



ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

January 2024 Newsletter

January Dates

Mon 1st Jan : New Year's Day Birding Challenge : Greater Manchester 7.42am – 16.42pm

Thurs 11th Jan : Indoor Meeting : RFNS 150th Anniversary : 7.30pm : Cutgate

Sat 13th Jan : Coach Trip : Anglers Country Park ; Yorkshire : 9.00am ***BOOKING NEED***

Thurs 25th Jan : Visit to Gallery Oldham : 10.30am

ADVANCED NOTICE :

Sat 10th Feb 2024 : Coach Trip : Caerlaverock WWT, S.W. Scotland ***BOOKING NEED***

More details below. 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/

NEW YEAR'S DAY BIRDING CHALLENGE - Dawn to Dusk Bird Race : Pam Crofts

You can enter either as an individual or as a team with a maximum of 4 members.

The official - I've checked - times for dawn and dusk on Monday 1st January 2024 in Manchester are 07.42 and 16.42.

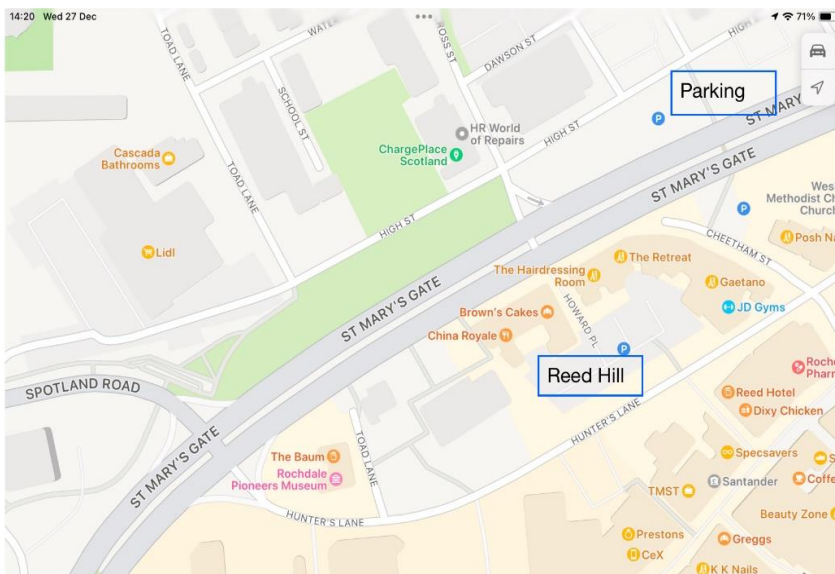
Birds must be seen between these times by **all members of a team at the same place** within Greater Manchester. You should record locations where birds have been seen as well as species. It is entirely up to you where you go within Greater Manchester. You may choose to stick close to home or zoom around the whole area. However, you must be at the designated meeting point in Rochdale at 17.00 or you will incur penalties!

If you are travelling around by car then record your mileage when **leaving your first location** and at the end of the day. The total miles travelled will be used in the event of a tie.

START - any time after 07.42 wherever you like home or away travel distance to your first location won't count towards total miles, but all members of a team must be there before you can begin.

FINISH - no more birds can be recorded after 16.42 and you must be at the meeting point which is **The Baum, Toad Lane (St Mary's Gate), Rochdale OL12 0NU** by 17.00.

They will be open - I have checked. There is no car park at the pub but there are public car parks within a couple of minute's walk. These are shown in the map and will be free, although you may still need to get a ticket so check the machines. The closest is Reed Hill CP which is accessed via Howard Place from St Mary's Gate, alternatively there's parking alongside St Mary's Gate accessed off High Street. rfnspublicity@gmail.com



Please let Pam know (07846 505126 or via RFNS WhatsApp) if you are taking part and who is in your team.

Indoor Meeting : Thurs 11th Jan : 7-30pm : Linda Turner : Co-chair



We are looking forward to welcoming you to our first indoor meeting of 2024 at Cutgate Baptist Church Edenfield Road, Rochdale, OL11 5AQ.

As this is the 150th Anniversary of the Rochdale Field Naturalists' Society we are marking the occasion with a talk on the history of the society by Karen Cowley. Karen has been researching the subject and she will be sharing her findings with us. If you have any artefacts or memories that you would like to share with us, please bring them along on the night.

Admission is £3 for Members and £4 for non-members. Refreshments will be available for which we ask for a small donation.

