

Loughborough Naturalists' Club



www.loughboroughnats.org



Annual Report 2019

LOUGHBOROUGH NATURALISTS' CLUB

OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE

as at 30 November 2019

President Ms H Ikin

COMMITTEE

Chair Mrs H Graves

Vice-chair Vacant

Honorary Secretary Mrs S Graham

Honorary Treasurer Miss ML McLoughlin

Membership Secretary Mr G Fisher

Indoor Meetings Co-ordinator Mrs P Darby

Outdoor Meetings Co-ordinator Vacant

Members
Mr M Buckley
Mr J Graham
Mr J Ward
Mrs K Ward
Mr P Wilkinson
Mr S Woodward

OTHER OFFICERS

Heritage Editorial Panel
Ms H Ikin
Mr J Graham
Mr S Woodward

Librarian Ms H Ikin

Records Co-ordinator Ms H Ikin

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2019

We have enjoyed a highly successful year once again with a superb range of both indoor and outdoor meetings. We are very grateful to both Margaret McLoughlin and Pam Darby for stepping in so successfully to the roles of Treasurer and Indoor Meetings Co-ordinator. We still need a Vice-Chairman and an Outdoor Meetings Co-ordinator. Volunteers would be very welcome.

Our 2019 season of indoor meetings was started off in January by Steve Woodward who gave us a talk on his and Helen's findings in VC55 Churchyards. The range of plants and animals they found was remarkable, especially their records of invertebrates. All credit to Steve and Helen for the sheer amount of hard work that has gone into this fascinating study. I do hope they intend to publish.

The next two talks, February and March were on the wildlife of areas of two European Countries. This particularly fascinated me as I have taken wildlife holidays in both the areas. Pam Darby took us on a tour of Extremadura and the Gredos, showing us the scenery and wildlife in this wonderful part of Spain, especially birds and flowers, and Ian Gamble showed us the wildlife of Abruzzo, a mountain region in the Apennines in Italy, amazingly less than 100 miles from Rome but with wolves and bears and an amazing array of wildflowers especially orchids. After both Pam's and Ian's talks I went home planning when we could go back!

Our April meeting was the AGM, concluding with Member's talks. I briefly mentioned the impressive work done by the Charnwood Lodge Volunteer Recording Group, including several of our new Members, in adding an impressive total of 527 new species to the reserve between 2014 and 2019, such as moths, spiders and rare plants. Anona and Graham Finch discussed the case bearing moths that we have observed on our Wednesday morning walks and those also found at Charnwood Lodge, including an adult of the, new to VC55 species, Lesser Lichen Case-bearer *Dahlica inconspicuenta*. Steve Woodward gave a short presentation of his recent trip to Sri Lanka, with superb photographs, and Jeremy Haynes concluded the evening with video recordings from his trip to Trinidad.

We restarted the Winter Season with a talk in September by Bruce White entitled "Target: 200 Tweets". Bruce runs a U3A birdwatching group and is also Chairman of Great Bowden local group of the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. He gave us an illustrated account of his determined travels around the country to find his target of 200 bird species that he had set himself in one year, describing destinations and habitats he enjoyed in order to complete his goal.

The October talk was by Jamie Gould, Ranger at Brock's Hill Country Park and a naturalist who lives in Charnwood Forest. Jamie has travelled in Eastern Hungary and gave an illustrated talk entitled "The Wildlife of Transylvania". She described some of the unique wildlife of the traditionally farmed region of Transylvania, which contains some of the most species-rich grasslands in Europe.

Tim Sexton, manager at Attenborough Nature Reserve was our speaker in November and gave a superbly interesting talk entitled "The Wonder of Willow". He covered a wide range of aspects of Willow, including its importance for wildlife, in particular for a vast diversity of insects, including many micro moths in which he has a particular interest. Willow is considered a 'wildlife champion' at the Attenborough Reserve. He also talked about some of the more cultural aspects of willow growing in the Trent Valley, including its commercial use.

Our December Meeting was a Members Evening complete with Mince Pies. We had presentations from our Members covering a wide range of subjects. Anne Brown gave a beautifully illustrated presentation of the range of fungi she has seen and photographed locally. Roger Harris discussed his moth trap that he had used fondly at his home in France but is now happy to pass on to Loughborough Nats. One of our Members was delighted to obtain it for a donation to our Club. Ian Gamble gave us a fascinating insight into the moths that he is now finding in his home district of Bedfordshire and that we are

likely to be seeing soon in Leicestershire as climate change seems to be causing a northward spread of moths with a more southerly distribution. The evening was rounded off with a delightful presentation by Jim Graham, recording many of the species of lemur that he and Sue had seen on their recent trip to Madagascar and including discussion of some of the ecological problems to be found there.

All in all a wonderful year of interesting and informative evenings.

Our outdoor Wednesday morning meetings have been similarly interesting, and well attended. We visited a range of destinations covering a variety of habitats, including canals, heaths, lakes, woodland, and heathland. We found many items of natural history interest. Full reports of these walks are found in the Newsletters. Many thanks to the leaders of these walks, who were members of the Committee plus Bas Forgham who led the walk to Cloud Wood SSSI. The December walk had been planned for Cossington Meadows but following unusually high rainfall in the autumn we decided that the footpaths at Watermead Country Park would be more accessible. It would be helpful if all our Members forward their email addresses to Sue Graham so that we have an easy way of contact in case of further changes to our schedule.

