Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group

Newsletter

Autumn/Winter 2016
Volume 9 No 2

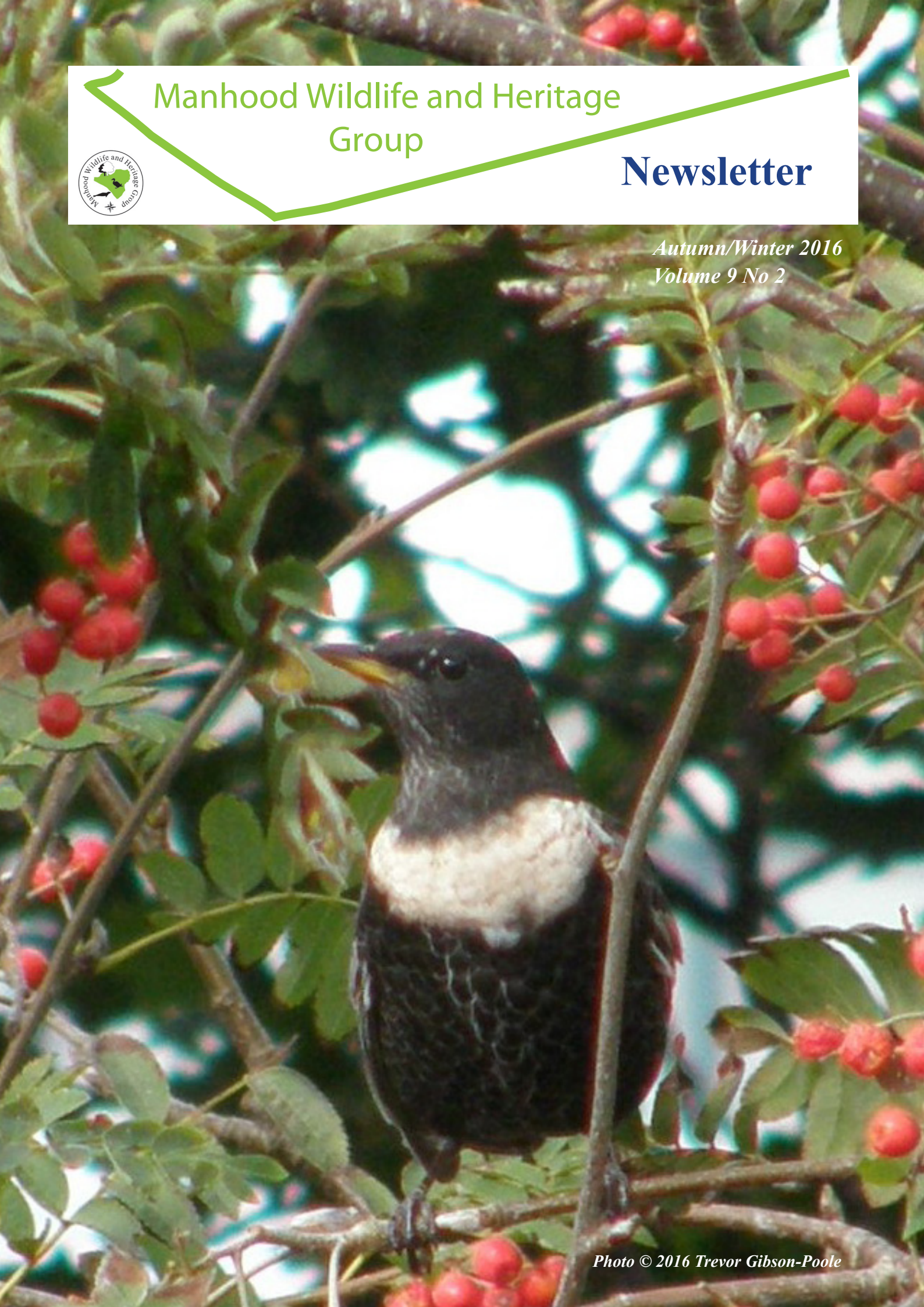

Photo © 2016 Trevor Gibson-Poole

Management Matters

Thanks to our successful second round application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, FLOW continues! This means that we have funding to progress the project until December 2020 – time and money to make a real difference, particularly in terms of improving the wetland and hedgerow networks across the Manhood. And, all this wouldn't have been possible without Jill Sutcliffe's expertise and sheer determination in the first place – thank you Jill.

