

Manhood Wildlife and Heritage  
Group



**Newsletter**

*Spring/Summer 2020*  
*Volume 13 No 1*

*Haydons Pond © 2020 Jane Reeve*



## MANAGEMENT MATTERS

Who could possibly have predicted the changes to our lives since I last wrote. I would never have imagined them even a couple of months ago. Our only significant hardship is not being able to meet with our daughters and their families so we feel very fortunate. However, I know that some of you may be coping with very challenging circumstances so I wish you all well.

There have been obvious impacts on the FLOW Project with all volunteer work cancelled until further notice. However, the FLOW staff team have been able to work from home and still conduct some essential survey work, as social distancing can easily be observed. It has provided an opportunity to get vital reports, management plans and maps produced as well as start work on various publications.

Other projects are also carrying on: Bill Martin is continuing to develop new heritage trails; volunteers for the Selsey Photo Archive Project are scanning more photos for the website in their own homes – do visit [www.selseyphotoarchive.co.uk](http://www.selseyphotoarchive.co.uk) if you haven't already; the Eileen Savill Award for 2020 is encouraging families to help and record wildlife in their gardens – see our website for full details and Lesley Bromley is helping to commemorate VE Day via our facebook page. This is to name just a few of the many things that are still happening.

It has also been agreed that our website would benefit from a re-design and a working group has been set up to carry this forward.

Leaving Covid-19 to one side for the moment, there have been significant changes to the Management Team [MT]. Gina has decided to step away from the MT for the moment but she is continuing as part of the Newsletter Editorial Team and to help co-ordinate the Eileen Savill Award. John Hiscock has also left the MT and stepped down as Hon. Secretary but is, very kindly, still fielding some communications until we recruit a replacement. So, if you fancy getting more involved or know someone who might suit the role, do get in touch.

Peter White has also decided to retire from the MT this summer and I would like to take this opportunity to officially thank him on behalf of us all for the huge contribution he has made to the Group over many years. Indeed Pete was a founder member, as a key person in the small team that produced the Selsey Parish Map to mark the new millennium. Fortunately for us, he is going to continue to volunteer his services and I'm sure that he will continue to skilfully produce much needed equipment in his workshop and to contribute his marvellous artwork and photographs. Thank you Pete for everything!

Finally, we do have a new member of the MT, as Paul Bedford has joined us. Paul has a background in planning and countryside management and experience as Chair of SWISH – The Manhood Peninsula Surface Water Issues & Solutions Group, so he brings a great deal to the team.

We also said a fond farewell to Leanne Clements – our Community Conservation Officer. She has been successful in setting up a fledgling Community Conservation Partnership [CCP], involving four parishes so far, which could become a core element of MWHG's focus going forward. So, huge thanks to Leanne for this and for recruiting some key volunteers to help take this forward.



In February the MT held a workshop to consider future plans for the Group after FLOW. This proved extremely worthwhile and the main outcomes included the following aspirations:

- To retain some staff resource
- To maintain and build on the outcomes of FLOW to ensure its legacy
- To develop self-sufficient parish groups, building on the CCP
- Further development of heritage trails across the MP
- The expansion of the heritage side of our work
- The production of a book to describe and celebrate the flora and fauna of the MP
- To update the Water Vole Action Plan and to help implement it

All this and a commitment to keep our management of long-standing sites and projects going.

Much is obviously on hold at the moment but, as you can see, there are exciting times ahead. And if you have other ideas to contribute, do please get in touch.

In conclusion, I'll return to the impacts of the pandemic. A huge bonus is that we are all treading more lightly on the planet and it is recovering. Signs are everywhere: vast reductions in pollution and carbon emissions, wildlife re-appearing in all kinds of places and birdsong, clear and loud, is pre-eminent. It just proves the power of nature to recover, if given the chance.

As the legacy of Covid-19 begins to be discussed, the opportunity to build on the positives of lockdown needs to be grasped.

*Joe Savill*

## **MWHG AND THE 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF VE DAY**

We had hoped to mark the Anniversary of VE day with an exhibition about Selsey at War, but the covid 19 virus intervened!

However we did not let the day go unmarked, and using information from the Selsey Society's book *Selsey Remembers* published in 1995 on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary, we put together biographies of some of the men whose names appear on the War Memorial at St Peter's Church in Selsey.

