

The RSPB Macclesfield Local Group



The Heron 40th Anniversary Season



Newsletter - January 2020

WE WELCOME DENNIS ATHERTON AS OUR SPEAKER TONIGHT

This will be the first talk Dennis has given to the group. A keen birder and photographer he likes to travel and see birds from far and wide.

His talk will follow The Texas Coastal Birding Trail, a state-designated system of trails, bird sanctuaries and nature reserves running along the entire length of the Gulf coast. He will be dropping in at all the local hotspots looking for up to 30 species of American warblers during peak migration on their way north across the Gulf of Mexico as they make their way back to their breeding grounds in America and Canada. He will also check out the stunning coastal shore birds and exotic raptors before making a trip to the Rio Grande for Mexican specialities.

DIARY DATES

JANUARY 2020

Wednesday 15	Walk with Nature: Astbury Mere Country Park Join us for a short winter walk around Astbury Mere Country Park looking for wildfowl and unexpected visitors. The Country Park has hosted Slavonian grebe, smew, brambling and hawfinch at this time of year in the recent past. Meet at the Visitor Centre, Sandy Lane off the A34 (Newcastle Road) Congleton CW12 4FR. LR Grid Reference SJ846627, WGS84 N 53.16132, W 2.23153 10:30 am to 12:30 pm, Car park fee payable Leaders: Ian and Lydia Taylor 01260 275248
Saturday 25	National RSPB Event: 'Big Garden Birdwatch' at West Park, Macclesfield Contribute to monitoring the state of bird populations across the country by taking part in The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch with help from birdwatchers from The RSPB Macclesfield Local Group and Wildlife Explorers. There will be advice on using binoculars and telescopes and help with identifying common garden birds, as well as lots of helpful hints on completing your own survey at home. Meet outside the café by the bowling green at West Park, Prestbury Road, Macclesfield, SK10 3BJ 10:00 am to 12:00 noon Contact: Tina Hanak 07870 804413 or visit the Wildlife Explorers website
Sunday 26	WGBG Coach Trip: Fylde Coast Depart at 8:00 am from Wilmslow Guild, Bourne Street, Wilmslow, SK9 5HD Contact: Steve McGann 01625 533652

FEBRUARY 2020

Friday 7	CAWOS Meeting: From Alaska to Argentina - Wildlife through the Americas' by Mark Sisson 7:30 pm for a prompt 7:45 pm start at St. Vincents Roman Catholic Church, Tatton Street, Knutsford, WA16 6HR
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DIARY DATES

FEBRUARY 2020

Sunday 9 To Monday 10	Field Trip Away Overnight: Rutland Water If you plan to join us for our new venture to visit Rutland Water for just an overnight stay please let either of the walk leaders (Ian and Lydia Taylor) know you are coming. You will be responsible for booking your own accommodation on Sunday evening and we suggest using the Premier Inn at Melton Mowbray where the walk leaders will be staying. All rooms have ensuite facilities and this Premier Inn does have a restaurant. Meet at the Rutland Water, Anglian Water, Birdwatching Centre at 10:45 am (travel time from Macclesfield 2.5h). There will be a permit charge of £6 per person per day (£5 concessions). Lifts may be possible if we have sufficient willing participants. We plan to spend the two days exploring the hides around Rutland Water and Eyebrook Reservoir. At this time of the year we would expect to see grebes, smew, wildfowl and woodland birds. Walk Leaders: Ian and Lydia Taylor mobile 07540 707170 or 07976 850399
Tuesday 11	Indoor Meeting: 'Sri Lanka – The Teardrop Island' by Keith Offord A journey through a land of immense natural diversity, with fabulous National Parks and protected areas with many endemic species. Introduced by: David Tolliday 01625 432105

40th Anniversary Dinner



**Booked at the Tytherington Club, Macclesfield
on Tuesday 21st April 2020**

We cordially invite members, partners and friends to join us for this evening's celebration of the Local Group's 40th Anniversary with after dinner speaker Professor David Norman.

Cost excluding drinks - £25 per person for a three course meal and speaker.

Please book your place by contacting Daryll Bailey - 01625 430311 / secretary@macclesfieldrspb.org.uk or by adding your name and contact details to the sign up sheet on the front desk at tonight's meeting.

Tickets available at the February 11 2020 Indoor meeting

A NEW COMMUNITY FUNDING CO-ORDINATOR



The Local Group are pleased to announce that **Pam Woollen, assisted by Bruce Woollen**, has now taken over the role of **Community Funding Coordinator (Pin Badges)** from Rita Howard.

Rita and her team of pin badge box volunteers banked over £41,000 since she took over the role in 2005. The Local Group Committee, on your behalf, would once again like to thank Rita for all her hard work and ask that we all support Pam and Bruce as they look to follow in Rita's fantastic footsteps.

Editor

To My Spirit Animal by Frankie Babcock

Growing up, one of the values (or maybe it's more a quirk) I got from my family, was not to have 'favourites'. It somehow fitted with a sense of fairness but also my very indecisive personality. I'm neither amazed nor ungrateful that I've never been asked to appear on Desert Island Discs, have never liked judging competitions and I'm unable to answer the question 'Which aspect of nature do you like best'.

My best shot at an answer would probably be, 'Whatever I'm enjoying at the moment' be it birds, flowers or trees. Recently, having to compose a poem for a poetry group I'm in, I struggled with the topic - What is your Spirit Animal? Write a poem for / to it.