The HLF committee were very impressed with our development phase work in West Wittering, which relied on the considerable qualities of Jane and Chloe. We are now seeking to expand the team by recruiting a Communications & Engagement Officer. The successful applicant will have responsibility for supporting volunteers, so hopefully, someone many of you will come to know well.

As FLOW moves around the parishes, there will be many and varied opportunities to get involved so do keep an eye out for regular updates and requests.

Our container from Vitacress is now safely sited at Southend Farm and has been painted ready for winter. Huge thanks go to Peter White and Dave Haldane, plus their team, for the refurbishment work, as well as to Will and Mariella Fleming for permission to use their land.

In other news, we have now taken on responsibility for much of the mink monitoring work across the peninsula. As many of you will know, controlling mink is vital to the success of water voles and a key reason why the peninsula is a local stronghold for them. Thanks go to Tony Burnand for taking on the mink monitoring contract and RSPB, Vitacress and Barfoots for their financial support. We will be looking for volunteers to give this work a sustainable future, so do get in touch if it interests you.
This is an extremely exciting time for the group as FLOW has the potential to recruit many more members/volunteers. The Management Team is well aware of its responsibility to ensure that all members/volunteers, old and new, feel valued, supported, satisfied and involved. Do get in touch if you don't!

Once again we achieved success in the Royal Horticultural Society's South and South East in Bloom Awards being awarded the following:-

Manor Green Sensory Garden	Level 4 Thriving
Manor Green Small Park	Gold
East Beach Pond (Small Conservation)	Gold and Best in Category
Selsey in Bloom	Silver Guilt

Congratulations to all those members whose hard work makes this possible.

Finally, all members are entitled to a free copy of the newly reprinted Selsey Parish Map. So please contact me if you would like one.

Enjoy the winter work parties!

Joe Savill

Editor's note: There is no article on the FLOW project this time, but a there will be a full progress report in the next issue.

AMAZING BORNEO - Our Project Officer, Sarah Hughes's, recent travels

I was very fortunate to take a career break this year with a life changing adventure in Borneo with my daughter, Maddie.

Borneo is estimated to be home to around 222 mammals (including 44 endemic – meaning they are not found anywhere else in the world), 420 birds (37 endemic), 100 amphibians and 394 fish (19 endemic). At least 15,000 plants, of which 6,000 are found nowhere else in the world, can be found in the swamps, mangroves, and lowland and mountain forests of the island. Insects are in their millions and with an average of three new species being discovered each month. Borneo is a wonderful place, with incredible people and awesome wildlife.

We stayed in an amazing eco-lodge (located in Samboja, East coast of Borneo, near Balikpapan), in the middle of the jungle; vivid colours of alien looking plants, sweltering humidity, noises to melt one's soul and sights that would make you gasp. However, we were never allowed to explore on our own, as we ALWAYS had to have a member of the team with us, something about wildlife and the possibility of danger/death.

The first week was spent getting acclimatised to the humidity, exploring the rainforest and meeting local people. The Indonesian people we met had very little, but were very giving, warm, honest, respectful people. It was a pleasure and privilege to be among them. We took a hike in a primary rainforest (untouched), where we were fortunate enough to watch Muller's gibbons (*Hylobates muelleri*) swinging through the trees. One day was spent at the beach, where long-tailed macaque (*Macaca fascicularis*) greeted us at the entrance and a 1.5m long Malayan water monitor lizard (*Varanus salvator*) was wandering over the garden areas. This was my sort of heaven. We survived the tree canopy walk, which was thrilling, and overwhelming to see the extent of the magical rainforest. Such majestic trees there, some of which, when it rained, sprayed acid. It was almost an overload on one's senses.