These were on our website from the 8<sup>th</sup> of May and over the weekend they appeared on Facebook and Twitter with links to the website for more information. We also prepared some more of these mini biographies to put up over the period of VJ day, and the end of the war.

It is interesting to see that men from Selsey were involved in many of the famous battles of the second world war. Not surprisingly many were in the Royal Navy, and served in the North Atlantic, the Mediterranean, and in Coastal Command. There were also young men who served in the RAF, a spitfire pilot lost in the Battle of Britain, and several in Bomber command, lost over Europe. Also some in the army, both in the European Theatre and in the Far East. The smaller villages on the Manhood tell the same stories, and not one of them was left untouched by loss. It is sobering to look at the ages of these men many in their late teens and early twenties. As we are asked to stay at home to keep safe, I it is a wonder to me that these young men set off to war for the same end, to keep those at home safe. Their names are there on the memorials to remind us.

*Lesley Bromley*

## PLANTS AND CREATURES

Having only lived here eight months everything is new, (though we were familiar with the area before moving). The winter was unexpectedly wet: I thought West Sussex would be dry, but in the six months October to March, 555 mm (22 inches) of rain fell in my garden, about what we got in twelve months in Battersea. That filled my new pond, and the well which supplies water for the garden.

Swallows have been chasing insects over the pond, and blue tits and sparrows are nesting. The sparrows have already lost two babies that looked as if they'd only just hatched, but they are noisily persisting. It is wonderful to hear larks nesting in the overgrown fields at Scotts Farm where in a normal year there would be camping. We've seen a cuckoo, and water voles are evident on the paths and lanes round West Wittering and Itchenor,



*Garden Wildlife Pond - Photo © 2020 Chris Hardy*



*Pond at Hales Farm - Photo © 2020 Chris Hardy*

We are mowing some of our garden but leaving quite a bit to grow out. So far nothing unusual has appeared, but Herb Robert, Speedwell, Violets are still welcome. The wild flower seeds we planted (yellow rattle etc) have not grown. We were hoping for frogs to help us with the slugs on our vegetable beds, but another unexpected thing is - where are the frogs and frog spawn? All these ditches and ponds but no sign of them. I'm assured there are slow worms, snakes and hedgehogs, so will look out for them in our scrap-wood and compost heaps.



*Found some Slow Worms  
West Wittering  
- Photo © 2020 Chris Hardy*

### 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary VE day

My mother is 96. She was in the Wrens during WW2, fitting the guiding mechanisms to torpedoes. Her war ended in Portsmouth and I'm hoping she will remember more about what she and her girl friends did on the evening of May 8<sup>th</sup> 1945. She says they knew peace was coming as they'd not been asked to deliver torpedoes to the Navy for some time, but they all 'Went out', (where? What happened?!) She was worried about my father, whose regiment was somewhere in the Far East, fighting the Japanese. He used to say the atom bombs saved him from being killed, which is maybe why I am here to write this.

*Chris Hardy (MWHG Volunteer)*



## A RARE VISITOR



Viewing some of my butterfly photographs on the computer recently I found that one of the images, “surprise surprise,” was of a female Long Tailed Blue *Lampides boeticus*. I took the photographs in my garden seven years ago during August 2013. This pretty little blue butterfly was feeding on nectar from the blossoms of a broad-leaved Everlasting Pea, *Lathyrus latifolius*, a garden perennial.

The Long Tailed Blue is an extremely rare migrant to the British Isles. There were a number of sightings during 2013 and 2015, mostly in Kent, Sussex, Hampshire and Dorset; but with climate change sightings could become more frequent, especially along the south coast.

The Long Tailed Blue gets its name from the wispy tails on the trailing edge of each of its hind wings, which flutter in the breeze. This dainty butterfly is common in Africa and the Mediterranean, where it is considered a pest. The caterpillars are responsible for causing considerable damage to pea crops.

With the warming climate there is a strong possibility that this rare butterfly could breed in the British Isles but is unlikely to survive our winters. So keep your eyes open as it could visit your garden!

*Peter White*



## PROJECT OFFICER'S REPORT

Globally we have seen clear waters and skies and experienced the sounds and smells of wildlife. It is almost as Mother Nature can breathe again. I hope that with all the loss and sadness around Covid-19 we can rebuild and move forward in a green and wildlife nurturing manner, for without biodiversity we will be lost.

The beginning of the year was very busy with working parties, enhancing and managing ditches, ponds, streams, hedgerows and trees etc.

