catton1@ntlworld.com

Threats and opportunities

Being involved in wildlife conservation is no easy ride these days. Against the background of international horror stories of massive insect losses, unbelievable levels of marine pollution and shocking disregard of climate change evidence, we have depressing threats in our own back yard. HS2 looks set to continue, despite mounting doubts about the need for it and enormous overspend predictions. In addition there are concerns that the East-West Rail project will fail on its ecological promises and now the prospect of the Oxford-Cambridge Expressway bringing a further swathe of destruction across North Bucks, Bernwood and the River Thames floodplain. In its wake the Government wants to see an 'economic growth arc' bringing a series of new towns and super-villages between Bicester and Milton Keynes.

Thankfully, there are occasional shafts of sunlight in this gloom. BBOWT has won its appeal in the High Court to be able to launch a Judicial Review of the decision over the route of the Expressway. The Trust could not fight for wildlife like this without your support. The Chilterns Group contributed funds towards the legal costs of the court appearance and will continue to do so. Please look at the BBOWT website for ways **you** can help.

There has been other positive news recently. The Chilterns Conservation Board announced a few weeks ago that its ambitious 'Chalk, Cherries and Chairs' landscape partnership project had been awarded £2 million National Lottery funding. BBOWT will be working closely with them on their Wildlife & Landscape theme and our nature reserves will serve as exemplars of good management and hubs for a series of new landowner clusters. You can help us keep them in good order – please consider helping at our work parties – see the conservation opportunities page.

What's more ... spring has arrived! I've just seen my first hoverfly of 2019 in the garden.

Mick Jones MBE, Chairman BBOWT Chilterns Group

jonesmick365@gmail.com

Come and Enjoy Pilch Field

In spring and summer, BBOWT reserve Pilch Field is a sea of wildflowers, from the pink explosions of ragged robin to the statuesque early marsh, green winged and common spotted orchids. The breeze carries the scent of water mint from the wet flushes and the yellowhammer laments 'no cheese'. All your senses are engaged. Now, at the end of winter though, the wildflowers are just about to emerge. Winter is when we do lots of the work to protect the wildlife found here. Just south of the A421 between Buckingham and Bletchley, I park up on a crisp morning to enjoy the quiet and see what is there.

The enemies of the delicate wildflowers here, as in many meadows, are hawthorn and bramble. Whilst some scrub is great for birds, left unchecked it overtakes and shades out the ground, leaving it cold and dark. As well as the flowers here, hundreds of anthills support millions of individuals which rely on the warming effect of sunlight. The ants themselves are a food source, perhaps most notably for the green woodpecker, whose diet in winter can be up to 80% ants, and whose distinctive 'yaffle' call can often be heard here.



To ensure the scrub doesn't take over, BBOWT volunteers, trainees, and the mighty Vale Countryside Volunteers spend the cooler months lopping back bramble and levering out hawthorn saplings root and all.

As I leave, a sparrowhawk swoops down from nowhere, almost within touching distance, before disappearing through a gap in the hedgerow. Just one of countless little moments on a BBOWT reserve. I know I'm biased, but what wonderful places they are.

If you would like to volunteer to help look after Pilch Field, or any of our reserves in North Buckinghamshire, please contact Pete Bray – petebray@bbowt.org.uk.

Pete Bray, Reserves Officer

A winter make-over at the Upper Ray Meadows

There has been a flurry of activity on the Upper Ray over the winter months. At the tail end of last year we made use of the RSPB rotary ditcher and created a total of 1.6km of new wetland scrapes at Gallows Bridge Farm.

This powerful machine uses a drum of spinning blades to cut into the ground and then flings the arising spoil over a wide area avoiding the need to transport large amounts of soil outside of the floodplain. These shallow cuttings will be filled by rain and flood water over the winter months to help provide the soft muddy areas needed by our breeding curlew and lapwing in the spring and summer. We were also very grateful to receive a donation from the Bucks Bird Club which has allowed us to install a new bird hide. This seasonal hide will



provide commanding views over these new scrapes and allow even more people to enjoy this fantastic reserve. Unfortunately due to the unseasonably dry winter the large flocks of wildfowl, lapwing and golden plover that usually call Gallows Bridge their home over the winter have been lacking but thankfully there have been regular sightings of peregrines hunting over the site as well

as good numbers of winter thrushes and stonechat. Our dedicated band of volunteers have also been busy tackling our prickly blackthorn hedges and have already created 6 x 20m coppiced sections which will not only rejuvenate our hedgerows but also provide the young growth needed by our rare brown hairstreak butterfly.