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 13th Jan 2024 : Anglers Country Park ; Yorkshire :

Anglers Country Park, located 4 miles south-east of Wakefield, was once known as one of the deepest open cast coal mines in the country reaching a depth of 250 feet. Since the opening of the park in 1986, it has become one of the most important inland bird sites in Yorkshire, the lake is a haven for migratory birds, particularly wintering wildfowl and it has been designated a Local Nature Reserve by Wakefield Council. The park has been awarded Green Flag status – recognising it as one of the best parks in the country. A central lake is surrounded by grassland, woodland and a wetland area known as the 'Pol' giving you an array of places to explore. Winterset reservoir has been popular with fishermen for well over a century. When the local public house was built in the 1850s it was named "Anglers Retreat". The opencast workings adopted the "Anglers" name in the 1970s and this stuck when the Country Park was created.

The two-mile lakeside path around the lake is both wheelchair and pushchair friendly and electric mobility scooters are available free of charge for use within the park. Contact 01924860280 or anglerscp@wakefield.gov.uk if you want to book one.

The newly refurbished Visitor Centre at Anglers Country Park is open 10am – 4pm daily and the Woodland Café offers the opportunity for you can enjoy a well-deserved coffee and cake at the end of the day. There is also a gift shop with "Room on the Broom" merchandise!



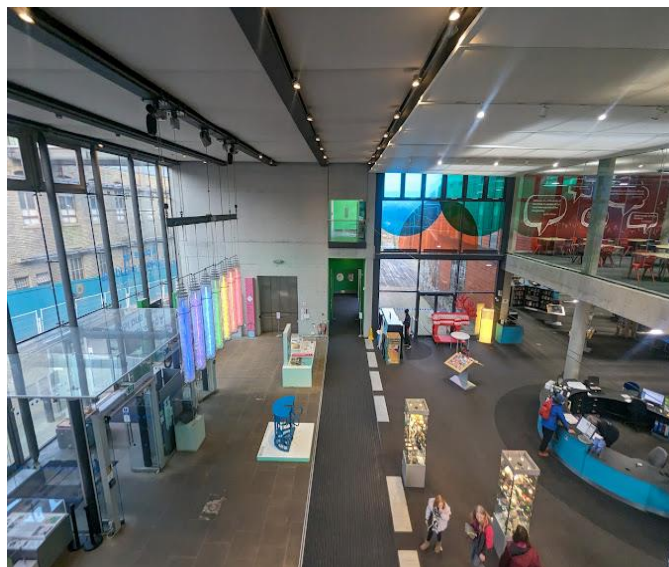
The trip is open to members as well as friends and family. The coach will leave Manchester Road cul-de-sac, Rochdale OL11 4HY at **9.00am** prompt and will set off on its return journey at 4.00pm. The cost is still £20. Contact rfnspublicity@gmail.com with any queries. Please pay your £20 beforehand by bank transfer: Sort code 05-07-67 Account number 60931963 and use your name as reference. **Then email rfnspublicity@gmail.com to book your place on the coach by 5th Jan.** **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".

Leaders : Paul Whiting & Laura Ettrick

Local Event : Thursday Jan 25th : The Gallery Oldham : 10.30am : Sheila Simpson

The local event on January 25th will be a visit to GalleryOldham. They have two natural history exhibitions on visit, "Carboniferous Monsters 150 million years before the dinosaurs " and "Wild Colour". Both are informative and beautifully presented. Patricia may be available to talk to us, but is busy packing up all their collections to be put in storage prior to the move premises in 2 years' time. A third gallery also has a display of local natural history (unfortunately stuffed) and an original Lowry painting on loan from The Lowry in Salford. Unfortunately, the cafe is closed at the moment. We will meet at the entrance to the Gallery at 10.30am. The trams from Rochdale stop almost outside the door but there are carparks nearby if the tram isn't convenient. I expect the visit will take approximately 2 hours.

<https://galleryoldham.org.uk/>



RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch : Jan 26th – 28th 2024 : Laura Ettrick

Last year, over half a million people took part in the Big Garden Birdwatch. Now, the Birdwatch is back for 2024 and we're hoping it'll be bigger than ever! The birds we see in our gardens, from our balconies, and in our parks, are a lively, colourful and endlessly fascinating part of all our lives. By taking part in the Birdwatch, you and hundreds of thousands like you play an important role in helping us understand how UK birds are doing.