Late February 2020, I was fortunate to work with Chichester District Council's Senior Management Team (SMT), which included the CEO & Directors, with a working party to enhance the riparian habitat at the chalk stream at Fishbourne Roman Palace.



*Senior Management Team - Fishbourne Roman Palace working party*

The stream that runs along the eastern side of the Fishbourne Roman Palace Scheduled Monument supports a small population of water voles *Arvicola amphibius*. In order to enhance the sustainability of this environment it was proposed that a series of small-scale non-invasive improvements were made. This involved manual removal of recent alluvial silt from the base of the stream, which we used to establish a suitable foundation for planting up the appropriate native vegetation along the east bank of the stream adjacent to the Scheduled Monument. No soil was removed into or out of the area of the Scheduled Monument and any movement of soil was archaeologically monitored.

The work was undertaken as a partnership project by a small working party made up of individuals from Fishbourne Roman Palace, Sussex Archaeological Society, Chichester & District Archaeology Society, Chichester District Council's CEO and Directors and a local volunteer/entomologist.

As well as being a site of archaeological interest adjacent to a Scheduled Monument, it is a Biodiversity Opportunity Area and is one (Fishbourne to Lavant) of a group of wildlife corridors proposed for inclusion in the Chichester District Local Plan.

Since the outbreak of the coronavirus I have been redeployed to Stonepillow, who support and empower homeless people - <https://stonepillow.org.uk/>. It has been a really interesting role and so lovely to work with the staff and clients of Stonepillow. We have been cooking lunches, delivering food and engaging (with social distancing in place) with a wide range of people throughout the community who have continually supported and provided much needed food for our vulnerable and homeless people.

Again, I find myself privileged to work amongst amazing volunteers/community who continually give, which is so heart-warming.

Thank you for all your time and effort.

*Sarah Hughes*



## VE DAY – 75<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY FRIDAY 8<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2020

The Sidlesham Heritage Trail website has several references to events during World War Two concerning evacuees, a bomb at Keynor Copse, Canadian and America soldiers and the Home Guard.



No 1: John 'Jackie' Kemp appeared on the 1939 Census at 'Batchmere Training Centre'. According to the Sidlesham School Admissions Register Rita Hackwell and Mervyn Griffiths (evacuees?) were also registered at No 1 Keynor in the care of Mrs Kemp. They left the school in October 1943 and returned to Trealaw in the Rhondda.

No 2: Fred Phillips was here during World War II, he appears in the photo of the Keynor Home Guard,

Keynor Cottage (Keynor Lane) called Blue Cottage in the School Admissions Register in 1939. Freda Reed with daughters Muriel (Mills) and Margaret (Grainger) and son Malcolm lived here during the war, when their father Albert joined the army, having previously been a tenant at No 83 (Fletchers Lane). Mrs Reed sold sweets to the school children from her front room.

Keynor Hut (adjacent to Keynor Farm House in Cow Lane) was the base for the Home Guard. Photo with 14 of the 25 men identified.

No 11: A Canadian soldier was billeted here during the war. (Photograph supplied by Beryl Bowyer, nee Cowan at No 12)

No 12: Two evacuees from Tooting were with the Cowans. I have a photo of their parents Mr & Mrs Frost, when they visited after the war.

No 19: Fred & Winnefred Ruckley arrived here in 1939 from Tonypany. Fred had been a miner in the Rhondda Valley. Fred was on the 1939 Census at Batchmere Training Centre, he is also on the photograph of Keynor Home Guard. In October 1939 Peter Watson was evacuated from East Ham, London, in the care of Mrs Ruckley - he was evacuated again this time to South Wales' in May 1941.



No 22: Dad (John Bailey) arrived late 1937, the family followed in early 1938. Mum and dad worked the land until 1947 when they moved to Selsey. John was in the Sidlesham Home Guard and awarded a certificate for service 12th June 1940 to 31st December 1944.” (Joan Crees, daughter)

No 27: Harry and Beatrice Willks were tenants in 1936 having moved south from Hebburn with the Santon family (No 34). Harry joined the Royal Navy when war broke out and both families then moved to Dartford. Harry Wilks died off Cromer in 1942 when HMS Vortigen was sunk. (Sylvia Higgs, daughter).

No: 39: Mrs Kemp cared for Phyllis and Elaine Mitchell (evacuees?) who were on the School Admissions Register at the beginning of 1944

No 42: Doug Lichfield arrived from Wales in 1946, after the American soldiers, who were billeted here during the war, had moved out.

