



ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

November 2023 Newsletter

November Dates

Thurs 9th Nov : Indoor Meeting : The Work of the Lancashire Badger Group : 7.30pm : Cutgate

Sat 11th Nov : Coach Trip : Carsington Water : 9.00am ***Booking needed***

Sat 18th Nov : Cons & Ed Event : Nature Journaling : Falinge Park : 10.30am

Thurs 23rd Nov : Local Walk : Upper Naden Valley : 10.30am

Sat 25th Nov : Festive Fun : Bacup : 10.00am

Keep an eye on your email, our website, WhatsApp group and Facebook page for any updates to these proposed events.

www.rochdalefieldnaturalists.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/965410946937744/

Rochdale Field Naturalists' is run by, and for its members, and we encourage everyone to plan and participate in our activities.

The society encourages all members to be involved in the organization of activities for the society. The smooth running of the society depends on members taking an active role.

The steering group is currently made up of elected officers

Co-chairs - Jan Kidd and Linda Turner

Treasurer - Ruth Hardcastle

Secretary - Joan Carter

And representatives of each of the teams

Publicity team – Pam Crofts

Indoor team – Ian Short/Linda Turner

Outdoor team – Jan Kidd

Conservation and Education team – Gill Wrigley



We are approaching that time of year when we will be looking for nominations for the elected officer posts. This year Jan Kidd and Joan Carter will be standing down and we need people to consider standing for Co-chair and Secretary. Please read through the description of these roles and consider whether this is something you could do for the society. Steering group meetings take place four times a year. The roles require someone who is organised and computer literate. You don't need to be a great naturalist.

We are always looking for people to join the teams who organise events or to volunteer to lead a walk or coach trip. We also need people to help with publicity who could offer skills in updating the website, writing for the newsletter, and supporting the Facebook page. We also need someone to help with booking speakers for the indoor meetings.

If you think you might be the person for one of these roles please let us know by speaking to one of the steering group or emailing rfnspublicity@gmail.com for more information.



Chairpersons of the Steering Group **Role and Responsibilities**

Introduction

The role of Chairperson within the society may be on a shared basis. The Chairs of the Steering Group are elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Society by the membership on a yearly basis. They are allowed to stand for a maximum of 5 years.

The primary function of the Chair is to facilitate the deliberations of the Steering Group and satisfaction of the Steering Groups roles and responsibilities in fulfilling the operations of the society in accordance with the constitution.

Duties and Responsibilities.

The Steering Group Chairs will together perform the following duties:

1. Ensure that the Steering Group satisfies its legal duties and responsibilities as an Unincorporated Association in accordance with the society's constitution, thereby maintaining the reputation of the Society.
2. Act as spokespersons for the society on any issues involving outside bodies where an opinion of the Society is sought.
3. Provide leadership, foster effectiveness, and develop teamwork across the various teams of the society.
4. Organise Steering group meetings in an efficient and productive manner.
 - Canvassing all members for agenda items and then providing an agenda
 - Ensuring that matters to be considered by the Steering Group are properly presented and given the appropriate opportunity for discussion
 - Encourage Steering Group members to ask questions, express viewpoints and add insight during Steering Group meetings
 - Guide the Steering Group in establishing a consensus on important issues and decisions, while allowing full and open debate.
5. Organise the Annual General Meeting along with other Steering Group members in accordance with the constitution.
6. With input from other Steering Group members write the Society's Annual Report.

Secretary **Role and Responsibilities**

Introduction

The Secretary is elected at the Annual General Meeting of the Society by the membership on a yearly basis. They are allowed to stand for a maximum of five years

The primary function of the Secretary is to act as a contact and information point for the society and its' members.

Duties and Responsibilities.