During the Big Garden Birdwatch 2023, counting a whopping 9.1 million birds! House Sparrows took the top spot, but counts of these chirpy birds are down by 57% compared to the first Birdwatch in 1979. In fact, we've lost 38 million birds from UK skies in the last 60 years. With birds facing so many challenges, it's more important than ever to get involved in the Birdwatch. Every bird you do – or don't – count will give us a valuable insight into how garden birds are faring.

Taking part in the Big Garden Birdwatch is easy and fun. Just spend one hour on the weekend of Big Garden Birdwatch (26th-28th January) counting the birds that land in your garden, before submitting your results.

Register now and get ready to join the Big Garden Birdwatch 2024. Together let's take action to help birds and other wildlife thrive for generations to come.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/big-garden-birdwatch>



Coach Trip : 10th Feb 2024. Caerlaverock WWT, S.W. Scotland

We are really looking forward to our February coach trip to the Wildlife and Wetland Trust centre at Caerlaverock. When the society last went - seven years ago! - it was the most popular trip of the year and lots of members have already indicated that they are looking forward to this visit.



Caerlaverock WWT in Dumfries and Galloway is the most northerly WWT reserve and is often said to have been Sir Peter Scott's favourite. It occupies a spectacular area of wild habitat on the north Solway Coast. From October to April it is alive with flocks of tens of thousands of Barnacle Geese, hundreds of Whooper Swans and other wintering birds. The entire Svalbard population of Barnacle Geese winter on the Solway and there is the opportunity to see Whooper Swans closer than anywhere else in Britain as there are two daily wild swan feeds.

A couple of important pieces of information about this coach trip, both of which are directly linked to the fact that it's further than we usually travel:

- 1) It will be an **8.00 am start** to allow us more time to admire the wildlife!
- 2) The cost of the coach is such that we will need to charge **£30 per person** instead of our usual £20. We also need people to book places well in advance - **26th January**

Entry to the reserve is free for WWT members but there is an admission charge for non-members of £6.60 which is the group discount rate.

Hibernation in our Homeland Lucy Doherty

1.The Winter months bring shivering with cold and ice and rain.
Nice perhaps to sleep away in Spring to wake again.

2.Hedgehogs bats and dormice drop their pulse and body heat
Also snails slugs woodlice worms - which they eat.
Reptiles go into brumation when there is no sun.
Snakes and slow worms revive again when the Winter's done.

3.Frogs and newts will hibernate at the bottom of still water.
Toads will shelter under stones, in holes and damp leaf litter.
The insects - green shield bugs - and some butterflies
Will diapause - upon which their survival relies.

4.Queen bumble and some solitary bees wake up in the month of March.
Pollen and nectar they gorge upon from snowdrops, blossom and larch.
Spiders weave a funnel web into which they hide
Outside at temperatures below in diapause abide.

5.To hardier wildlife surviving the cold give help by night and day.
Helping all those still wick, methinks, 'tis best awake we stay.

Research: Wildlife Trusts, WWT, RSPB, Peter Knowles

Hibernation: Animal kingdom - most feed up in Autumn to produce body fat, metabolism slows down to less than 5% - pulse rate and breathing drops - they enter state of torpor, which is not sleep. Do not disturb their hibernation - they could starve

Invertebrates: Without a backbone or internal skeleton, spiders beetles butterflies moths mites worms snails slugs woodlice.

Mammals: hibernate

hedgehogs, bats, dormice

Reptiles: brumation

snakes, slow worms, cold blooded, need the warmth of the sun to be active

Amphibians: hibernate

frogs, newts under water, but gasses from rotting vegetation can be trapped by ice which can poison them.

Annelids: quiescent

toads shelter in leaf litter, piles of stones.

earth worms, especially anecic, eg lob worms, can burrow as deep as 100cms and in wet weather can drown.

Arachnids: diapause

spiders cold blooded, spin webs outside in which they shelter.

Crustaceans: hibernate

woodlice, need damp dark shelter

Insecta: diapause

ladybirds, some butterflies, green shield bugs, find shelter in outhouses or similar bumblebees, only queens survive solitary bees, like mining, mason, carpenter, leaf cutter, lay about 10 eggs in a stem, larvae, chrysalis, in Spring males emerge then females.

Plantea: dormant

deciduous trees, -shrubs, -climbers

dormant

wild plants perennial - bulbous corms tubers roots

dormant

grasses - roots

Lorna-Lucy Entwisle Doherty

Bacup, 26th December 2023

February Newsletter

If you have something you would like included in the February newsletter, please send it to rfsnewsletter@gmail.com by Thursday 25th Jan.

Newsletter Title Colour Coding :

Green = Society Information Red = Member Contribution