Heritage continues to be published, albeit with a few delays. Many thanks to the Editorial Team for all their work on this. Please remember that *Heritage* needs Members' records to continue to be so successful. I am writing this at the start of the Coronavirus pandemic but would like to remind you that records are still needed and *Heritage* will still be written.

Once again, many thanks to all the Officers and Members of the Committee, and Members of our Club who have supported me in 2019. And many thanks to those Members who have helped with refreshments – very much appreciated by all.

Hazel Graves

March 2020

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2019

It has been another very enjoyable year in post as Secretary and heartening to see that our Members continue to embrace the natural world with so much enthusiasm and wonder. There is always something new to learn and the combination of our regular meetings and outings has ensured that expert knowledge and field skills are shared in relaxed, informal and social settings.

Everyone on the LNC Committee has worked hard over the past year to ensure that Club business carries on behind the scenes, despite some unavoidable delays in the publication of the Club's flagship publication, *Heritage*.

Involvement in the Club is a two-way process and we would be delighted to receive any articles from you about Nature, no matter how brief, for inclusion in the Newsletter. These could be about recent garden sightings, observations on behaviour of certain species or perhaps fond memories from your local patch. Your contributions are also of critical importance for *Heritage*, which has experienced a significant drop in the number of Members submitting records of late for a variety of reasons. With a little bit of effort, we should all be able to keep our Club vibrant and moving forward. Let's think positive and make it happen!

Sue Graham

March 2020

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2019

Last year was quite a steady year for membership with just four Members declining to renew, two of whom unfortunately moved away from the area. We did however have a new family Membership, which helped offset this. We remain a small club, numbering less than one hundred, but happily are fortunate to have a surprisingly loyal core of long-standing Members!

However, to secure the Club's future through the next decade, we always need new Members, so if you know anyone who may be interested, please do tell them about the benefits of the Club and encourage them to consider joining us.

We have continued to retain Membership subscriptions at the same level for eight years now, even though costs are continually rising. I am sure you will agree that they are good value, as they enable us to continue our mission to record the flora and fauna of our locality as well as disseminating such information and hopefully providing interesting and informative talks and excursions.

Please may I remind you that, in accordance with our Constitution, Membership subscriptions are always due on 1st January each year, regardless of the time of year you may have first joined. The only exception being that if you join during the last three months of the calendar year, this covers the following year's subscription also.

So thank you once again, to all who have already kindly renewed their subscription for 2020 in a timely manner. For those who may have overlooked this crucial task, we would be most grateful to receive your renewal at your earliest convenience. Please forward you subscriptions to the Membership Secretary or hand them to any of your Committee Members.

Please remember that Gift Aiding allows us to claim back the income tax you may have paid on your subscription and so helps us keep down Membership rates. You only need to do this once, so if you pay income tax but haven't already done this, please consider Gift Aiding your subscription and request a declaration form from either the Membership Secretary or Treasurer.

Thank you to all who have let us have contact details so we may be in touch if necessary at short notice. This is particularly useful if we have to make any last minute changes to arrangements for meetings or walks, and is especially relevant in the current conditions. So if you are able to provide a contact telephone number (land line and/or mobile) and e-mail address, this would help us stay in touch. We currently hold such details for only 45% of Members, so any additional information would be appreciated. We promise to keep your details safe and only use your address for Club-related reasons. If you would like to help us keep in touch, just send an e-mail from your mail account to the Membership Secretary at grahamandmaggie@waitrose.com - or let any Committee Member know your contact details and no doubt I will be advised for the record.

You can also receive your copy of *Heritage* and Newsletter via e-mail if you wish, saving the Club postage costs. Just let us know by e-mail or speak to one of your Committee.

Finally, if you require any assistance regarding Membership or have a query regarding your subscription, please contact the Membership Secretary, Graham Fisher (Tel: 01509-890077) who will also be pleased to receive your cheque etc., either by post or at one of our indoor meetings. Please also let us know if you change your address so we can keep our records up-to-date and ensure you continue to receive your regular Newsletter and *Heritage* publication.

Graham Fisher

March 2020

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2019

It is my pleasure to present this year's Financial Report to the AGM. I have simplified the report appearance but without reducing its content. The Committee have been presented with the full breakdown but copies are available should anyone wish to see it.

As you know I took office following last year's AGM, and this triggered what became a bit of a battle with our bankers, National Westminster, to change our approved signatories. To cut a long story short, all is now in order and our funds were boosted by two apology payments of £100 each. With the Executives permission I closed the 'Number 2 Account' and have combined the 'NS&I Funds' into one figure to streamline matters.

Another fillip to the funds is shown with both the 2017 and 2018 Gift Aid submissions coming through as one credit.

These two items have had quite an impact on the surplus shown of £501 which - even with one year's Gift Aid (approx. £180) - would ordinarily still have led to a net surplus of £121, which is quite a turnaround from the 2018 figures; this is mainly due to reduced printing and postage costs.

