



ROCHDALE FIELD NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

May 2025 Newsletter

May Dates

Thurs 1st May : Con & Ed Event : Bird and Bat Walk, Greenbooth : 6.30pm

Sun 4th May : Con & Ed Event : Dawn Chorus Day : Watergrove : 5.00am

Sat 10th May : ***CAR TRIP*** : RSPB Coombes Valley, Staffordshire ***LIFT BOOKING NEEDED***

Thurs 15th May : Local Walk : Upper Naden : 10.30am

(Sat 24th May : Surveying Small Mammals : Stoney Hill Event : 10.00am)

Thurs 29th May : Con & Ed Event : Survey of Barlow Bottoms : 10.00am

ADVANCED NOTICE :

Fri 6th June : M.M.U. Sustainability Festival : 11.00am

Sat 12th June : Coach Trip : Kettlewell & Starbottle : 9.00am ***BOOKING NEEDED***

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/

Conservation & Education Event : “Birds and Bats” : Thurs 1st May : 6.30pm : Janet Gerrard



Early evening walk to see what we can spot around Doctor Dam and the lower part of Greenbooth reservoir in Norden. Meet at the car park by the Bridge Chippy (OL11 5TT) and Jubilee Park in Norden, just off the A680 Edenfield Rd. If the car park is full there is parking on Hutchinson Rd. There are a few flights of steep steps and stiles along the route. There should be plenty of Spring migrants by then and we might spot some birds of prey. Please bring a bat detector if you have one and we will see what bats are about as dusk approaches. (Sunset is around 8.40pm)

Optional drinks afterwards at The Bridge Inn.

Conservation & Education Event : Sun 4th May : Dawn Chorus : Watergrove : 5.00am : Paul Whiting



This event celebrates International Dawn Chorus Day. Whether it's Skylarks, Blackcaps, Nightingales or Robins, the UK's birdsong spectacular reaches its crescendo in early May just in time for International Dawn Chorus Day. This is held on the first Sunday in May each year, which falls on 4th May in 2025.

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/whats-happening/news/the-dawn-chorus-all-you-need-to-know-about-natures-big-show>

Meet at Watergrove Reservoir car park for a 5.00am start and we should be back to the start for 8.00am in

time to get home for Breakfast. Smart phone users may want to download Merlin which we will be able to use and demonstrate during the walk. So, if you can be up with the Lark or can't sleep, we will see you as the sun rises and the birds are at their most active. Last year we spotted an Avocet, the first ever recorded at Watergrove!

Car Trip : Sat 10th May : RSPB Coombes Valley Reserve, Staffordshire : 9.00am : Sheila Simpson and Karen Cowley

Please note that in May we are having a car trip rather than a coach trip because this reserve no longer has access for coaches.

RSPB Coombes Valley, Six Oaks Farm, Leek ST13 7EU

What3Words tumblers.exposing.gearing Grid reference SK00915340

The Nature Reserve and Car Park are open from 9am until dusk. The toilets until 8pm.

The Car Park is FREE to RSPB members – display your Membership card on the dash.
Non Members pay £4 per car - Pay by Phone or in Visitor Centre when staffed.

We intend to leave from Manchester Road at 9.00am and should be at the Reserve at approximately 10.30am