Andy Collins, Upper Ray Reserves Officer

Winter work at Bacombe Hill

During January we have had a lot of mowing work done across the site to cut back the invasive scrub so that the chalk grassland has a better chance to rejuvenate.

During December 2018 we began work on haloing our juniper. We have over 40 juniper bushes and we plan to give each one a small dead hedge to try to keep sheep, rabbits, deer and anything else that sees them as food away from them.

We are always looking for volunteers to help us and we will be running some volunteer taster session during the spring so if you want to come along and see what we do on our work parties, watch out for the notices at the entrances to the site. For more information please contact Volunteer Warden Steve Keene - steve_keene@btinternet.com.

Last year we ran a wild flower walk across the hill which was very well attended and this year we plan to do the same on the 22 June.

During the walk various team member will talk about managing the reserve for wild flowers, butterflies, juniper and scheduled ancient monuments.

Booking for the walk is essential through the BBOWT Website <https://www.bbowl.org.uk/events>

We will continue to graze both cattle and sheep on the reserve so please keep your dogs on a lead when you see the stock grazing signs. Hope to see you up on Bacombe Hill soon

Steve Keene, Volunteer Warden

Pitstone Fen Update

It has been a good growing season in Pitstone Fen with lots of wildflowers and butterflies.

As part of the '30 Days Wild' event which BBOWT held in June we had an orchid walk in the fen led by one of our orchid enthusiasts Chris Trew. The highlights of this were the ever growing number of marsh helleborines. Over 20 people attended this field trip and had a very entertaining few hours walking through this small reserve next to College Lake.

We have had a new board walk installed and a new fence line completed in an effort to make the site more accessible. The fen itself was grazed by ponies during the spring which helped us to manage the invasive scrub and keep the reed beds neat and tidy.

In January and February we cut back and cleared the old scrub growth in preparation for the new season.

If you would like to join us on the first Saturday of the month please contact steve_keene@btinternet.com

Grangelands, Yoesden and Weston Turville Reservoir

As spring approaches, we're nearing the end of our winter work programme out on the South Bucks reserves. Much of the work has focused on scrub clearance and we've recently had some help at Bacombe Hill and Grangelands & the Rifle Range, where a contractor has been out with a tractor and flail. Although this work can look rather destructive, the clearance of these areas of scrub will help to restore and improve the valuable chalk grassland on both reserves.

Grazing is also an important management tool on our sites, with the livestock helping to control the more dominant coarse grasses and to prevent encroachment by scrub. At our Yoesden reserve new fencing has been installed, which will now allow us to cattle graze the southern bank, one of three neighbouring areas purchased to extend the reserve in 2016. Back in August visitors may have also noticed a rotavated plot appearing on site, which was spread with seeds from the main bank. The aim is that in time this area will also be covered in wildflowers, along with all the species that depend on them.

The work party at Weston Turville Reservoir meanwhile has been venturing out into the reed bed – a task that can be rather wet and muddy! Two new blocks of reeds have been cut and the material raked and removed to reduce the build up of organic matter and stop the reed bed from drying out.

A huge thank you to all our volunteers for their help out on the reserves. For more information about volunteering with BBOWT please see our website at <https://www.bbowl.org.uk/get-involved/volunteer>

Stacey Hewitt, Reserves Officer, South Bucks

News from Finemere Wood

The Finemere volunteers have been very industrious over the winter. Several ‘scallops’ have been cut along the rides, thus creating a varied structure to the woodland edge. Sunlight will flood into these now open areas and seeds lying dormant in the soil will be able to germinate. We shall watch with interest to see what grows in these newly cleared areas. These open, but sheltered spaces, right on the edge of the wood, are so important to the survival of invertebrates, and to the many butterflies found here.



Spring is on its way. Loppers and saws will soon be replaced with scythes and rakes. As the cutting and clearing of shrubs and trees stops, the volunteers will turn their attention to the management of the grassy rides and meadows. There will be fences to assemble around the newly cleared areas, to protect young lush shoots from the predatory deer, and there will be the magnificent annual display of bluebells to marvel at.

