



ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

January 2022 Newsletter

Happy New Year say all the Field Nats on the Dec walk!



Message from the Steering Group

Happy New Year everyone. Hope you are all keeping well.

Unfortunately, the Omicron variant of Covid has meant we have had to change some of our plans. We were very sad not to be able to see you in person in December for our AGM. You will see in the notices below that we are going to add a short AGM after the talk on Zoom on Thursday 13th January and hope you will join us. We have also had to cancel the coach trip this month. All other outdoor events will continue to take place.

We are watching the situation and the government advice daily. Decisions about events in February will be taken when we have information. Please keep looking at your newsletter, emails, Facebook and web site for information about events.

www.rochdalefieldnaturalists.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/965410946937744/

We really hope that by the time our next newsletter comes your way that we will be back to business as usual. In the meantime, take care of yourselves.

Linda Turner and Jan Kidd (Co-Chairs)

January Dates:

Thurs 13th Jan : Indoor Meeting : Speaker & AGM : 7.00pm on Zoom

Sat/Sun 15th/16th Jan : Coach trip **CANCELLED**

Thurs 20th Jan : Cons and Ed event : Winter Tree ID : 10.30am

Sun 30th Jan : Car trip : Marshside : 10.00am

Thurs 13th Jan 7.00pm : “My Year” – a talk by Paul Hill then AGM : Zoom

Our speaker at the first RFNS event of 2022 is Paul Hill. He is a professional photographer and keen naturalist who is going to talk to us about his photographic exploits during the last year. This will be followed by a short AGM, cancelled from last month. Paul's talk will last about an hour (with Q&A's), then we will have a short “comfort” break before commencing the second part of the meeting.

Paul has kindly agreed for the meeting to be recorded so it will be available to view on our website in the near future along with the recording of the AGM.

RFNS members will be sent the Zoom link the day before the talk.

We hope that you can join us.

Laura Ettrick



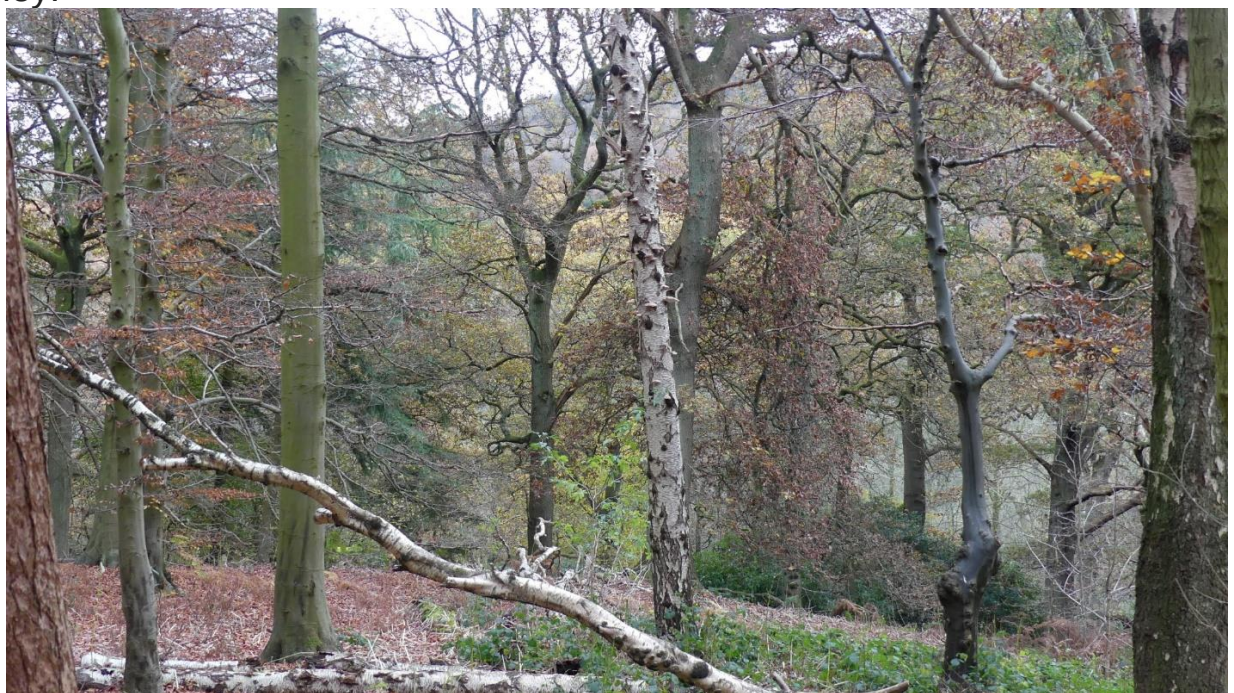
Cons and Ed Event : Thurs 20th Jan : Winter Tree Identification : 10.30am