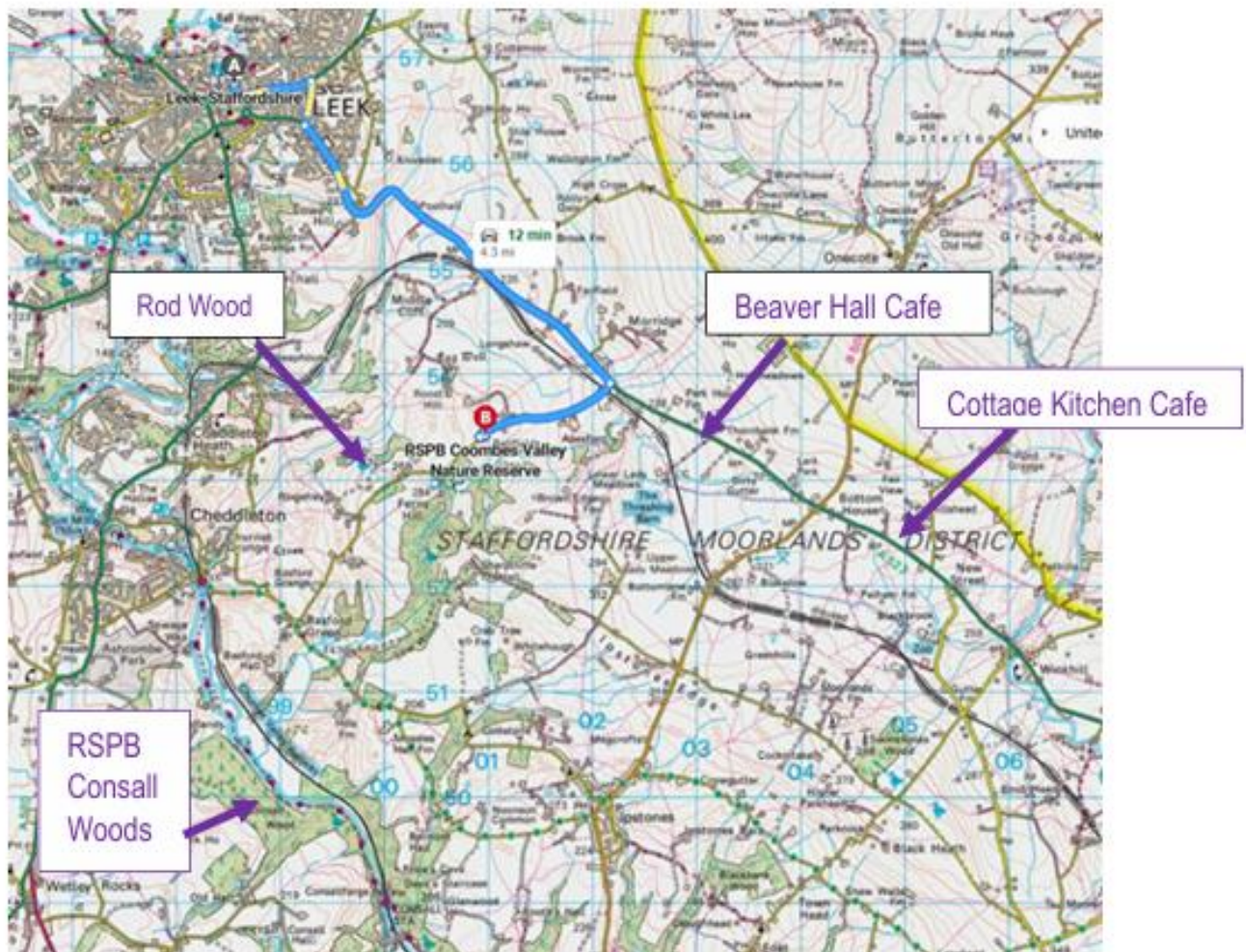
Please let us know via the rfnspublicity@gmail.com or the WhatsApp group if:

- 1. You can offer a lift (and say how many places you can offer)*
- 2. You need a lift*
- 3. You are going directly to Coombes Valley.*

If you can tell us before Sunday 4th May we will try to match those who need a lift with those offered and let you all know.

Your Sat Nav may suggest various routes depending on traffic conditions.

From Rochdale we drove South to M60 clockwise through Stockport – then took A34 to Cheadle, A532 to Macclesfield and Leek. After three miles (4.8 km) from Leek on Ashbourne Rd (A532) turn Right at the junction with Bradnop Road. (There are Brown tourist signs) Continue for one mile to the Reserve Car Park and Information Centre.



Coombes Valley is a wonderful woodland reserve. There are ancient oaks, swathes of Bluebells in May and many other early flowering species. It is situated in a deep valley so some trails are steep or they have steps but they are generally good. Most are stony underfoot and could be slippery in wet weather. There is one stile at the north end of the Valley Woodland Trail shortcut and an exciting canopy walk on a rope bridge for the intrepid!



Please Download the attached Trail Map and bring with you in case there are not enough printed copies at the Information Centre.