A new challenge to be faced is the reality of HS2. The railway will run alongside Finemere Wood and so its construction will have implications for woodland workers and visitors alike, as well as for those creatures who live in this haven. National Grid is required to modify some overhead electricity lines, pylons and gas pipelines along the HS2 route to enable the building and operation of the new railway. Their work along the main track into Finemere begins now, continuing through to November. The wood will not be accessible via this route for much of the year, but follow this link for alternative footpaths into the reserve:

<https://www.bbowl.org.uk/nature-reserves/finemere-wood>

Charlotte Karmali, Volunteer Warden

The turn of the year at Dancersend

The mid-winter months at Dancersend usually mean a virtual close-down of wildlife recording and a significant increase in hard manual work for the volunteer team. This year has been a little different. We have had lots of work sessions and also hosted work parties from the Chiltern Society – carrying out mowing and raking, scrub clearance and re-coppicing areas of hazel woodland to create sunny clearings for woodland flowers and insects. However, we have also been gathering interesting records in December and January this year as well.

I have been taking more of an interest in fungi and slime moulds that appear in the winter – not to everyone’s taste! It means I’ve been on hands and knees in dark, damp corners of the reserve that don’t get much attention for the rest of the year – and it’s been rewarding. Slime moulds, for all the lack of attractiveness of the places they live, are fascinating and beautiful structures, especially when they develop stalked spore-bearing structures called sporangia. Three species that showed well this winter demonstrate the variety of form – *Trichia decipiens*, with bright pink-orange spheres, like hundreds of clowns’ noses; *Craterium*



Arcyria denudate



Craterium minutum

minutum, with minute pin-heads covering the surface of dead leaves, each with a hinged lid that opens to release spores; and Arcyria denudate, with tiny tufts of candy floss held aloft.

Whilst checking a particularly slimy fallen beech trunk I noticed a white bracket fungus that looked slightly different to any I was used to seeing at Dancersend. Closer inspection revealed an underside of angular maze-like pores and thick corky flesh that left a distinctive pattern when broken. It turned out to be the quite rare Spongipellis delectans or spongy mazingill, only recorded previously from four classic sites in our area known for their beech deadwood

habitat, including

Burnham Beeches and Windsor Great Park. This was a remarkable discovery given the absence of very old beech trees at Dancersend due to clear felling during World War II.

Recording wasn't confined to fungi and moulds. Our volunteer and keen invertebrate recorder, Sue Taylor, inspired an experimental New Year Invertebrate Hunt to rival the Plant Hunt organised nationally by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland. This proved to be very enjoyable - and surprising. On 29 December a group of invertebrate enthusiasts, including local expert Martin Harvey, gathered to walk from the Waterworks through Crong Meadow and Bittams Wood, exploring evergreen plants, tree cavities, dead wood and leaf litter as we progressed (very slowly!). Around 50 species were found, ranging from tiny springtails and plant hoppers to spiders, beetles and snails. Fence posts turned out to be surprisingly interesting and produced my favourite insect, a nymph of the plant hopper Issus coleoptratus, which Sue described very accurately as 'wearing armour and with a paintbrush sticking out of its bottom'. Despite being only about 7mm long it made my day! I hope we will repeat this event at the end of 2019 – make a note in your diary.



Spongipellis Mazegill

Mick Jones, Volunteer Warden

College Lake Reserve Update

We are finally starting to see the first signs of spring returning to College Lake. It is exciting to see the first oystercatchers return and also to see lapwing starting to display and establish territories on our islands. We hope that both of these species will have a successful year breeding at College Lake. Many other birds are also starting to get ready for the approaching breeding season and birdsong can be heard all around the reserve. Species already getting vocal include dunnocks, wrens, song thrushes and bullfinches.

Signs of spring are present in our plants too and many species can be found already in flower around the reserve. These include one or two early primroses, snowdrops, winter aconite and spurge laurel. Take time to look closely at some hazel and you will notice the minute crimson female flower growing alongside the more obvious male catkins.

Winter has been good to us with some interesting bird sightings. Jack snipe have made several appearances and have treated us to some superb views of what is normally a very shy and elusive species. Water rails have also been turning up regularly on our islands providing a treat for many visitors. We have also had some interesting ducks join the throng of wintering wildfowl including pintail, goldeneye and red-crested pochard.



Next time you visit the reserve take a moment to have a look at our brand new bird viewing screen which is situated halfway along the path towards the Octagon Hide. This is a great spot to see a variety of waterbirds including ducks and waders.

Why not join us for a guided walk around College Lake to find out more about the site, its history and its wildlife? Booking is essential, so please go to <https://www.bbowt.org.uk/events> for details.

