



ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

September 2024 Newsletter

September Dates

Thurs 12th Sept : Indoor Meeting : The Moths of Lancashire : Ben Smart : 7.30pm : Cutgate

Sat 14th Sept : Coach Trip : Hest Bank : 9.00am ***BOOKING NEED***

Sat 21st Sept : Woodland Family Activity Day : Stoney Hill : 10.00am

Thurs 26th Sept : Local Walk : Deeply Vale : 10.30am

ADVANCED NOTICE :

Sat 12th Oct : Coach Trip : Filey Brigg and Filey Dam : 9.00am ***BOOKING NEED***

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/

Indoor Meeting : Thursday 12th September 7-30 p.m. Linda Turner : Co-chair

We are looking forward to welcoming you to our new season of indoor meetings at Cutgate Baptist Church Edenfield Road, Rochdale, OL11 5AQ.



THE MOTHS OF LANCASHIRE

Our speaker this month is Ben Smart, who along with Steve Palmer is the author of The Moths of Lancashire, a detailed new book published with the support of the Tanyptera Trust. The definition of Lancashire used includes most of Greater Manchester (north of the Mersey), so contains Rochdale.

Ben is from Rochdale, and his parents still live here. Some of you may have met Ben and his parents at the Moth Morning event at Stoney Hill in July, when they came along to help with identifying the moths.

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 : Hest Bank : 9.00am : Charlie Farrell ***BOOKING NEED***

Due to issues finding suitable parking for the coach at Glasson Dock, we have switched the destination for the September coach trip to Hest Bank, which is located just north of Morecambe, a place that the society visited in 2009 and 2014.

The coastal location along the southern edge of Morecambe Bay and gently sloping beach means that it is a good spot for waders and waterfowl. In September we should be able to enjoy flocks of many different species of migrating waders and ducks including some sea-ducks such as Eider and perhaps some Common Scoter or Divers.

The vegetation along the shoreline is likely to include Lax-Flowered Sea-Lavender, Spear-Leaved Orache, Sea Aster, Harebell and Sea Purslane along with Sea Plantain and Sea Milkwort. High Tide that day will be at 08:52 and low-tide is at 15:44, so the beach will be accessible most of the time that we are there. Please Note that at high tide, parts of the route are covered by the sea and parts made be partially underwater. We will amend the route accordingly, if this is the case. If you are planning to spend more time on the Salt Marsh areas then wellies would be recommended.

Cafes and toilets are available at the Shore Café and also at the Archers Café and finally at the Bay View Garden Centre, at the end of our route along the shoreline. Between the shore Café and Archers Café the quicker route goes slightly inland, but this involves climbing over 3 stiles of varying height and style en-route.

Walkers will have the option to return back along the shoreline path or to join the Canal at Bolton-le-sands and to return to Hest Bank via the Canal towpath.

The trip is open to friends and family. The coach will leave Manchester Road cul-de-sac at 9.00am prompt and set off on the return journey at 4.30pm. The cost is

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



RFNS SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR 2024/2025 : 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 2025.
- 3) New members who joined during August 2024 do not need to renew their memberships until September 2025.

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 send it to your bank or set it up online, informing the treasurer of this update at RFNSTreasurer@gmail.com

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 or the membership secretary your cheque at any RFNS event or send it to the Treasurer's address as detailed on the membership form.

Cash - Pay me or the membership secretary at any RFNS event.

Woodland Family Activity Day : Sat 21st Sept : 10.30am – 3.30pm : Stoney Hill: Pete Knowles & Jan Kidd

We are holding a **Woodland Family Activity Day** on Sat 21st Sept from 10.30 am until 3.30 pm at Stoney Hill Community Wildlife Area, Bridgefold Road OL115BP.

This is a **FREE EVENT**, so come along and join in the activities and have lots of fun.

Meet Happy the Hedgehog, find out what an owl eats, build a bird house, make a woodland mask, a bird feeder, a flower hanger, eco wand or a bat kite, and much, much more

All Welcome, but children **MUST** be accompanied by an adult.



Also

If you have a fold up table that Stoney Hill could borrow for this event, please can you get in touch with Jan Kidd as soon as possible. You can email on rfnspublicity@gmail.com

Local Walk : Deeply Vale : Thursday 26th Sept : 10.30am : Paul Whiting

Start point is the roadside parking facing Old Bets pub on Edenfield Road

We will be taking a clockwise circular route of 4.5 miles

Taking in Deeply Vale including the ponds, Buckhurst lodge, Cheesden brook, Lumb bridge

The route has several stiles and a short section on roadside verge before returning to your cars

An extension at the end of 0.5 miles can add Ashworth Moor Reservoir to the walk for anyone wanting moor 😊 (more)!

Alternatively Old Betts should be open or the roadside cafe if anyone fancies a drink 👍 😊

2025 RFNS Calendar : Pam Crofts

Unusually I am not issuing an appeal for photographs for next year's calendar. Instead, I am going to plunder the wealth of images posted by our members on our Facebook Page. I know not everyone posts on it but there are a staggering amount of fantastic photos which would be great to share with everyone.