The empty holdings during the end of war were used by the American army preparing for D-Day, they managed to put a hole out of the chicken house which also passed through the chimney of 42 and 41. (David Lichfield, son)

No 50: The Dixon family had 4 evacuees - Dennis Cambridge (Tooting) until he left school. Robert (Bob) Brownhill (Balham?), Henry Mullin and Charlie ? were here for shorter length of time. All 4 went to school with Norman Dixon.

Mutton Farm House (Keynor Lane)

During World War II the children from No 45 were ‘evacuated’ here when a bomb landed between the apple trees on the smallholding and blew the windows out of the house. (Becky Wilson, No 45)

No 66: John & Alan Hayman (evacuees?) were on the School Admissions Register at No 66 (Street End Lane) for one month in 1943, in the care of Mrs Cross. They left in June to return to Abertillery.

No 69: Derek and Joan Brown (evacuees? ) were also on the School Admissions Register in September 1943, in the care of Mrs McKenzie.

No 78: “I’ve just watched on BBC 1 South Today news a film clip about the land settlement 80 years ago. On one of your photos of a group of men was my granddad, front row first on the right. His name is Horace Hook who eventually brought his family down from 7 Campbell Street South Shields to join him when given the opportunity to rent a piece of ground to live on . He then moved to Hunston South Over Way and became the local policeman . During the second world war he joined the navy and served on mine sweeping vessels, one of which sank off the north east coast called Ceylonite. (Andy & Gary Hook, grandsons)

No 86: The Wilsons had two evacuees, two young girls from London, and I know the family kept in touch for a while over the post war years.

“Another war time story the family told me was of the day they were all working in the top field here at 86, Arthur, four years old, was standing on top of a chicken coup, when a German plane flew low over the holding, off-loading the rest of his ammunition before crashing, but on seeing the family and little Arthur on top of the chicken coup, he actually stopped while he flew over them. The plane crashed in the field beyond. I think the pilot survived”. (Diane Wilson) “My memories of the war in Sidlesham are very vague. However I do recall the sight and sound of German bombers flying low overhead on their way to London to bomb the Capital. One story Mavis told me was of an escort plane shot down on land near her home. She, along with other friends found it fully intact/the pilot dead and wearing a beautiful watch.”

No'88: The Home Guard 'allegedly' used this property as a base during World War Two. "It also had Canadian soldiers billeted there at one time and. I'm sure much to the delight of the Wilson's daughter here at 86 the family had a piano and the soldiers would come in some evenings for a good old sing song. One morning the family awoke to find the front room window had been opened and there were stacks of tinned food placed on the floor by the window. The Canadians were gone, and they never saw those boys again. wonder if they survived." (Diane Wilson)

No 103: The house may have been occupied by soldiers in the war (Nick House, son)

No 104: A Nissen hut still stands on site - "I remember distinctly, one of the 'old boys' at the time (1962) remarking that it housed a Canadian ant-aircraft gun crew. The gun itself was located in our back field (southern end). This was presumably to defend the thousands of Canadians mustering in the area for D-Day, mainly off the Redlands Lane area. (Stefan Bartkowiak)

No 137: Cecil Berry was here in December 1940 when his children were admitted to Sidlesham School. William Coleman (evacuee ?) returned to Bexley Heath, London in March 1941. (School Admissions Register)

Find out more about the Sidlesham Heritage Trail at [sidleshamheritagetrail.co.uk](http://sidleshamheritagetrail.co.uk)

*Bill Martin*



*Photo © 2020 Alex Ainge*

**Nature's Red Arrows - Coot chics on East Beach Pond**



# **FLOW**

## **IMPROVEMENT WORK OVER THE WINTER PERIOD OCTOBER 2019 – MARCH 2020**

We have had another very busy winter work period with large expectations on our amazing volunteers to achieve a huge amount. Not only have we got previous work sites to finish off and manage, we also had new ponds and waterways to tackle and improve. But it is always exciting to get your teeth into a fresh challenge.

### **Sidlesham Parish**

We have continued with the improvement work at many sites in the parish, normally cutting back bramble and willow to keep the water light and open, giving other plants a chance to colonise and do well.