Leo Keedy, Reserve Manager

Mosses - forests in miniature

Many people regard moss as a pest which must be eradicated from the garden lawn at all costs - or those blobs of brown and green that fall off the roof onto the patio and need sweeping up. I'd like to persuade you that these fascinating, tiny plants are worth a closer look.



Delicate mosses growing between the flat leaves of liverworts.

Walk through a shady wood in the Chiltern Hills and you will see carpets of emerald green velvet swathing the tree roots and creeping up the trunks. Delve between the wild flowers in an open field and you will find tiny mosses covering the stones and undisturbed soil. Mosses (and their close relations, the liverworts) are almost everywhere.

Look closely and you will see what looks like a small forest. Some mosses grow upright like tiny trees while others grow flatter along the surface.

They all have minute, transparent, green leaves.

Some look like miniature ferns while others have a starry or feathery appearance. They reproduce by spores which are produced in capsules, carried on stalks above the green velvet. The capsules have a clever mechanism of teeth which bend and straighten with changes in humidity. When it's dry, the spores are released and carried away by the wind.

These 'forests' are home to many microscopic creatures including strange tardigrades, sometimes known as 'water bears' or 'moss piglets'. Robin Wall Kimmerer said that 'One gram of moss from the forest floor, a piece about the size of a muffin, would harbour 150,000 protozoa, 132,000 tardigrades, 3,000 springtails, 800 rotifers, 500 nematodes, 400 mites, and 200 fly larvae. These numbers tell us something about the astounding quantity of life in a handful of moss.' There are 420 species of moss and liverwort in our region. All you need is a hand lens and a guide to get started. Why not begin by appreciating what's in your lawn?

Sylvia O'Brien, Volunteer

What's the Chilterns Group Events Team got planned for this year?

As always, quite a lot! When organising activities we have two over-riding objectives in mind:

- 1) Raising funds for the Trust's work (last year it was just over £4,000).
- 2) Ensuring that BBOWT members find them enjoyable and informative - giving them insights into the work of the Trust or simple enhancing their appreciation of the Chilterns.

There are monthly talks on a Tuesday evening from September to March, held in the Memorial Centre, Link Road, Great Missenden, HP16 9AE.

There are walks in the summer months at Dancersend, Aston Clinton Ragpits, Bacombe Hill and of course College Lake. These walks should be booked online and a donation will be gratefully appreciated.

We also promote the never ending conservation work carried out by the Trust by taking the BBOWT stall to local events, for instance, the Lindengate Summer Fayre (Wendover) in June and the Amersham Heritage Day in September.

The two major fundraising events each year are the Plant and Produce Charity Markets. The spring one is on Sunday 19 May, the second in the autumn is on Sunday 20 October at their usual venue, Missenden Memorial Centre. The plants are the big draw, donated by enthusiastic local

gardeners. If you are short of garden tools, 'Workaid' will be able to supply some interesting ones. Inside the hall you'll find the pop-up café and a produce stall which will be the envy of the WI. Full details of all these, and more activities can be found on the Trust's website: www.bbowt.org.uk/events

However, we do need volunteers to help run these events, so if you would like to join in and have some fun promoting the Trust with people who share your concerns about the environment, please contact John Catton on either 01494 726616 or richard.catton1@ntlworld.com or talk to me at one of our summer events.

John Catton, Chilterns Group Events Organiser

Come and shop at College Lake

The Spring Fair is almost upon us so that means lots of lovely new products for the visitor centre. My focus for this year is to have a great outdoor range as well as a more extensive mens' range. There will be a new homeware range and we always like to have exciting new products for the children too. Claire and her team continue to provide lots of delicious food to spoil our customers and we are still hoping for the café extension, which is currently in its feasibility stage, to be authorised. Visitor numbers keep on rising and we have been receiving some lovely comments in our visitor surveys. We are still finding that in our immediate community in Tring we are not well known so we really need to look at how we can engage with people there better. We are looking forward to another good year of trading and showing new visitors our wonderful nature reserve.

Toyah Baulk, Visitor Centre Manager

Educating the next generation.

It's full steam ahead for the education team at College Lake. Our first event of the year 'Love Amphibians' (part of BBOWT's Wild at Heart campaign) brought little explorers to the reserve to look at the wonderful world of amphibians. Despite our local frogs, toads and newts evading us we managed to turn ourselves into frogs and toads with craft headbands and fancy dress. Our trail saw the children take part in the 'Croak Factor' along with some marvellous slug pie recipes! With our April-July events now bookable on our website, we look forward to welcoming families new and old to the reserve.