150th Anniversary Year Walk

After a very poor weather forecast for Thursday 22nd August Rick and Karen Cowley feared they would have no takers for the Anniversary Year Walk from Broadley to Fern Isle Wood.

In fact, 13 stalwart members appeared at 10.30am in full waterproofs and sou'westers at Station Road, Broadley. We are a tough bunch in the Field Nats – and also optimistic, as everyone insisted it would soon clear up!! We spent about an hour in the Healey Dell Nature Reserve near the old Broadley Station which had bountiful wildflowers, ferns and a few insects despite the drizzle. As we turned to make our way up to Knacks Lane the skies cleared considerably and we were



delighted to spot a party of tits plus a nuthatch come down. On the route to Fern Isle Wood we unfortunately never saw any Butterwort or Beech Fern but we did see plenty of Lemon Scented fern, Black Spleenwort, Hart's Tongue fern, Polypody, Broad Buckler fern, Male fern and Golden Male Fern. In the hedgerows between the fields, we were able to practise identifying grasses and found 5 species in flower and the bright yellow of Marsh Ragwort drew everyone's attention. After the overnight rain there were several very wet patches where *Veronica beccabunga* is flourishing. Some waste land beside the Spring Mill Reservoir was carpeted with Scentless Mayweed and further examination of this area was rewarded with another interesting list of wild flowers. At higher levels the heather was turning purple

The 1882 members never told us what species other than plants they had seen on their excursion. However, we saw Raven, Kestrels, Swallows, House Martins and probably the last of the summer's Swifts returning south. There were large numbers of House Sparrows in the hedges around Knacks Farm and around Broadley Fold. Large skeins of Canada Geese – a species unheard of around here in 1882 - came down to graze the fields. Although it wasn't a great day for butterflies there were other interesting insects: dragonflies, *Helopholus pendulous* and *Cicadella viridis* which sparkled in the grass sward.

As we got higher and higher there were extensive views to the south over Rochdale and beyond and over Whitworth, Brown Wardle Hill and the ancient woodland of Healey Dell to the east.

Everyone agreed it had been an excellent day – and much better than we expected!



Chicory



Yellow Dung Beetle



Eristalis Nemorum



Cladonia

Here is a wonderfully redolent poem written for us by Lorna-Lucy Doherty née Entwisle
The Rowan

1

Landscape flattening, clouds a-darkling, skudding, drizzling
Shedding damp and spitting, trees a-shaking and dripping.
Above and upwards the billowing covering glimmers brightness
From our star,

2

Which orders a freshet to break that covering
And lets in a shaft of glory golding
Changing our world's garden to beauty beholding
And catching bright redness on the mountain bounting
From afar.

3

Winged creatures arriving shining cadmium enticing
Finding the feasts abounding squabbling gorging thriving.
Berries diminishing finishing and thus departing
Now replete

4

Scattering the seeding wherever the flying.
Sans contrast the greening - satisfying
The reasoning for living this yearly giving
Now complete.

Addendum

Rowan (from Norse 'runa' - a charm)

or Mountain Ash (flourishes by mountain streams)

Rosaceae (Rose) Family

Sorbus aucuparia

Height 15-20m

Bark smooth and shiny grey

Leaflets pinnate 5-7 in pairs opposite

with sharp forward pointing teeth

Flowers clear white 8-10mm five petals, umbellike in dense corymb

Fruit UK - orange, red

Pomes (not berries) - fleshy with thick outer layer and seeds inside

Lepidoptera larvae use Rowan as plant food

Can be cooked and used for eg jam

Unrelated to Ash - *Oleaceae* (Olive) Family, *Fraxinus excelsior*

References

Collins Wild Flowers UK 1989, Readers Digest 1985, "Roots", Wiki, Google

Lancashire Life

RFNS made it into the Lancashire Life magazine. Well done!



We love Rochdale, naturally

The Rochdale Field Naturalists are celebrating their 150th anniversary this year and Peter Knowles, who co-chairs the society with Linda Turner, is convinced there is no reason why it shouldn't reach another 150.

'People are noticing their environment and they want to help improve it for our local fauna and flora,' says Peter, who organises family-friendly events like Spot the Wildflower Walks and river cleaning. 'We also organise walks, talks and coach trips

for members; we all have specific interests – you can tell someone's speciality on a walk: birdwatchers always make sure they're at the front and flower specialists walk slowly inspecting the ground.'

Linda says: 'We send our data to the Greater Manchester Ecology Unit. Unlike our predecessors, we no longer press flowers or shoot things. The only thing we shoot is our cameras, although, just like them, we do pore over books to identify our finds.'

The society cleared an area at Footlands planting a wildflower meadow and were rewarded with the arrival of the brown argus butterfly, seen for the first time in Rochdale.

'Rochdale is a good place to be a field naturalist. We're surrounded by moorland and although I'm born and bred here, I've been on walks that I never knew existed, so I don't think we'll be running out of places to explore any time soon,' says Linda.
rochdalefieldnaturalists.org.uk

October Newsletter

If you have something you would like included in the October newsletter, please send it to rfsnewsletter@gmail.com by Wednesday 25th Sept.