Overall - To act as liaison point for members and the general public and to act as RFNS archivist

Specifically

- Ensure that the following areas of membership are effectively dealt with:
 - Responding to enquiries from potential new members and issuing Welcome Packs to new members.
 - Liaising with the Treasurer re membership lists
 - Circulating relevant information to members, steering group members and external bodies.
 - Send out cards, Get Well, Bereavement etc as relevant
 - Organising social events as appropriate.
- Acting as Contact Point for the Society
 - Receiving post, phone calls etc on behalf of the society and distributing accordingly.
 - Providing a phone number and email for external use.
 - Assisting the Steering Committee with secretarial issues
- Take Minutes at Steering Group meetings in the absence of a Minutes Secretary
 - Archiving relevant records pertaining to the Society'

Indoor Meeting : Thurs 9th Nov 7-30pm : Cutgate Baptist Church : Linda Turner : Co-chair

We are looking forward to welcoming you to our next indoor meeting at Cutgate Baptist Church Edenfield Road, Rochdale, OL11 5AQ.

Our speaker this month is Andy Hardman of Lancashire Badger Group. He will be talking about how their volunteers carry out surveys and rescues and work to raise awareness of the local and national issues that badgers face.

Members £3 per meeting, Non-Members £4 per meeting. Tea, coffee, and cake available - please make a donation towards cost.

For those of you who have not been before there is parking on the Cutgate shopping precinct and the Norden bus stops near the church. We are always needing members to help with setting up the room and tidying up afterwards, so if you can spare a few minutes just come a bit early or stay behind after.



Coach Trip : Sat 11th Nov : Carsington Water, Ashbourne, Derbyshire : 9.00am : Karen & Rick Cowley

This trip is very suitable for Field Naturalists and their Family and Friends as there's always lots going on there - water sports, yachting and cycling - and there are plenty of mod cons!!

Carsington Water is a large, 300-hectare reservoir serving the East Midlands and opened in 1992 by Severn Trent Water. SEE ATTACHED SITE MAP.

The Visitors' Centre is well appointed with a restaurant/cafe on the 1st floor with panoramic views over the lake and Stones Island - and has excellent scones! Just outside there is a courtyard with a take away cafe, other shops, including a clothes shop and the RSPB gift and bookshop (get your Xmas shopping done!)

There are picnic tables at the Visitors' Centre and at the Sheepwash car park.

There are three hides, including the heated Wildlife Centre/hide and an old WW11 watch tower on the west and NW side of the reservoir. All overlook the water and are within about a mile and a half of the Visitors' Centre. We will lead an optional "there and back" walk to all of these hides, passing through some woodland and enjoying views of the lake en route.

There is also a pleasant short walk around Stones Island in front of the Centre. The full circular walk

around the reservoir is 8 miles long and more suitable for strong walkers who want a good leg stretch rather than those of us who prefer to walk at a Field Nats pace! (We have not tested this trail)

The paths are well maintained limestone tracks for the most part and fairly level or gently undulating - but can be a bit muddy in places depending on the weather.



There is one Mobility scooter available for visitors but it cannot be booked in advance and can only be taken out for 2 hours at a time. It can be taken to all the hides on the west side as well as to Stones Island and across the dam. If you are interested ask at the reception desk on arrival and provide a form of ID and leave a returnable deposit of either cash or your ID.

Binoculars can be hired for the day from the RSPB shop – for adults or children.

Since the reservoir was constructed, over 215 bird species have been recorded, including 60 breeding species. Over 30 species of mammal have also been noted.

The Carsington Bird Club regularly record between 90 and 100 bird species each November. Great Northern Diver is often recorded in the winter months, and Whooper Swan and Barnacle Goose may be present. There are frequently good numbers of geese, ducks and waders as well as woodland and farm species and raptors.

The trip is open to members as well as friends and family. The coach will leave Manchester Road cul-de-sac, Rochdale OL11 4HY at **9.00am** prompt and will set off on its return journey at 4pm.

The cost is still £20. Contact fnspublicity@gmail.com with any queries. Please pay your £20 beforehand by bank transfer: Sort code 05-07-67 Account number 60931963 and use your name as reference. **Then email fnspublicity@gmail.com to book your place on the coach by 3rd Nov.**

Please note that your place is not reserved until you receive a reply to that email. Cheques should be made payable to "Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society".