School bookings took off with a bang this year and by January the summer term (May-July) was fully booked and the spring term quickly filled with our bursary schools! We were very excited to be able to offer bursaries again for 2019.

With all this ahead, Claire and I have been getting our spring clean in early, starting with a tidy of our barn classroom. Our warden Leo along with volunteers has also been clearing 'Ed woods', wood chipping paths and building a fantastic bird screen that we can't wait to use with the children attending our Geology Rocks programme!

2018 was a busy year that saw change for the education team. My role as a 'sessional' came to an end as I became Education and Events Officer for Bucks. I had rather large boots to fill with the amazing Catherine heading to pastures new. I learnt so much from her and I hope I can put everything she taught me into practice over the coming year! With all this change our education volunteers were invaluable and without their dedication and support we couldn't deliver our programmes and events. We would like to thank them all and welcome new volunteers to the team for the season ahead of us.



Sarah Close, Education and Events Officer(Bucks)

Wild Trax

The Wild Trax youth project is continuing to engage with young people in the Tring and Aylesbury areas. Back in January two groups of students from Bucks UTC visited College Lake with Action4Youth as part of their Inspiration programme. They had to find out about how BBOWT runs as a charity and the work we do to protect wildlife and their habitats. The students also took part in some scrub clearance on the Chalk Bench to get a feel for the kind of practical conservation work we carry out every winter. Once they returned to school they had to take part in a Dragon Den's

style pitch where they chose to promote a charity. One of the groups that chose BBOWT were successful in their pitch.

'My group and I represented you for our pitch and won the £100 prize. This was, in part, down to the information you provided to us during the visit. The experience as a whole has improved my confidence in presenting, which will help me in work and help me care more about the environment, which is something I can apply at home.' Matthew, Bucks UTC

Most recently, we've been working with the South Bucks Reserve team to prepare The Mandeville School's grounds for their exciting new wildlife area.

This involved turf cutting two areas to create a wildflower meadow and outdoor area which will have seating and raised beds where the students can relax and enjoy nature. We're looking forward to getting the students and their parents involved with planting seeds and bringing the area to life now the groundwork has been completed.

I'd like to welcome Claire Wainwright to the team; she joined Wild Trax as the new Project Officer at the beginning of February. Claire graduated with a BSc in Biological Sciences from the University of Birmingham last year and is passionate about protecting wildlife. She has been involved in conservation projects in the Amazon Rainforest, Pembrokeshire and in Queensland, Australia. Claire is familiar with working with young people through her long-term experience in equine activities, which provided her with the skills and opportunity to lead youth groups in horse care and riding. She is delighted to be involved in this exciting partnership project as she believes interacting with nature can substantially benefit young people's confidence, abilities and well being. Claire is looking forward to using her skills and enthusiasm to encourage young people to have fun and engage with wildlife through the Wild Trax project.



Kate Sheard, Community Wildlife Officer (Bucks)

Volunteer Profile - Gill Cornelius

Gill's passion for plants goes back to school days when she ran the natural history group and took fellow students out on the South Downs looking at chalk grassland flora and to the foot of the cliffs looking for fossils. These were the carefree days before the need for health and safety statements and parental permissions! She took a joint honours (London external) degree in Geology and Botany and then went on to a career as a librarian. She worked first at the Natural History Museum in South Kensington, and later at the NHM Tring (formerly the Walter Rothschild Zoological Museum). This led to a greater interest in the famous family. At both sites she assisted many distinguished naturalists but there was never enough time for doing fieldwork herself. Joining BBOWT on retirement in 2001 opened the door to that and much other useful volunteering work besides.

She put in her time on work parties with the inevitable scrub clearance and started plant surveying. This led her in 2015 to complete the online identification course known as IDentiplant, organised by the Field Studies Council, the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland and Plantlife. Gill was also walks' organiser for the Chilterns Group for a couple of years and still helps on the walks and at fund raising events.



Her life beyond BBOWT includes skiing, travelling (particularly in France) and lots of U3A activities like setting up and running the Wendover U3A Discovering Wildflowers Group as well as taking part in photography, science, Scrabble and walking groups. To relax Gill watches Midsomer Murders, follows Formula 1 and practices yoga. She's a very busy volunteer - but she does allow herself an occasional spot of self-indulgence confessing to a penchant for croissants for breakfast and steak-frites for dinner!