One of our most visible sites is Willow Glen on the B2145 in Sidlesham and we have continued to manage this site for wildlife. The wildflowers here have just exploded and one of my favourites, Water Figwort (*Scrophularia auriculata*) with its small deep red flowers is doing particularly well. This is good news for the Mullein moth caterpillar (*Cucullia verbasci*) as this is a favourite food plant.



We have carried out improvement work at Sheepwash pond in Ham, planting 255 native trees to create a hedgerow at the back of the pond, acting as a windbreak while also protecting the pond from arable farm spray.

We have also carried out work management at The Elms ditch and Ham Road corner pond to trim back vegetation.



**Sheepwash pond**



**Ham Road corner pond**



We had a new challenge in Sidlesham Common at Chartswood Nursery where the adjacent section of the B2145 has been a flooding hot spot for a while. Working with WSCC Drainage team to get to the bottom of the issue, we started by clearing out a hidden pond and revealing blocked up culverts. The landowner then tackled his ditches and the culverts were all jetted by a drainage team, and now, having been tested with a couple of heavy rain days, there is no longer flooding at the bus stop or the B2145 in this spot.



**Chartswood Nursery pond**



**Volunteers and Chris at Chartswood nursery**

**Hunston parish**

In Hunston we have continued our work at Spire cottage pond, cutting back the bramble and managing the invasive Hemlock Water Dropwort. This pond has now shown itself suitable for water voles and they have moved in and are leaving signs that they are breeding.

We tackled 2 hugely different new sites in the parish this year. The first is an urban drainage basin in Foxbridge Drive that was installed by developers a few years ago and which has become a rubbish dump within a neglected green space surrounded by housing. We spent a day installing wildflower verges (with the help of the Brownies) and cutting back the vegetation around the pond, opening up the basin and looking for culverts. We engaged a tree surgeon to trim back the mature poplar trees to get light in on the site.



**Foxbridge Drive verges**



**Foxbridge Drive basin**

The second site we have worked on is the moat at Hunston Manor where we have carefully removed some trees to get light in on the water channel, cleared some of the invasive bramble and started some digging work. We also planted over 800 trees, as part of a community event, in the field adjacent to the moat to help absorb water.





**Hunston Manor field**



**Hunston Manor moat**

**West Wittering**

We have continued to work at Cakeham Manor Estates and have enjoyed seeing kingfishers flit up and down the water channel and evidence of water vole at this site.

We are in our second work season at West Wittering Estates and with guidance the work team of the estate have carried out much of the hard work, strimming out the bramble, digging out the channel and creating a deep pool and island. We then put in some stakes and binders, planted trees, and pulled sycamore seedlings!



**West Wittering Estates**

**East Wittering and Bracklesham**

A large challenge for us this year was the Bracklesham Barn east ditch which had been dug out by a contractor for the parish, but which needed some mitigation work.



**Bracklesham Barn east ditch**



During the wettest part of the winter volunteers came out and helped us to create a long stretch of dead hedge out of cut material left onsite, and then plant native hedge trees along the front. This work was brutal due to the weather, but we had amazing support. The parish are incredibly happy with what we have managed here.

Our favourite pond in this parish, Hilton Business Park pond, goes from strength to strength and we planted wildflower seeds and bulbs, plus trees, and have been rewarded with lots of positive feedback by local people.



**Hilton Business Park pond**



**Tile Barn Lane south ditch**

The long ditch in Tile Barn Lane has not needed much work this year, just bramble and willow trimming as the landowner gave the site a light cut, which is responding well with a second season of perennial wildflowers coming through.

We have continued to manage Spinney Pond by planting a hedge on the roadside and hope to have it dug out a little more in future.

### **Earnley**

We have continued with improvement on Hedgehog Hall, Somerley Lane and Easton Lane ditches with digging work and tree planting, and more vegetation management at Sparrow Cottage.



**Hedgehog Hall pond**



**Easton Lane ditch**

Haydons pond is very special to the group as we have been surveying it, pond dipping, oak aphid hunting and cutting back trees and vegetation for a while. This pond underwent a significant change in November by being dug out so that there are now deep sections and greater potential to hold water year-round.





**Haydons pond**

**West Itchenor Parish**

We continue to advise the Parish council on management of the West Itchenor village pond and monthly working parties to dig out Hemlock Water Dropwort and to introduce a greater range of wetland plants has been working – the water voles seem happy anyway!