This is a half day event. Even without their leaves, trees have distinctive shapes, buds, bark, fruit or even fungi which should allow us to recognise them. If you have tree ID books bring those too, please.

Meet 10:30am at the car park of Milnrow Memorial Park, Newhey Road, Milnrow OL16 4JF

All welcome. Please wear warm clothing and bring a hot drink and waterproofs.

Gill Wrigley.



Car trip : RSPB Marshside, Southport : Sun 30th Jan : 10.00am

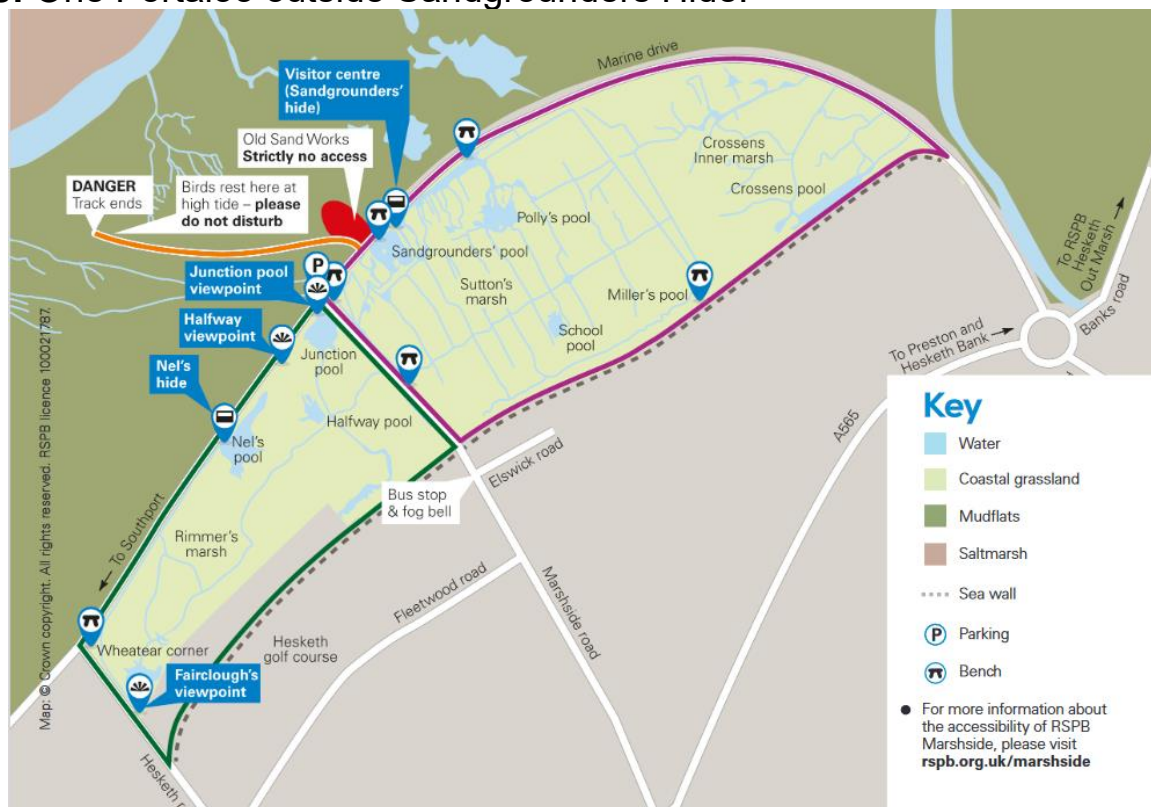
About 1 hours' drive from the Rochdale area, the RSPB Marshside offers a great chance to catch up with huge numbers of wintering Waterfowl over an extensive area of pools and salt marsh at the north end of Southport. The site offers several hides and plenty of open views over the marsh, but facilities are otherwise limited. Expect to see Greylag, Canada & Pink-footed Goose, 1000s of Wigeon, Teal, Shoveler and Mallard along with possibly Pintail and Goldeneye. There are also large numbers of Lapwing, Black-tailed Godwit, Redshank and Golden Plover plus substantial numbers of Gull, Corvids and Coots, while on the sea-facing side of the marsh, there are more of the same plus large flocks of Knot and other small waders being hunted by a wide range of raptors including, during the winter, Peregrine, Merlin and both Marsh and Hen Harrier.