Richard Birch

BBOWT Chilterns Walks

Booking is essential for all walks via the BBOWT website where more details are available

Aston Clinton Ragpits

Annual Orchid count, Saturday 22 June 2019 10am – 2pm

Contact Phil Townsend, 07876217957 philjtownsend@yahoo.co.uk for more information. **Booking essential**. Limited parking at the reserve entrance, some steep slopes. Meet at the entrance just prior to 10am

Guided walk – Summer Orchid spectacle

Sunday 23 June 2019, 10am – 12pm. **Contact** Phil Townsend. **Booking essential** as numbers are limited to 25. Meet at the reserve entrance just prior to 10am

Walk – Summer flowers and butterflies

Saturday 3rd August 2019 10am – 12pm

Contact as above

More guided walks

Saturday, 13 April. - In search of spring flowers at Dancersend

14.00 – 16.30 Dancersend Waterworks. Leader **Mick Jones**

Saturday, 18 May - Discover the Dancersend you don't know

10.00 – 12.30pm Dancersend Waterworks. Leader **Mick Jones**

Sunday 26 May 2019 Exploring a Chilterns Landscape (A follow-up to Tony's talk in January) 09.00-13.00. Denner Hill and Stony Green

Please note this is a 7km walk with some steep slopes and stiles. Leader **Tony Marshall**

Saturday, 22 June - Jewels of the Chiltern Hills 10.30-12.45 Bacombe Hill.

Meet in NT Coombe Hill car park. Leaders **Steve Keene and Sylvia O'Brien**

Saturday 10 August. - Discover the special Wildlife of Yoesden Reserve. 2pm - 4pm

Leader **Sue Taylor**

Walks at College Lake

Sun 5 May - Dawn Chorus 5am to 7am

Sat 11 May - Wonderful Waders 10.30 to 12.30

Sat 8 June - Arable Plants and Wildflowers 10.30 to 12.30

Sun 23 June - Orchids 10.30 to 12.30

Sun 21 July - Butterflies 13.30 – 15.30

STOP PRESS! HS2 and the East-West Growth Arc

We can't actually stop the press but we can ask you to use the BBOWT website for the latest news on the two massive infrastructure threats to Bucks – HS2 and the East-West Growth Arc. A new expressway will be the spine of a vast area of urban development between Oxford and Cambridge. BBOWT is fighting to force the government to obey the law and conduct a proper environmental assessment before deciding on the expressway route. This fight needs funding so please be generous and contribute all you can online. We are pleased to welcome Ellie Ellwood, funded jointly by RSWT, RSPB, The Woodland Trust and The National Trust, as the project officer tasked with making the development wildlife friendly – a tough job if there ever was one, so give her your support!

As for HS2, at the time of writing the promoters, alias the government, are starting wholesale vegetation clearance at twenty two sites just as the bird nesting season gets under way. BBOWT has met with the HS2 team responsible to try to negotiate some changes. We don't think their strategy is justified as five years have passed since the route was published, ample time for planning for the work to be done in a more sensitive and phased manner, with appropriate mitigation being put in place in advance to help support many of the species that will be adversely affected.

Some 200 hectares/500 acres adjoining our Calvert Jubilee Reserve are subject to clearance and critical parts of the reserve itself are impacted. We believe it is the only place in UK to support all five native hairstreak species along with many other threatened species of bird, reptile and insect, information that was passed to HS2 a long time back but largely ignored. We can expect the same destructive strategy to be applied all along the route in Bucks so that means somewhere near you...

What can you do? Please write to your MP, the minister for HS2 Nusrat Ghani and the minister for the environment, make waves with other groups you are a member of, like the RSPB, and add to the pressure on HS2 to behave in a civilised fashion.

Richard Birch

Plant and Produce Charity Market Sunday 19 May 10 – 12 Great Missenden Memorial Centre HP16 9AE

Please help with our fundraising for BBOWT by contributing items for sale and coming to this event.

Please note that once again we shall hold the market on a Sunday and concentrating solely on plants, a produce stall and the pop-up café. Almost everything we sell is donated by enthusiastic local gardeners and cooks so as you divide your perennials please pot up some spare ones, label them attractively and bring them along. If you need plants collected, contact **Janet Philpott on 01494 722737**, janetleath48@aol.com and she'll do her best to help. Herbs, shrubs and summer bedding will also be very welcome – but no trees please.