Photo © 2016 Sarah Hughes

We were fortunate to spend the second couple of weeks volunteering at Samboja Lestari Orangutan Rehabilitation Centre in Borneo.

The project covers nearly 2,000 hectares (7.7 sq mi) which was once deforested, degraded and burnt land. Luckily, in 2001 BOS purchased the land. Reforestation and orangutan rehabilitation is the core of this acclaimed project, with thousands of indigenous tree species planted. By 2009, 137 species of birds, 9 species of primates and a whole range of wildlife had been recorded.

Many of the trees were grown from the seeds extracted from the excrement of free roaming orangutans therefore a guarantee that they will support orangutans and other wildlife. I should just mention that I didn't bring any pooh back with me, though I was tempted.

The volunteer work was very varied, making enrichment (to stimulate the senses and reduce boredom) for both the orangutans and sunbears; we used machetes to cut down ginger plants (food and bedding for the orangutans); and getting into the moat and clearing the encroaching vegetation by hand (to stop succession, which would allow the orangutans to escape the islands, as they cannot swim).

It has been amazing to spend so much time up close with these intelligent apes (with whom we share 97% of the same DNA) aiding their rehabilitation in the hope that they can be reintroduced into protected rainforest. Although this sanctuary is a wonderful place it is awful that humanity's selfish and destructive behaviour has led to a scenario where the majority of orangutans cannot survive in the wild.

Each and every one of the 217 orangutans cared for by the centre has a different and usually disturbing past. Many were kept as pets, others were cruelly trained in the circus, but the vast majority lost their homes due to deforestation. The main culprits of this increasing problem are the palm oil producers, destroying the forest to make room for plantations.

Unfortunately, palm oil is in almost every consumer product so it is virtually impossible to avoid. However, we can put pressure on the corporate giants to ensure the palm oil in their supply chain is not linked to deforestation and is responsibly sourced.

So when you are next stocking up on toothpaste or buying a bag of crisps please take this into consideration and support the brands that use sustainable palm oil.

And if you're not easily swayed by my cute orangutan photos, consider the other detrimental effects of deforestation - climate change and global warming. As orangutans are effective seed dispersers, they play an important role in the rainforest's ecosystem, and so by saving these apes we can save the rainforest and a whole host of other species that consider the rainforest their home.

Alternatively please support the wonderful work of the Borneo Orangutan Survival Foundation to help protect the future of the orangutans. http://orangutan.or.id

Primates helping primates

Sarah Hughes

Heritage - Selsey name forms

In the book of maps produced for the Millennium, 'A Sense of Place – West Sussex Parish Maps' published in 2006 it has six pronunciations for our Town, as does our Selsey Walks leaflet 'A Sense of Place - Seaside Stroll'.

In this article I have added to this list, which where possible I have sorted by known date and provided a source, where possible.

Selaesiae Eddius refers to Selsey in this form in 7th cent.
Seolesiae, Soelasiae c720
Selaeseu "*insula vituli marini*" Bede History Ecclesiastical 731
Seleseig *Cartularium Saxonicum* A.D.772
Siolesaei c780 from Anglo-Saxon Charter
Selesey *ibid.,* No.262 *c* A.D 791
Selesegh *ibid*., No. 302, A.D. 801
Seles, Selaes c957
Seolesig *Anglo-Saxon Chronicle*, A.D. 980
Seolesige c1000
Selesea, Sylesea c.1000
Domesday (published 1086) refers to Selsey as Seleisie c1066
Island of Seleseye 1357 - Patent Rolls
Island of Sheleseye 1431 – inquest of the wreck Edmund de Sancto Maelorio
Selsey 1587
Celsey John Norden's map 1595
Selsea 1778 Yeakell & Gardener

The following cannot be dated (at the moment)

Celseye from 'A Sense of Place 2006' actual name date not yet located
Silesia from 'A Sense of Place 2006' actual name date not yet located
Selesia from 'A Sense of Place 2006' actual name date not yet located
Seleseghe
Seleseia
Seleseie
Selesey(e)
Seleseya
Selesie
Selesye
Selesiae
Selesaei
Selsey Bill recent actual antecedence not yet traced