**Birdham Parish**

The three linked ponds in Birdham are doing well and all have water vole signs now. Triangle pond continues to delight, and we have had many work party sessions here piling up the dead wood, planting more trees and wildflower bulbs, managing the bramble and Hemlock Water Dropwort and reinstating the woodchip path. We found water vole feeding signs here, so they have found this lovely new pond with lots of wetland plants. There was due to be an official opening of this site, but it has had to be delayed under the current circumstances. We have also had a nice new shiny gate put on at the entrance to this site so that it is secure and so we can access it when we need to. We have also planted three very rare black poplar trees, provided by Wakehurst Place, that originated from a Birdham tree, in memory of David Scott, the lovely hardworking and dedicated MWHG Treasurer who passed away last August.



**Triangle pond**

The three linked ponds in Birdham are doing well and all have water vole signs now. Kingfisher pond is so abundant with aquatic vegetation that it is hard to see any open water. Water voles have created burrows in the higher bank on the field side and they can be seen under the plants.





**Kingfisher pond**



**Birdham Village pond**

Birdham Village pond has been dug out to make it deeper and within a couple of months water voles had moved in, having been absent for many years. The vegetation was left on the banks and we have planted a hedge at the back and wildflower bulbs ready for next spring.

### **North and South Mundham**

We have continued our improvement work on the relic canal and had some great help from the Environment Agency who spent a team building day with us hammering in chestnut stakes to make a dead hedge.



**Relic canal**



**Camic pond**

We have also started work on a beautiful new pond in South Mundham called Camic pond, firstly cutting back vegetation, finding the water surface and the banks, secondly digging it out, and hopefully thirdly, eventually, planting and seeding.

### **Apuldram**

We have a new improvement site in Apuldram with a large pond in Apuldram Lane south. This was hidden away and with the severe flooding issues in this road we thought it would be a good idea to look at improving it. We involved a team of tree surgeons who have removed some of the overhanging trees and willow, plus an unhealthy Ash tree and they have transformed this pond. We now just need to get the diggers in to remove some of the spoil and this pond will have a chance of becoming an amazing biodiversity centre and maybe water vole holiday spot! We were helped here by Balfour Beatty who put up a set of traffic lights and managed them for a week as part of a Community Payback scheme and we couldn't have done it without them as the pond is on a scary bend next to the road.





Rymans Pond, Apuldram



## DITCH SURVEYING

Ditch surveying has finished in West Wittering, East Wittering and Bracklesham and Earnley Parishes with Parish reports completed. Surveying has also finished in Hunston, Donnington, Selsey and Sidlesham and Parish reports are in the process of being written and maps created. Apuldram parish is 90% finished and in North and South Mundham and Runcton Parish the local residents, plus MWHG FLOW volunteers, are 50% done. So well done to everyone for getting through all those many kilometres of walking despite the weather!



## OTHER WORK

### Mink monitoring

We have been managing and carrying out mink monitoring across the area with financial support from Barfoots, RSPB and Vitacress. Key trained volunteers have been very diligent and committed in carrying out this work whatever the weather, so huge thanks.

### WHAT'S NEXT?

From mid-March work parties came to a halt and we had to re-plan our work. We have been keeping very busy with Chris creating maps out of all the raw data that has been provided by volunteers on the ditches. He has also been providing tutorials for volunteers wanting to have a go at maps themselves.

I have been working on management plans for many of our work sites, attempting floral surveys, looking at interpretation boards with Emily and Claire's help, and starting to focus on Parish reports.

Going forward we will have to see how realistic it is to carry out species surveying on sites and will have to follow government guidelines when working. Much will depend on whether caravan parks and beaches open up as that will potentially causes the largest virus risk to the area. We must bear in mind the safety of the volunteers and their families as well as staff.

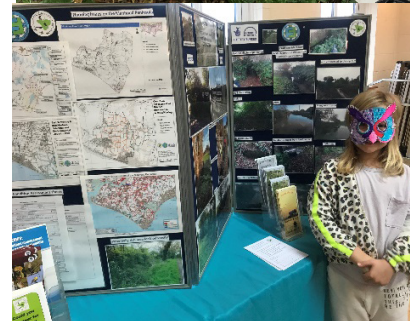


## BIG THANKS

Huge thanks to all the volunteers that have come out and helped us over the last work season – it was extremely wet with something like 6 dry days between the start of October and mid-December – very challenging conditions to work in, particularly when at Bracklesham Barn and Camic pond if I remember correctly - horizontal continuous rain!