In spring and early summer, migrating birds come to breed and are often seen on the Valley Woodland Trail – an easy one hour trail with picnic spots at places where you could see bird migrants nesting and grey wagtails on the stream. There are plenty of chiff-chaffs and willow warblers as well as all the usual woodland birds. Lots of nesting boxes have been erected to attract Pied Flycatchers and Redstarts and a few of them have arrived already (early April) and can easily be seen in the area below the Clough Meadow Cottage.

This is a simple reserve. There is a small information centre next to the Accessible Toilets. There is no Shop or Café but you can purchase ice cream and cold drinks at the information Centre. There are plenty of wildlife benches often facing good views but no hides or much shelter in inclement weather. In a couple of places there is sufficient seating for small groups but mainly the seats are widely dispersed around the reserve.

If you need more refreshment after your visit there is a café at the **Beaver Hall Equestrian Centre ST13 7EZ** just a half mile down the A532 towards Ashbourne and also the **Cottage Kitchen Country Café** further down the same road at Winkhill, ST13 7PN, open until 4.30pm - or you can find more facilities in Leek or Cheddleton.

Other wildlife reserves nearby:

- (i) RSPB Consall Woods, Consall, Staffordshire, ST9 0BE
- (ii) Rod Wood – a Staffordshire Wildlife Trust Reserve - meadows.

Conservation & Education Event : Thurs 29th May 10.00am - 12noon : Barlow Bottoms Survey : Mark Higginbottom & Gill Wrigley

The field meeting will conduct a species survey of Barlow Bottoms Meadow, Facit, Whitworth. SD886193. It will act as a follow up from the previous survey carried out on Monday 29th July 2024.

This is a good opportunity for you to look for phyla you might otherwise overlook. If you are not confident in ID, you are very welcome to attend as there will be experienced members there to assist.

Times: 10.00am -12 noon. There is scope for members to stay longer and explore the area further, including Facit incline and chimney.

Parking: There is a layby (image 1) immediately opposite Stubbs Lane (image 2) on the left and on-street parking. SD887195.



Terrain: The access is tarmac from the parking area down to the entrance to the meadow. The meadow itself is rough grass and has no clear paths. It is flat, but uneven.

Activities: We aim to carry out a thorough survey during the morning and hope members will agree to focus on one of the following areas to record;

Wild flowers

Grasses/sedges/rushes

Trees

Birds

Invertebrates (Molluscs, Arachnids, Hymenoptera (Ants, bees and Wasps), Coleoptera (Beetles and Weevils), Lepidoptera (butterflies and Moths), Diptera, Hemiptera, Odonata (Dragonflies, Damselflies, Chasers) and Orthoptera (Grasshoppers etc),

In addition there will be a table and chairs area under a gazebo where members will support identification of species photographed during the survey:

What to bring: Usual outdoor gear, refreshments and if possible please bring along any field guides that will support the identification of species during the morning.

Local Walk : Thurs 15th May : Upper Naden : 10.30am : Trevor Parry

Local walk. Thurs. 15th May. Naden Valley. Trevor Parry.

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

To get there from Rochdale, drive along Edenfield Road through Norden. Continue past the Bridge Inn and then steeply uphill looking for the White Lion pub on your right. Turn right at the pub onto Overtown Lane and continue on for about $\frac{1}{2}$ mile until you can see green railings on your right.

The road is quite wide at this point and there is usually plenty of parking space. There are no refreshments or toilets. The full walk will circuit all three of the Naden reservoirs (about $3\frac{1}{2}$ miles)

Most of the route is on good tracks, though quite narrow in places (especially around the Higher Reservoir) and possibly a little muddy after wet weather. There are a few sets of steep steps, including one stretch of 106 steps very early on, but most of the route is fairly flat. Some of the uphill can be avoided by cutting across some of the dams but this would mean repeating some of the route in reverse.

The valley is often good for stonechicks, wheatear and reed bunting and it is always worth watching the sky for ravens or buzzards. There used to be a regular little owl on the little cliffs above the Lower Reservoir and I suspect there is still one around somewhere in the valley.