Selsey written as '*Chelsey'* appears on early maps. It was, however, used in the current form on the 1587 map prepared at the time of the Armada threat. Yeakell and Gardener introduce the incorrect form '*Selsea'* in 1778 but this was not used by other cartographers or on their own individual map of 1795 until it was reintroduced by Gream and Coltman in 1799. '*Selsea'* was then used by a number of mapmakers including Greenwood. Lower in 1931 uses both forms. The Ordinance Survey 1" series (1813) uses '*Selsea'* but the New Series uses the correct form – or the form we use now. Thus we have over time, **34** different forms of the name 'Selsey', which as we see from above, first appeared in 1587.

If you know of any more or the missing source information please get in touch. But please, do not tell me I have used the same spelling twice unless you are very sure!

Dr. Anthony Preston

2016 Eileen Savill Award

On Friday 7th October seven talented young artists received their prizes during the Award Presentations at the Selsey Centre. This year the challenge was to submit a drawing or painting of a scene, creature or natural object on the Manhood Peninsula that attracted their attention. There were three age groups, 5-7 years, 8-11 and 12-24. The first prize and award went to 17 year old Hannah Farrant for her skilful landscape painting of a view over Medmerry. She received a beautiful carving of a robin by our very own Peter Warren and a £50 voucher to spend at the Colne Gallery in Chichester.

Families of the prize winners and MWHG members watched the presentations by Leah Mathias-Collins, Conservation Officer of international horticultural wholesalers Vitacress, which has an outlet at Runcton. Vitacress has kindly taken on sponsorship of the Eileen Savill Award and we thank them for their support of our Charity.

Other prizewinners were Matilda Rey-Barriero, Mia Chung, Ruby Bensley, Elizabeth Broadbridge, Bethany Middleton and Sofia Casali.

The Eileen Savill Award was created to commemorate MWHG founder member and much loved Selsey resident and teacher at the then Manhood Community College.

To find out more about Vitacress visit www.Vitacress.com.

Gina Scott

Photo © 2016 Peter Warren

Vitacress - One of our Sponsors ORIGINAL

Vitacress is one of Europe's leading suppliers of fresh produce, specialising in watercress, salads and fresh herbs. We grow pot herbs at our Runcton nursery, which also supports a variety of wildlife. We have a thriving water vole population, and a reedbed and many other habitats that provide a safe and secure haven for wildlife. We are very keen to enhance and improve our facilities for the benefit of wildlife and have recently formed a working partnership with MWHG, to which we have donated £2000 and a shipping container to provide a secure storage facility for MWHG equipment. Part of our donation sponsors two mink traps, located near our site, and the Eileen Savill Young Persons Environment Award.

We are very excited by this partnership. Jane and Sarah have already led activities for our employees to engage them on wildlife issues as part of our annual Environment Week. They have also carried out a Phase 1 habitat survey to enable us to produce and implement a conservation management plan for the site. MWHG is a fantastic group to work with and this relationship helps us be part of the local community and ensures that our site plays a valuable part in the wider landscape.

Leah Mathias Collins - Conservation Manager of Vitacress

Ring Ouzel visit 6 October 2016

"That's a funny looking blackbird" said Tina; she has a better view of the back garden from our kitchen window than I do. "Where is it?" I asked. "In the Rowan feeding on the berries" she replied. Oh well, probably it's just our female blackbird I thought, she has quite a pale chest, but I'd better take a look. "OH!" (Expletive expletive expletive expletive) it's only a male Ring Ouzel" I cried grabbing my phone from my pocket and trying frantically to find the bird in the tree in the view finder to get a record shot.

So then it was a mad rush around the house trying to find my camera and, isn't it always the way, fresh batteries, and cracking open the upstairs velux windows very slowly to try and get some better views and pictures. The bird was fairly cautious; when I attempted to sneak up on it from outside it disappeared fairly rapidly but then popped up in our Hawthorn tree and ate a few berries there. It stayed most of the day feeding up before the next step in its migration south. A lovely bird, a first for our garden and local patch, a real privilege to play host to such a fabulous creature.