For the produce stall please bake cakes, biscuits, scones and flapjacks, or whatever your speciality is, and bring some home made jams, marmalade and pickles. All proceeds will go towards BBOWT's work in the Chilterns.

For more information contact John Catton, richard.catton1@ntlworld.com or 01494 726616

NOTE FROM THE EDITOR

We are covering topics from around the county to encourage members to spread their wings. The Trust's reserves north of Aylesbury have year round interest but are less visited, so please explore them and support the hard work of local staff and volunteers.

We are grateful for everyone's contributions to the newsletter. If you have ideas for the next issue, **covering September to March please submit them by 20 June** juliebirch60@yahoo.com.

The digital version of this newsletter is available on the BBOWT website. To be put on the mailing list contact membership@bbowt.org.uk

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of Berks, Bucks & Oxon Wildlife Trust. Picture copyright from Google & BBOWT website pictures.

HANDS - ON CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITIES

Work parties are sociable and satisfying local events with opportunities to learn new skills. Beginners are particularly welcome and you can stay for whatever time you can spare. Please wear stout footwear and work clothes, including gloves, and take care on steep slopes and uneven ground. Tools and instruction are provided. Children (10+) are welcome but please contact the organiser if you wish to bring them. Parents must supervise children at all times.

DANCERSEND (near Tring) 10 - 4pm - Second Sunday of month

**14 April, 9 June,
14 July** Meet at western end of reserve near Chivery. Turn south off B4009 - Wendover - Tring Road towards St Leonards for approx 1.7 miles. 150 yds S of Chesham Fencing, Supplies, take track on left signed to BBOWT car park, then follow signs to work site. OS sheet 165 SP 898090

12 May, 11 August Meet at Thames Water pumping station. SP 905088, HP23 6LB. Where Wendover - Tring Road B4009 meets old A41 turn right after 1 mile and continue for 0.75 miles to car park on left by waterworks.

8 Sept, 10 Nov, 8 Dec Meeting place to be agreed

Contact Judi Fisher 01494 722073, judiandbryan@yahoo.co.uk

ASTON CLINTON RAGPITS (near Wendover)

For information please **contact** Phil Townsend 01923 353410, philjtownsend@yahoo.co.uk

FINEMERE WOOD (near Quainton) Work party dates: The second and fourth Thursday of the month: 13 & 27 Sept; 11 & 25 Oct; 8 & 22 Nov; 6 Dec. 9.30am-3pm

Contact Charlotte at charlottekarmali@outlook.com.

WESTON TURVILLE RESERVOIR (near Wendover, 10am -2.30pm) Last Thursday of month from 28 March (no work party in April or May), 27 June, 25 July, 29 August
Meet at eastern entrance to reserve in the lay-by in Halton Lane, off B4009, map ref SP 866096, HP22 6AZ. Work is mostly in wet areas so waterproof footwear is essential. New volunteers from the area will be very welcome.

Contact Stacey Hewitt (see below).

COLLEGE LAKE (near Tring) 10.00 - 4pm

Please call or email **Leo Keedy** - 01442 826774 ext. 210 or leokeedy@bbowt.org.uk

For Roving Teams **contact Stacey Hewitt** ext. 208 or staceyhewitt@bbowt.org.uk

Pitstone Fen work party is 1st Saturday of the month. Meet at College Lake for 9:45am. I need to know how many to expect so please contact me if you want to attend. steve_keene@btinternet.com

BERNWOOD GROUP Rushbeds/Lapland on first Sunday of month. Whitecross Green Wood on other Sundays. For more details contact **Becky Woodall** on 01844 238399

Yoesden Bank For more information contact Ched George on c5hed.george@btinternet.com

Bacombe Hill (near Wendover) 10am on second Thursday of month, contact steve_keene@btinternet.com

Headquarters The Lodge,
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Oxford OX4 4XT **Tel** 01865 775476 **Fax** 01865 711301
Website: www.bbowt.org.uk Reg Charity No 204330

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MAIN CONTACT DETAILS

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**Conservation: Leo Keedy, ext 210
leokeedy@bbowt.org.uk**

**Visitor centre: Toyah Baulk, ext 214
toyahbaulk@bbowt.org.uk**

**Education: Claire Garrity,
clairegarrity@bbowt.org.uk**

**Volunteering Information:
www.bbowt.org.uk/how-you-can-help/volunteer**