Cons & Ed Event : Sat 18th Nov : Nature Journaling – "I notice, I wonder, It reminds me of ...": Falinge Park : 10.30am : Janet Gerrard & Laura Ettrick

What do Beatrix Potter, Charles Darwin, Rachel Carson and John Muir all have in common? They were all naturalists who kept nature journals of their observations.

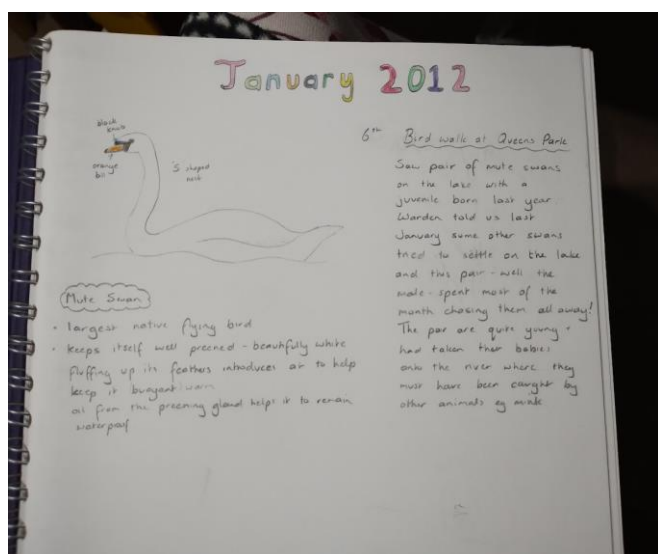
What is the purpose/benefit of a nature journal?

- Recording what we see in nature helps to develop our observational skills
- It makes us ask questions and intensifies our curiosity
- Sometimes we observe little things that bring us joy and documenting them in a journal helps embed them in our memory
- Journaling helps us form a closer connection with nature

Come along on Sat 18th Nov 10.30 – 12 to learn more and have a go at starting your own nature journaling journey. (You don't need to be an artist to nature journal – words, numbers and quick sketches can all be used as well as pretty pictures!)



Nature journal I follow on Facebook



My first nature journal

Local Walk : Thurs 23rd Nov 10.30am : Upper Naden Valley : Jenny Short

This walk will start on the west side of the valley at Overtown Lane SD 852 152 just above Greenbooth Dam.

To get there from Rochdale – drive along Edenfield Road A680 through Norden, continue past the bus terminus / chippy / Bridge Inn and then steeply uphill looking out for the White Lion pub on your right : 942 Edenfield Road, Rochdale OL12 7SS

Turn right and go up the lane beside the pub, which is Overtown Lane. Stay on this Lane for half a mile or so until you can see green railings on your right, with a pylon and the reservoir ahead of you.

The road is quite wide at this point and there's usually plenty of parking space. The meeting point is a bit further up the lane by the track down to the reservoir.

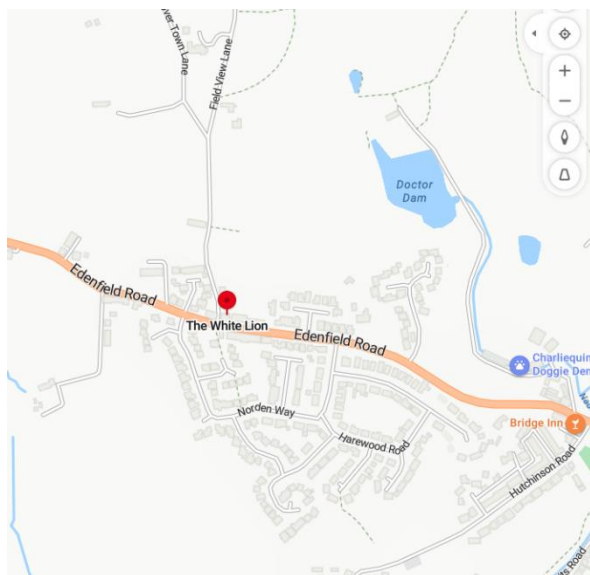
There are no refreshments or facilities.