Provide the habitat and who knows what will turn up in your garden; our bird list stands at 66 now, what's yours?

Trevor Gibson-Poole

WATER VOLE GENETIC RESEARCH TALK SUMMARY

Following their widespread decline across much of the UK, the water vole is now commonly found within isolated patches of suitable habitat amongst perceptively hostile landscapes. This poses them at increased risk of localised extinction, not only due to stochastic events, but also due to genetic factors such as inbreeding and loss of genetic diversity, which in turn, can reduce the fitness of individuals. Over the past seven years, I have been studying the genetics of water voles in the south-east of England. Two of my study sites were based on the Manhood Peninsular where I was privileged to have the help and support of the water vole patrol group of volunteers. As such, I presented at the 2016 AGM, two pieces of research on water voles that have relevance to the Manhood Peninsular populations.

The first piece of research involved characterising the genetic patterns of water voles across the south-east region of England. This information can be used to direct conservation strategies by identifying strongholds of genetic diversity alongside areas where diversity has been lost. I collected hair samples from water voles sampled from 12 different populations in the south-east, including two populations on the Manhood Peninsular: one at Medmerry and one occupying the banks of Chichester Canal. The hair provided me with a source of genetic material from which I isolated a variable region of maternally inherited mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA). Variation in mtDNA is identified by a mutation in the DNA sequence which results in a new haplotype. The more mutational differences between haplotypes, the longer in time it has been since the populations that have these haplotypes have shared ancestry. This was also the same DNA that was used by Aberdeen University to identify that the Scottish and English/Welsh water voles had not shared a recent ancestor since the last ice age, approximately 11,000 years ago. This has led to the Scottish and English/Welsh water voles being treated as separate Evolutionary Significant Units (ESU's).

I found 14 different haplotypes across the south east, which was relatively high given that Aberdeen University identified 28 in the populations they sampled from across the UK. I plotted this diversity across the region and found two genetic diversity hotspots (Fig1). One was in North Kent and the other was on the Manhood Peninsular. This provides a wonderful example of how focussed conservation efforts in these areas have helped to safeguard the ancestral genetic diversity of water voles. I also found that the Manhood Peninsular, harboured five unique haplotypes that were not found elsewhere in the region, which again shows how much the area contributes to the regional levels of genetic diversity.

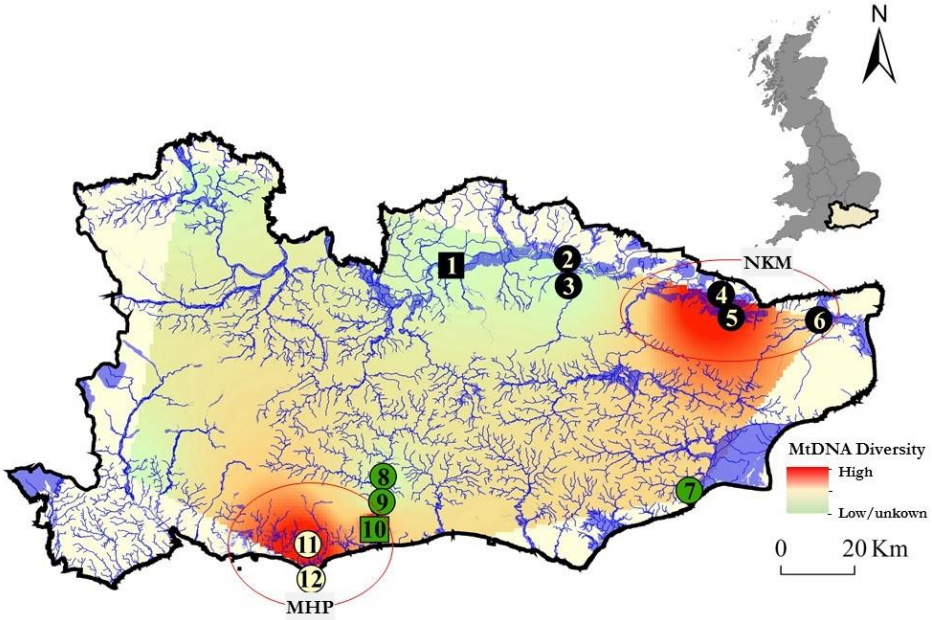

Figure 1: *Genetic hotspot map for water voles in south-east England showing areas in red where relatively high mtDNA diversity was found. Study sites are shown as numbered shapes where circles denote natural populations and squares denote populations that have been reintroduced.*