***** N.B. The White Lion pub's address is 942 Edenfield Rd, Rochdale OL11 5TA *****

Stoney Hill Community Wildlife Area : Saturday May 24th : 10.00 am to around 12.00 noon
Surveying Small Mammals : FREE EVENT

Small mammals such as Wood Mice, Shrews and Weasels are very difficult to detect and record. They are quick to hide, and often live in holes, walls or dense vegetation. Join us as we try out a variety of ways to detect their presence.



This is new for us and we have no guarantee of success!

We'll begin the event by looking at a few of the mammals we could find, and discuss methods of detecting them. We'll then go to Stoney Hill to see what we have found. Meet at Rochdale Sports Club, Redbrook, Bridgefold Road, Rochdale, Lancs. OL11 5BX at 10.00 am.



Wear sensible shoes and bring a drink. Biscuits provided.

Suitable for older children

ALL WELCOME - FREE EVENT

The Gulf Stream
Lorna Lucy Doherty née Entwisle
Bacup 17th April 2025

1.The Gulf Stream starts it's cycle from
The Gulf of Mexico -
The Stream transporting waters warm
To help ecology grow.

2.Passes America's Eastern coasts
And at 36°,
Turns East across The Atlantic Ocean
To reach European countries.

3.At 10° warmer The Scilly Islands
Become sub-tropical.
Then up to Western Ireland - Scotland -
Resist the winter frozicle.

4.At speed of 30 sverdrups a gif,
4 miles an hour the meaning.
It is the warmth that brings new life
60 miles wide the streaming

5.Then passing Norway losing the heat
By wind's evaporation.
The colder climes to reach to meet,
Causing it's abation.

6.Saltier denser heavier becoming -
Sinks to ocean's floor.
Southerly returns from whence it's coming
To start the cycle once more.

Addendum

Refs : Google, AI Overview, HowStuffWorks,Wikipedia, World Atlas

The Gulf Stream is part of Atlantic Meridional Overturning Circulation (AMOC) and is a warm and swift Atlantic Ocean current

Rises - Gulf of Mexico gathering momentum
East coast America to 36°
Turns East - to Europe and branches:
Southwards - Scilly Isles, France, Spain
Northwards - Greenland, Iceland, N Norway
W Ireland, Scotland, S Norway
Looses heat by evaporation
Becomes heavier
Sinks deep to ocean beds

Returns - via currents to origins

UK - Brings heat to Scilly Isles, Ireland, Scotland but not English Channel nor between Ireland and England

Stays in narrow stream:

Coriolis effect
Wind patterns
Shape of ocean floor
Western intensification

Description:

Temperatures: potentially 5-10° warmer
Dimensions: 100k (60miles) wide, 800-1,200m (2,600-3,900ft) deep
Speed average: 5.6k (4miles) per hour
Transports: 30-150 million cubic metres per second -
(30-150 sverdrups per second)

(Editor : I can well understand why Lucy says that she enjoys composing her nature related poems as it involves doing so much research. She says that it keeps her mind active and that she learns so much for her researching each of her topics. A lesson to us all there...)

RFNS Indoor Meetings

Please note that our schedule of Indoor Meetings on the evening of the second Thursday in the month has finished for the summer. The next meeting will be on **Thurs 11th September**. Put the date in your diary now!

Advanced Notice : Friday 6th June : 11.00am – 4.00pm Sustainability Festival : Manchester Metropolitan University

The 4th annual SES Sustainability Festival celebrates and promotes transformative action for socio-ecological sustainability within Manchester and beyond. This year's event will focus on nature and food, and creating pathways to a just and regenerative future.

The 2025 Sustainability Festival will include an inspiring and interactive programme of exhibits, workshops, performances, artwork, poster presentations and more. Throughout the day, there will be a wide range of stalls from sustainable businesses and enterprises, community groups, students and academics and NGOs with multiple opportunities for building new connections and collaborations. The Society has been invited to provide a stall at this event. **If anyone would like to organise a stall, contact us on rfspublicity@gmail.com and we will provide assistance, tables, banner etc.**

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/sustainability-festival-2025-tickets-1301122174449>



June Newsletter : If you have something you would like included in the May 2025 newsletter, please send it to rfsnewsletter@gmail.com by **Friday 23rd May**

Keep an eye on your emails as well as our information sources :

www.rochdalefieldnaturalists.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/965410946937744/

and our WhatsApp pages (Info as well as Chat)