Contact rfnspublicity@gmail.com if you would like a lift, or ring 07746408819 if you get lost!

The full walk will circuit all the Naden reservoirs (3.5 miles in total) but there are a couple of places where this can be shortened significantly by cutting back across one or other of the dams.

Most of the route is on good tracks but there are sections where the path is less defined, uneven and muddy. There are 5 sets of steep steps but all have railings, otherwise the slopes are gentle.

The furthest point of the walk reaches the edge of Scout Moor so there is a chance of seeing upland birds and raptors. The route also goes through grassland and woodland where fungi are still a possibility in November. On any of the reservoirs we may see goosander and other winter wildfowl.



RFNS SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2023/2024 : Ruth Hardcastle : RFNS Treasurer

RFNS's new financial year starts on 1st September and members renew their RFNS memberships during September and October. Please note that:

- 1) Subscriptions will remain at £10 per person
- 2) On paying your subscription you will be sent a complimentary RFNS calendar for 2024. This is a special 150 years commemorative edition being gifted as a way of thanking you for your continuing loyalty.
- 3) New members who joined during the latter part of 2022/23 do not need to renew their memberships until September 2024.

Methods Of Paying Your Subscription

Standing Order - You may wish to take this opportunity to set up a Standing Order. This is our preferred way of payment of subscriptions as it is so much easier to administer. If you choose this method then please complete the mandate form which is attached to this newsletter and e-mail it to: rfnstreasurer@gmail.com or post to: The Treasurer, RFNS, 20 Derwent Ave, Milnrow Rochdale, OL16 3UD.

Bank Transfer - Sort Code 05-07-67, Account Number 60931963. Please use your name as a reference.

Cheque - Make payable to "Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society". Please give me your cheque at any RFNS event or send it to the Treasurer's address as above.

Cash - Pay me at any RFNS event.

Please note the members form only needs to be filled in and returned to the Secretary if you are:

1) A new member

2) If your details have changed and you need to communicate this to the secretary so that the Society's records can be updated.

Advanced notice of Change of Bank Account : Ruth Hardcastle : RFNS Treasurer

The Society has taken the decision to switch the bank account from Virgin Money to the Coop Bank at the end of 2023. This decision has been taken as Virgin Money now charge on average £10 per month for our account. We feel this is too high for the society to fund in the longer term. We are planning for the account to be switched in the second half of November.
Coach Trip for November – pay as normal to Virgin Money our current banker.
Membership – If you are intending renewing your membership but haven't yet, please do as soon as possible to Virgin Money our current banker.
The switch should then take place before the next coach trip in January.
You DO NOT need to do anything else at this time as all standing orders and direct debits are automatically switched to the new bank.
In January if you pay for coach trips by bank transfer this will need to be updated. Further information will be provided on this in due course.

A Festive Invitation from Lucy Doherty : Saturday 25th November : Bacup : 10.00am

Following the success of last year's event Lucy is once again inviting members to join her on a short walk near her home on the moors above Bacup. The walk should take about two hours. This will be followed by seasonal refreshments at Lucy's house. There is no need to bring a packed lunch.
At 300m elevation, there is risk of snow and ice up there, even when Bacup itself is clear. If you would like to come, please can you email rfnspublicity@gmail.com by Thursday 23rd November at the latest so that we know who to expect. If you need a lift please say in your email and we will try to arrange it. If you haven't been to Lucy's house before, please say in your email and we will send detailed directions.

RFNS Garden Observers : Karen Cowley

Do you enjoy watching birds in your garden?
Would you like to join the RFNS Observers' Garden Recording Scheme?

This is open to any paid up member of the Society – wherever you live in Greater Manchester.

If you would like to start recording wildlife then do please start with your own garden or local patch.

Karen sends out forms to our Garden Observers every month either by post or by email.

The results help the Society to monitor what is around in our area and is useful for national researchers to monitor changes over time.