Twelve of the haplotypes that I found in the south-east were unique to the region and this was derived by incorporating my data with the haplotype data collected on water voles by Aberdeen University. Two haplotypes which were found in the region were identified as having no geographical affiliation to the south-east, one was found to be more closely related to the water voles in the west country and one was found to be within the Scottish clade of water voles. These have undoubtedly been introduced to the region as part of reintroduction programmes, however, this practice risks diluting the national diversity and is not recommended. The introduction of Scottish lineage to the region is of most concern as the Scottish water voles are regarded as separate ESU's.

The second piece of research was based on the water voles impacted by the Medmerry Coastal Realignment. The scheme was going to impact over 15km of water vole habitat where multiple colonies existed. Due to the protected status of water voles it was important for the scheme to mitigate against this and they did this by creating a new inland channel to compensate for the loss of habitat. As water voles were still occupying the channels inside of the area that was going to be reclaimed by the sea (the inundation zone), it was hoped that they would naturally disperse once the breach in the shingle embankment had occurred. Furthermore, it was hoped that the displaced individuals would colonise the new habitat created for them. To monitor this, myself and the water vole patrol volunteers from the MWHG radio collared and pit tagged (microchipped) water voles from within the inundation zone and a population next door to the breach in Medmerry Park (our control population). A small hair pull was also taken from every individual captured. The radio collared individuals were tracked during the breach and for two weeks afterwards to see their response to the inundation of tidal water. Some stayed in their territories whilst others got predated or swept out to sea. After the breach, we put out live-capture water vole traps along the new receptor channel to see if we could recapture any pit tagged individuals that had been displaced from the inundation zone. We did not capture any previously marked and displaced individuals from within the inundation zone, but did capture some new individuals from unknown origin. The ecological field data provided us with no evidence that the water voles from within the inundation zone had survived the breach to colonise the new channel.

We therefore looked to the genetic analysis to see if we could identify the origin of the new individuals found on the receptor channel and confirm whether these had come from inside of the inundation zone. To do this we isolated 12 variable regions of nuclear DNA that we had obtained from individuals inside of the inundation zone, the control population and any individuals that we had subsequently captured along the new receptor channel. We than analysed the samples by assigning individuals into genetically homogenous groups based on similarities in the alleles (variants in nuclear DNA). These genetic groups represented individuals that would have to have shared migrants and thus were considered part of the same breeding population. We found that the water voles captured on the new channel and those previously captured within the inundation zone, prior to the breach, were indeed part of the same genetic cluster. This suggests that migration from inside of the inundation to the new channel did occur (Fig 2). A very different result from our ecological findings and a fine example of how genetic data can contribute to monitoring the movement of individuals across the landscape. Interestingly, the individuals from the control channel were identified as a different genetically homogenous group, suggesting dispersal from within the inundation zone to the control channel and from the control channel to the receptor channel was not occurring. When looking at possible reasons for this, we identified that the new rock bund and bare ground were likely to be the features that restricted any movement of individuals between these areas.