A variety of circular walks are possible including loops of Rimmers Marsh (about 1 ½ hr long) and Crossens Marsh (2hrs)

Hides: Numerous screen hides around the area, with seated hides in front of Nel's Pool and Sandgrunder's Pool (also the visitors Centre)

Parking: Near the junction of Marine Drive and Marshside Road. Space for around 20 cars and free to RSPB members. Locals also park near the entrance to the old sandworks.

Toilets: One Portaloo outside Sandgrunders Hide.



A short drive to the north takes you to Hesketh out-marsh, where many of the ducks, Swans and Geese travel to feed, while a short drive south towards Southport Pier and the facilities of the town centre, gives you access to more car-parking, fast-food and toilet facilities at KFC or the café at Dunelm Mill, from where it is a short walk to the beach or Pier. More waders can be seen here, along with a good chance of flocks of Twite and (currently) a small number of Snow Bunting. Marine Lake also usually contains good numbers of birds, including a good chance of Goldeneye and Goosander.

Recording in the Kingsway area of Rochdale : Karen Cowley

Over the years we have organised local recording walks in the Stanney Brook Valley and around the Kingsway site. Before the JB Sports warehouse was erected there were large areas of partially flooded land which attracted lots of waders on passage and the shed roofs attracted for large numbers of roosting lapwings. Sheila and Sonia counted large numbers of snipe at the marsh near Turf Hill SBI (Site of Biological Importance in Greater Manchester) a few years ago while investigating water voles.

Recently we have been distressed about the loss of wildlife habitat in that area – even the loss of parts of SBI's. Some footpaths are closed at the moment whilst a new road connecting Michael Faraday Way with Sir Isaac Newton Way is being constructed.

GMEU has known for many years that the marsh near Turf Hill SBI would eventually be lost to development so some mitigation work has been happening in advance of this. A good number of the mud snails have been translocated to the new ponds at Shaw Moss created under the Great Crested Newt District Level Licensing scheme. Habitat improvement works along Stanney Brook may be granted funding in the near future from the Natural Flow Project, perhaps creating a replacement roosting site for snipe.

You could help! Please continue to send in recordings from this area, demonstrating its importance for wildlife to the funding authorities.



SBI Boundaries outlined in Red X = Site of new Road/ bridge linking Michael Faraday and Isaac Newton Ways

Message from Kath Smycki

I had scientific journals that I no longer needed taking valuable shelf space. I didn't want to pulp them and the colleges I contacted didn't have room for them. I'm sure there are RFNS members who are in a similar position. Then I found Books2Africa: <https://books2africa.org/donatebooks/> They take all kinds of reading material as well as computers, tablets and other electronic devices.

I'm very pleased my journals will be going to an educational establishment and be used as they should. Please have a look at their webpages and a rummage through your book case.

February Newsletter

If you have something you would like included in future newsletters, please send it to rfnsnewsletter@gmail.com.

Please submit items for the February Newsletter by Friday 28th January