Having wasted half the allotted time trying, and failing to make up my mind, I had to settle for this:

Who are you?, Maybe it's me?, I never can decide, sometimes you surprise me
A warty wonder sheltered under a stone
Sometimes I just hear you snuffling, shuffling in the dark, sometimes a plop in the pond
or a scuffle in the park, sometimes you appear, buzzing, boisterous, bumping
Sometimes you're ephemeral, fickle, fluttering
In the ocean you dive, a flash of orange beak
In the meadow you jive, all ears and tail and feet
Sometimes just a shadow, a rustling in a wood
Sometimes all you leave me is, a paw print in the mud.
You can be a hoot on my birthday
A choir at break of dawn
Sometimes you're ecstatic, sometimes you're forlorn
You're a swirling squealing scimitar, soaring to the sun
Too soon you're gone, too swift to follow
When summer's almost done
Did you send your wintry substitute?
Whose speckles sparkle through my grief?
I'm grateful sure but only your return in Spring can bring me full relief.
Maybe it's you
Shapeshifter?
or maybe it's me?
I never can decide.

Tunncliffe's Big Garden Birdwatch

A joint event from Macclesfield Museums and Macclesfield RSPB

Macclesfield RSPB Local Group and Macclesfield Museums are planning two engaging talks for the 16th January. Taking place in the Tunncliffe Exhibition at Macclesfield Heritage Centre, the talks will be focussed on providing attendees with all the information needed to take part in the RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch, the world's largest wildlife survey.

The largest collection of artworks held in Macclesfield museums is that of Charles Tunncliffe (1901-1979), an artist made famous for his illustrations of Henry Williamson's 1932 edition of Tarka the Otter and his artworks for the RSPB. This collection not only contains beautiful representations of wildlife but also scenes and landscapes from the local area of Macclesfield, where Tunncliffe grew up.

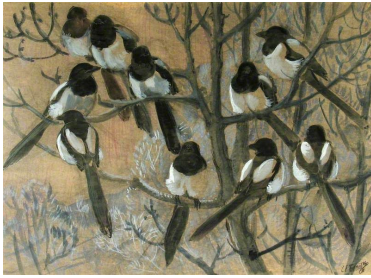
Tunncliffe's Big Garden Birdwatch Thursday 16 January 2020

Whittaker Room, Heritage Centre, Macclesfield

Family talk, 4.30 – 5.30pm

Adult talk, 7.30 – 8.30pm

Free entry (donations welcome), no booking required.



The earlier, family-focussed talk will introduce the most common garden birds with a mix of pictures and bird song. There will also be hands on activities for all the family delivered by Macclesfield RSPB Wildlife Explorers. (4.30 – 5.30pm)

Later in the evening there will be a talk for an adult audience. This will look in further detail into the lives and habits of our most familiar garden birds, incorporating Tunnicliffe images from both the RSPB and Macclesfield Museum collections. There will also be time to look at the Tunnicliffe Exhibition at the end of the talk. (7.30 – 8.30pm)

'We are thrilled to have the RSPB coming along to the Macclesfield Museum to deliver these fun and informative talks. Hopefully the stunning Tunnicliffe images will inspire people to take part in the Big Garden birdwatch and help the RSPB with their important conservation work,' enthused Natalie Lane (Education Coordinator, Macclesfield Museums).

Hopefully the talks will inspire visitors to take part in The RSPB's Big Garden Birdwatch which runs from 25 - 27 January. Over the last 40 years, 137 million birds have been counted giving the RSPB an astonishing amount of insight into how our wildlife is faring.

Taking part is easy. Spend just an hour during the Birdwatch weekend watching and counting the birds in your garden or local green space. Every count is important, so don't worry if you don't see anything. Observing which birds aren't around is as important as seeing the ones that are. You can submit your results online at rspb.org.uk/birdwatch or by post.

Further details about the talks can be found on the Macclesfield Museums website - <https://macclesfieldmuseums.co.uk/whats-on>

Tina Hanak
Wildlife Explorers Leader

'Magpies roosting' painting by C.F. Tunnicliffe photo credit Silk Heritage Trust currently on display as part of the Tunnicliffe Exhibition

RSPB Bempton Cliffs Seabird Cruises 2020 Schedule

Puffin & Gannet Cruises are planned to run from May to August, sailing around the coast and up to Bempton Cliffs to look at almost half-a-million seabirds nesting on the cliffs between April and September. The cruises allow you to get close-up views of puffin, gannets, guillemots, razorbills, herring gulls, fulmars, kittiwakes and shags.

Diving Gannet cruises - Three cruises are planned for August 2020 when we will sail up to Bempton Cliffs to see thousands of gannets raising their young on the cliffs. You can also experience the unforgettable sight of gannets diving around the boat for food.

A Pelagic cruise has been re-introduced following popular demand on Saturday 5 September at 4.00pm (with a provisional reserve date of Saturday 19 September in case of cancellation).

All cruises sail aboard the Yorkshire Belle from Bridlington Harbour and last for three hours, except the Pelagic which may last up to three and a half hours.

Follow the link for more information, dates and prices - <http://www.rspb.org.uk/bemptoncliffs>

Editor

Health and Safety

In the event of fire or other emergency necessitating evacuation of the building, please leave in an orderly manner via the nearest available Emergency Exit or as instructed by a designated Committee member. Emergency Exits are indicated by the internationally recognised symbol of a 'running man' on a green background.

If required, there is a first aid kit in the kitchen. (If you do have an accident, however minor, while here tonight please report it directly to a Committee member who, amongst other things, will ensure that details are logged in the Accident Report Book.)