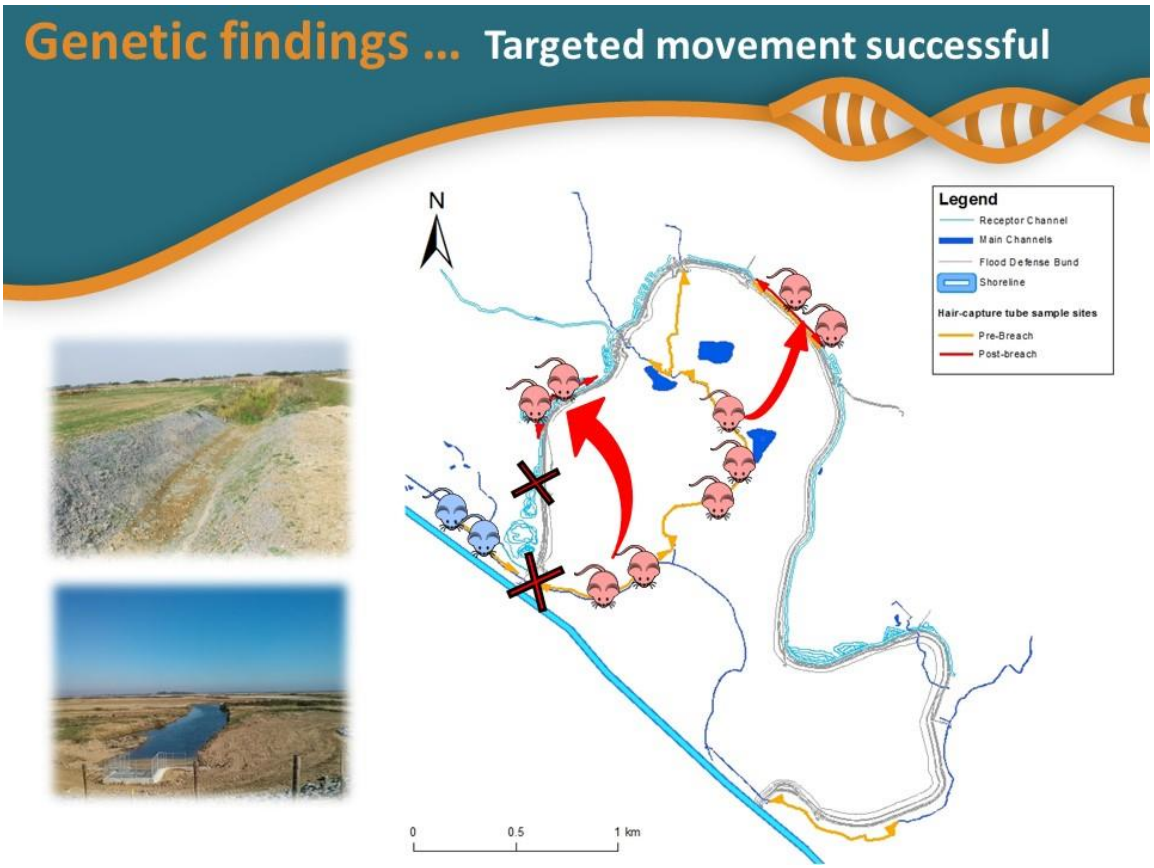

Figure 2: *Slide showing the genetic grouping of individual water voles based on variation at 12 microsatellite loci. Genetic groups are represented by coloured voles and inferred dispersal is shown by the red arrows. Crosses identify where migration between water voles was shown to be restricted and this was likely to be a result of the new rock bund and the failure of vegetation to establish.*

This document summerises a talk for the Manhood Wildlife and Heritage Group at the 2016 AGM and is written by Rowenna Baker, principle researcher on genetic patterns of water voles in south east England

Going Bananas in Selsey

Some of our members bought a banana plant from the Eden Project about fifteen years ago and planted it in their garden at Selsey.

Over the years it grew, produced offspring and there is now a little grove of about nine small trees and this year, guess what, one of them actually produced some fruit! This fruit didn't ripen but we couldn't believe they actually appeared – it goes to prove how warm the weather has been.

We understand it's very unusual to get such fruit on trees in this country which are not growing in a glasshouse.

Photo © 2016 Carole Hamtpon

ASHE

Autumn is here and the Moth Trap and Bat Monitors have been put away until the Spring whilst we return to work parties. We have been concentrating on Morgan's Pond, which had become overgrown during the summer period. Coppicing willow, clearing brambles and ivy and replacing hedge whips that the Roe deer had munched upon are the main tasks, but Ian and Felicity took time out to build an amazing bug hotel in the adjoining field; it even has a 'penthouse'! The very dry conditions during the latter part of the year caused Bushell's Farm Pond at Batchmere to dry out completely, so one weekend we took the opportunity to clear out some of the invasive Reed Mace that was gradually taking over the pond. Thanks and appreciation to our loyal hardworking volunteers who turn out in all weathers every weekend.