Thank you for helping us with surveying, admin work, tools, physical work, refreshments, mink monitoring, carrying equipment, turning up whatever the weather, the smiles, laughter and support.

*Jane Reeve*





## WHAT'S THE BUZZ? BUMBLEBEE ID FOR BEGINNERS

When I have delivered assemblies about bees to KS3 schoolchildren, I've often asked my audience to tell me something they know about bees and I usually get the following responses: "They sting you!" and "They make honey!". Then there will be a bit of a pause until another one says, "They're stripy!". Whilst none of these are strictly false, they represent a common, slightly warped perception of bees.

In the UK there is one honeybee species, 24 bumblebee species, and over 250 species of solitary bee. Only honeybees make honey and most honeybees in the UK are owned and cared for, while all other bees are wild, and rely on our gardens, allotments, parks and countryside to build their nests, forage wildflowers and pollinate our crops.

So, onto bumblebees – it can be daunting to start learning how to identify bumblebees when there are 24 species. But for now, you only need to start becoming familiar with the common ones that you are most likely to see here on the Peninsula.

Our seven most common bumblebees can easily be sorted into three groups based on tail colour: white, red and ginger.

### WHITE-TAILED BUMBLEBEES

**Buff-tailed bumblebees** (*Bombus hypnorum*) have two yellow bands and a creamy tail with an orange or 'buff' shade. They can be active over winter so you may see them on snowdrops or mahonia.

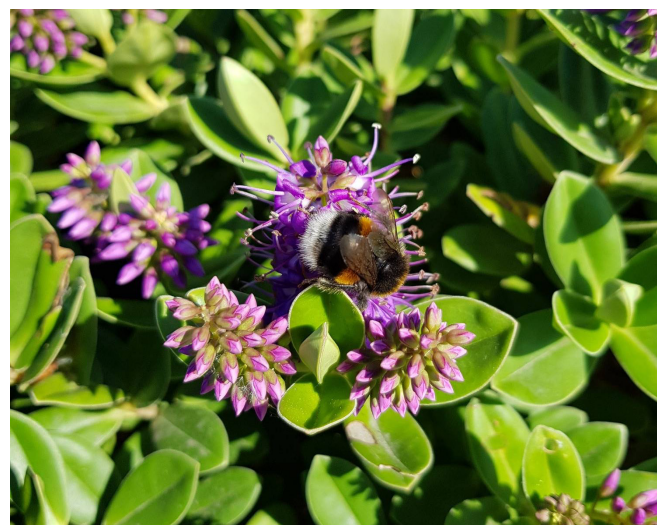
**White-tailed bumblebees** (*Bombus lucorum*) are similar to buff-taileds but have a bright white tail and their two bands are more lemon-yellow. The males also have yellow facial hair.

**Garden bumblebees** (*Bombus hortorum*) have a bright white tail and *three* yellow bands to distinguish them from white-tailed bumblebees. It has a long tongue (about 2cm – almost as long as its own body!) to reach nectar inside foxgloves and other tubular flowers.

**Tree bumblebees** (*Bombus hypnorum*) are the easiest bumblebees to identify with a brown thorax, black abdomen and a white tail. They have been in the UK since 2001 when they came over from mainland Europe. They are the only bumblebees who like to nest up high in bird boxes, lofts, and in old woodpecker holes, hence their name!



*Buff-tailed Bumblebee Queen* © David Wyatt



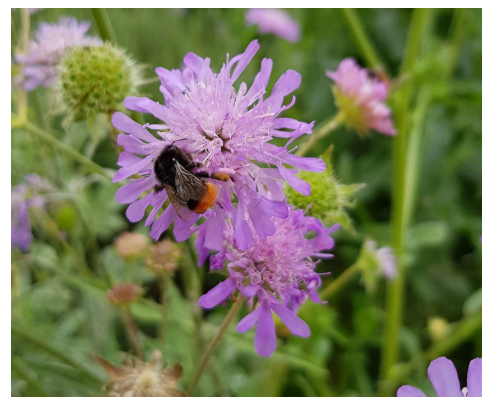
*White-tailed Bumblebee Queen* © Emily Sabin



## RED-TAILED BUMBLEBEES

**Red-tailed bumblebees** (*Bombus lapidarius*) are jet-black, with a bright red tail that can cover up to 50% of their abdomen. Males have bright yellow faces and moustaches.