Thanks go to our loyal band of members who regularly complete monthly records of wildlife seen in their gardens and occasionally on walks around the Borough. In winter the emphasis is definitely on the birds that visit our bird tables.



All local records are forwarded to the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit to be available to researchers and conservationists, so our members don't need to send in individual records.

RFNS has the largest band of local naturalists sending in records to GM and we have secured several FIRSTS over the years!

Please contact Karen for more information: k.cowley@whitworth46.myzen.co.uk or Telephone: 01706 853791.

Bumblebees : Pamela Jackson

Laura is an efficient bully. The news that I shall shortly be moving out of Rochdale started her thinking that I might like to write something for this newsletter, and as I've been organising bumblebee surveys for about eight years that was what it was to be (pun unintentional, but noticed).

Bumblebee surveys are a small part of Citizen Science, a huge association of amateur naturalists collecting data and forwarding it to professionals through various organisations. Many of you will have come across the British Breeding Bird Survey run by the British Ornithological Society and have happy memories of posting off batches of hand-written forms to Norfolk where some poor wretch had to collate all the data. As far as Citizen Science was concerned the Internet, and entering results on line, was the best invention since sliced bread, if not ever.

Bumblebees came much later, starting in the south in 2008 and spreading north as the admin was sorted out. I first came across it at a workshop in the Peak District in 2014 and was immediately interested. I like bumblebees - who doesn't? - and I already had a site in mind. There was talk of developing Mandale Park as a local nature reserve so an idea of finding out what was there seemed a good one. It was also readily accessible, with parking, and the on-site paths were reasonable. Various hitches prevented a start in 2015, but in 2016 I mapped out a route. The first walk, in March that year, I did on my own, but at the Members' Evening that April I presented the project and asked interested members to sign up. Fourteen signatures appeared on the list, and we were in business.

Things have stayed remarkably constant since then. There has always been a 'pool' of between a dozen and fifteen people signed up to receive information about the walks, with a core group of five or six who come whenever they can and others who come sometimes. As the ideal number for a group is between three and six, that works very well.

So, what have we found? Obviously, we are only a small part of a big project but there do seem to have been changes, some of them worrying, because while the actual number of bees has remained fairly constant there seems to be less variety. Even before the miserable summer this year numbers of red-tails and white-tails were down. Buff-tails are about constant, and the one that's doing well is the common carder, now our most common bumblebee. Tree bumblebees were doing well until this year. This species is relatively new to Britain and is invading from France and moving north; it's now common and some late summer records suggest it may be having two broods in a year. Early bumblebees are also worth watching. They've never been particularly common here, but numbers seem to be increasing and again, late summer records suggest second broods.



Buff tail bumblebee



Common carder



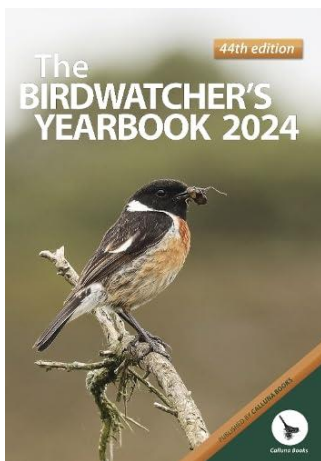
Tree Bumblebee

Remember Covid and the lockdowns? We survived that pretty well. For the first survey socialising between households was still forbidden, even outside, and exercise was limited. In stepped Jenny and Ian to do a survey in their exercise time and after that it was only social distancing. That's difficult when three or four people are trying to look at the same bee and I'm not sure we always managed it, but as far as I know no-one caught anything on the walks. Having got through that, the future looks good. I'm delighted to say that Jenny has agreed to take over from me as the main organiser, and several people have offered to step in if she's away or just busy - and I know she does a lot. Good luck everyone!