Our Christmas Cheer will be consumed at Sidlesham Community Orchard on 17th December, when we will be open all morning to any villagers who feel like joining in. We will be working from 9.30.am. until noon, and there will be seasonal goodies and spiced apple cup to share as well as jams and jellies made from the orchard produce to take away.

One exciting piece of news: a survey of St. Mary's Church, Sidlesham, by the Bat Conservation Trust revealed a colony of Grey long-eared bats *Plecotus austriacus*. This species, right on the northern extremity of their range, is rare in the UK, confined to a few colonies in south and south western counties of England and the Isle of Wight. Nice to have them on the Peninsula.

Photo © 2016 Veronica Wilkes

Veronica Wilkes

Donnington and Apuldram

My report in the previous issue covered our hedge laying days at Mile Pond Farm back in January 2016. It has been interesting to observe how this hedgerow has fared since.

The willow shot back up in no time at all and by autumn had almost regained its pre-laid height. Though with less vigour, the hazel has also put on new growth. The hawthorn, however, struggled over the cold spring and dry summer and one 3m section died off completely.

In November Sarah Hughes met with me on site to plan winter working parties. The willow will need to be cut back hard and native hedging whips planted to fill gaps where the hawthorn failed.

Felicity McStea

East Beach Pond

A busy period for the East Beach Pond volunteers as they carried out maintenance and habitat improvements to the south west corner of the pond. This area, where the hardstanding footpath meets the car park, is very much in the public eye with its concrete outlet and 30 metre long channel. Although the outlet grid is routinely cleared the Common reeds *Phragmites australis* along the channel receive just one cut biennially.

Reed cutting along the watercourse using garden shears is challenging. The depth of water and accumulated silt hinder progress and place a strain on the lower back. Perhaps that is why one of the volunteers was twice seen sitting down on the job, (in 2 feet of water??) Working as a team with one group cutting and the other dragging away the cut stems an effective rhythm was maintained. Our target of 75% clearance was achieved and the appearance and effectiveness of the channel vastly improved. Unfortunately there is nothing we can do about the build-up of silt.

As part of this clean-up operation several bankside Willows *Salix sp*. were coppiced. This immediately improved the vista across the whole pond. Although Willow coppicing for commercial purposes is usually carried out in the late winter, the species is very resilient and coppicing can be carried out during the early autumn. All of the coppiced material is recycled

A quiet lagoon alongside the Spit was badly shaded due to the overhanging tree branches. In the past Water lilies *Nymphaea sp*. did well here but in recent years the shade has affected their performance. By judicious tree pruning and reed control the team opened up the site and hopefully have improved the Water lilies chance of recovery.

Finally the mound between the channel and the Lagoon, known as the Spit, received a makeover. This site was reclaimed by the volunteers after tons of sludge was dumped here during dredging in 2013. Regrettably although the site has been improved the soil remains nutrient depleted and plant diversity is poor. Compatible plants are occasionally added to the site and the seed of nitrogen fixing legumes freely scattered in an attempt to increase soil fertility.

PS. During the work we disturbed a Common Rat but saw no signs of Water voles.

Dave Haldane

Outlet before and after

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

MWHG Website

www.mwhg.org.uk

At the moment, the only section which is regularly being updated is the "Current Programmes" page. New content and updates are regularly required for example on wildlife, heritage, etc.
All contributions welcome.
email: **website@mwhg.org**

New Membership

If you would like to become a member please either dowload the form from our website or email chairmt@mwhg.org.uk

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
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
Swift Conservation - http://www.swift-conservation.org/
Wildcare Shop for products relating to ecology, Park management or conservation. - http://www.wildcareshop.com

Editorial contact details:

newsletter@mwhg.org.uk
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