**Early bumblebees** (*Bombus pratorum*) are small bumblebees, with two yellow bands and a red tail. The males can sometimes look mostly yellow. As their name suggests, they emerge early in the year.



*Red-tailed Worker* © Emily Sabin

## GINGER BUMBLEBEES

The **common carder bee** (*Bombus pascuorum*) is our only common all-over ginger bumblebee. It earned its name from the act of weaving or ‘carding’ grass and moss together to build its nest.

### Male or female?

Bumblebee colonies consist of one large queen, her almost identical but smaller daughters (the ‘worker’ bees), and her sons or ‘drones’.



*Common Carder Bee* © David Wyatt

Queens and workers look similar, with some exceptions, e.g. buff-tailed workers often have a pure white tail without any orange and can be indistinguishable from white-tailed workers. Males have longer, straggly hair, and in many species, they show off colourful facial hair. Males have hairy hind legs and lack pollen baskets which females always have. Males also do not have a stinger and therefore are harmless and safe to handle (but I don't recommend picking one up just in case it isn't a male!)

### What are cuckoo bumblebees?

There are six species of cuckoo bumblebees which are parasitic in the nests of our common species. They have hairy hind legs and no pollen baskets (like male bumblebees), but their wing membranes are generally darker, and their tails slightly more pointed. Their faces are short and round whereas ‘true’ bumblebees have long faces. It is easy to demonise cuckoo bumblebees for killing their host and stealing their food, but this is all part of nature! Parasites exist in almost every group of organisms and are an important part of a healthy ecosystem.

### How can we help bumblebees?

Sow wildflowers, leave a patch of lawn to grow wild, avoid disturbing a bumblebee nest, and educate children and adults alike about the fascinating lives of bumblebees. They are not aggressive creatures by nature and are only interested in foraging for sweet nectar as they go about pollinating our plants and crops.

If you wish to learn more, then I suggest ‘Bumblebees: An introduction’ written by experts at the Bumblebee Conservation Trust. Or, if your inner geek is dying to get technical, then try Stephen Falk's ‘Field Guide to the Bees of Great Britain and Ireland’.

For lighter reading, I highly recommend Dave Goulson's ‘A Sting in the Tale’. Dave founded the Bumblebee Conservation Trust in 2006 and his story beautifully captures his passion and motivation for protecting bumblebees.

*Emily Sabin*



## WALKS LEAFLETS OUTLETS

Our walks leaflets can be purchased from the following places:-

Chichester District Council, Selsey Office  
Hunston Post Office (Tramway Walks only)  
Raycraft, High Street, Selsey  
RSPB Pagham Harbour Local Nature Reserve  
Selsey Printing and Publishing  
Selsey Town Council Office

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**MWHG Website**  
[www.mwhg.org.uk](http://www.mwhg.org.uk)

New content and updates are regularly required for example on wildlife, heritage, etc.

All contributions welcome.

email: [facebook@mwhg.org.uk](mailto:facebook@mwhg.org.uk)

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter at  
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## NEW MEMBERSHIP

If you are interested in becoming a member please go to  
[www.mwhg.org.uk/get-involved/membership/](http://www.mwhg.org.uk/get-involved/membership/)



**The Queen's Award  
for Voluntary Service**

## USEFUL WEBSITES

Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group -  
<http://www.mwhg.org.uk>  
Recording the changing seasons -  
<http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk/>  
Local wood recycling - [http://www.aldingbournetrust.co.uk/services\\_recycling.htm](http://www.aldingbournetrust.co.uk/services_recycling.htm)  
Local - Bags made from 100% recycled clothing - <http://www.thegreendoor.co.uk/>  
Sussex Bat Group -  
<http://www.sussexbatgroup.org.uk/>  
UK moths - <http://ukmoths.org.uk/>  
Bug life - <http://www.buglife.org.uk/>  
Mammal Society - <http://www.abdn.ac.uk/mammal/>  
Green shop - <http://www.greenshop.co.uk/>  
Environmental calendar -  
[www.countmeincalendar.info](http://www.countmeincalendar.info)  
Swift Conservation -  
<http://www.swift-conservation.org/>  
Wildcare Shop for products relating to ecology, Park management or conservation. -  
<http://www.wildcareshop.com>

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## VOLUNTEERING

Subscribe to our volunteering opportunities and get involved at [www.mwhg.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/](http://www.mwhg.org.uk/get-involved/volunteering/) or see the attached form

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