Message from our Co-Chair, Linda Turner :

Many of you probably already know that Pamela Jackson is moving out of Rochdale. Pamela has been a stalwart of RFNS and has led many walks, car trips and coach trips over the years that she has been a member. In lock down she even tried to teach some of us how to identify lichens, I'm afraid I still struggle with that. We are extremely grateful for everything Pamela has done for the society and we will be sorry to see her leave the area. However, she will still be working with the recording team with Karen Cowley and Sheila Simpson putting our observations on Mapmate to send to GMEU. One of Pamela's projects over the last eight years has been to organise monthly Bee walks in Mandale Park to record Bumblebees. She has kindly written an article for this newsletter about the project. I am very pleased to hear that Jenny Short is going to continue Pamela's work. We hope your move eventually goes smoothly and wish you all the best in your new home Pamela.

The Birdwatcher's Yearbook 2024: Joan Carter



I have had this email from Calluna Books – **“OFFER to contributors.** Thank you for responding to my request to check information for the 2024 Yearbook – I can confirm that any advised changes have been made. The Yearbook will be available towards the end of October for £24.00 (cover price), with an offer of £22.00 including delivery when purchased directly from Calluna Books.

By way of a thank you, I would like to offer you an additional discount – at **£20.00 per copy including delivery**, feel free to order multiple copies (delivery to a single address). In the first instance please contact me by email (with the number of copies required & a delivery address) - I will then send you an invoice with payment options. There is no time limit on this offer (subject to availability). Many thanks.

With best wishes, Neil Gartshore (Publisher)

Calluna Books, Moor Edge, 2 Bere Road, Wareham, Dorset BH20 4DD T: 07986 434 375 / E: enquiries@callunabooks.co.uk / W: www.callunabooks.co.uk Since The Birdwatcher's Yearbook was published in 1981 it has been a one stop shop for up-to-date, and verified, information for birdwatchers with all levels of interest.” (Editor - Contact Joan for more information)

Autumn Invasion - The Spider - Lucy Entwisle

- | | |
|---|--|
| 1. Fear not mine host - we come in peace
A gift we have for you.
All we ask is a still dark space
Away from public view. | 2. You wake in fear, put on the light
And see us skuttle away,
But in the darkness of the night
We seek unwary prey. |
| 3. It's only tradition that causes fear -
“All spiders must be killed!”
Consider a world without us here
Your house with insects filled. | 4. Out comes the swat, insecticide
Then the lethal stroke -
A death from which we cannot hide
Which simply makes you choke. |
| 5. Alternatively think of us
As useful pets and friends.
A symbiotic relationship
Suiting both our ends. | 6. We come in many guises,
Colours, shapes and sizes -
From minute mite to giant house.
Our pray specific from mite to louse -
They meet, from web to lure to pounce,
Their ultimate demises. |
| 7. So, welcome this Autumn army invading -
Living together's an art.
Influence your descendants following.....
To view us with kind heart. | |

COMMON INVADING SPIDERS

Tegenaria gigantea - Giant house spider

Leg span up to 45mm

Sheet-like web and sprints across the floor at 20in per second

Tegenaria domestica - Common domestic house spider

Leg span up to 30mm

Web a silken sheet funnels into a retreat

Leiobunum rotundum - Harvestman spider

Not really spiders, have two eyes

Tiny body fused head and abdomen

Leg span up to 50mm, may shed if attacked

Don't spin webs

Salticus scenicus - Zebra jumping spider

Black and white stripes

Leg span 5-9mm

Do not spin web to catch prey, they jump on them

Spin small retreat web

Lepthyphantes tenuis - Money spider

Most common in Britain with 270 species

Leg span 2-3mm

Small sheet-like web

Arenaus diadematus - Diadem spider

Cream cross on back of abdomen

Leg span 13mm

Large orb web up to 40cm across with zig-zag

Segestria florentina - Tube web spider

Body length up to 22mm

3 groups of two eyes and iridescent green jaws

Funnel webs in building cracks, silken lines radiating from it

Lorna Lucy Entwisle Doherty, Bacup, 25th October 2023

December Newsletter

If you have something you would like included in the December newsletter, please send it to rfsnewsletter@gmail.com by Friday 24th Nov.

Newsletter Title Colour Coding :

Green = Society Information Red = Member Contribution