In the setting out I have shown that the cost of the Indoor Meetings, continues to exceed our door receipts, this is then balanced from subscription costs. I do not propose any increase in the Membership fee.

Margaret McLoughlin

March 2020

Simplified Income and Expenditure

<u>Income</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
Subscriptions	£957.00	£1059.50	Room Hire	240.00	240.00
			Speakers Fees	205.00	239.40
Entrance Charges	£307.00	£354.00		(445.00)	(479.40)
Donations	£66.00	£0.00	All printing costs	£386.87	£628.17
Gift Aid	£362.86	£0.00	All postage costs	£243.95	£576.81
Misc. Income	£200.00	£0.00	Insurance	£201.04	£201.00
Misc. sales	£5.00	£93.00	Affiliations and	£60.00	£60.00
			Donations	£0.00	£45.00
			Equipment	£47.57	£0.00
			Web Domain	£11.99	£23.98
TOTAL	£1,897.86	£1506.50	TOTAL	£1396.42	£2,014.36
Surplus/Deficit	+ £501.44	-£507.86			

Simplified Balance Sheet

<u>Balances</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>	<u>Notes</u>
Cash in Hand	£22.26	£24.00	
NatWest Current Account	£2,898.65	£2,296.69	2018
NS&I Account	£8,211.97	£8,152.84	Combined General &
		(£1,739.69 + £6,413.15)	Publications Funds
Net Interest NS&I	£59.13	£38.24 (£30.00 + £8.24)	As above
Balance	£11,132.88	£10,572.31	

Income & Expenditure Account for the Year ended 30 November 2019

	2019	2018
<u>General Fund Income</u>		
Subscriptions	£957.00	£1,059.50
Miscellaneous Sales	£5.00	£93.00
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	£632.86	£0.00
Entrance Charges	£307.00	£354.00
Donations	£66.00	£0.00
Legacy	£0.00	£0.00
Misc. Income	£200.00	
	£1,897.86	£1,506.50
Interest		
Interest National Savings Acc	£59.13	£38.24
<u>General Fund Expenditure</u>		
Affiliations & Subscriptions	-£60.00	-£60.00
Speakers' Fees	-£205.00	-£239.40
Hire of Room, Meetings	-£240.00	-£240.00
Printing Annual Report	-£68.96	-£125.71
Printing <i>Heritage</i>	-£209.29	-£356.05
Printing Newsletter	-£108.62	-£71.78
Printing Miscellaneous	£0.00	-£74.63
	-£386.87	-£628.17
Postage <i>Heritage</i>	-£112.00	-£398.24
Postage Annual Report	-£117.06	-£111.08
Postage Newsletter	-£12.45	£0.00
Postage Miscellaneous	-£2.44	-£67.49
	-£243.95	-£576.81
Insurance	-£201.04	-£201.00
Equipment	-£47.57	£0.00
Web Domain	-£11.99	-£23.98
Donations	£0.00	-£45.00
	-£1,396.42	-£2,014.36
Surplus	£501.44	Deficit
		-£507.86

Balance Sheet for the Year ended 30 November 2019

	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
<u>General Fund</u>		
Cash in Hand	£22.26	£24.00
NatWest Current Acc 307	£2,898.65	£2,296.69
National Savings Investment Acc	<u>£8,211.97</u>	<u>£1,739.69</u>
	£11,132.88	£4,060.38
<u>Publications Fund - CLOSED</u>		
Cash at Bank No.2 Acc 315	£0.00	£98.78
National Savings Investment Acc	<u>£0.00</u>	<u>£6,413.15</u>
	£0.00	£6,511.93
	<u>£11,132.88</u>	<u>£10,572.31</u>
 <u>General Fund</u>		
Balance as at 1 December 2019	£2,320.69	£2,828.55
Surplus/Deficit for year	<u>£501.44</u>	<u>-£507.86</u>
	£2,822.13	£2,320.69
<u>NS&I (Reserve Fund)</u>		
Balance as at 1 December 2019	£1,739.69	£1,731.45
Add net interest for year	£59.13	£8.24
Transfer from Publication Fund	<u>£6,511.93</u>	<u>£1,739.69</u>
	£8,310.75	£1,739.69
<u>Publications Fund - CLOSED</u>		
Balance as at 1 December 2019	£6,511.93	£6,481.93
Add Net Interest for year	£0.00	£30.00
Transfer to General Fund	<u>-£6,511.93</u>	<u>£0.00</u>
	£0.00	£6,511.93
	<u>£11,132.88</u>	<u>£10,572.31</u>

Produced by: ML McLoughlin 11 March 2020

Checked by: AB Bass 11 March 2020

CLUB ACTIVITIES DIARY FOR 2019

INDOOR MEETINGS

- 12 January Pushing up the Daisies; Churchyard Wildlife, presented by Steve Woodward
- 9 February Extremadura & The Gredos, Spain, presented by Pam Darby
- 9 March Abruzzo, Italy's Hidden Wilderness, presented by Ian Gamble
- 13 April AGM followed by Members' Short Talks and Exhibits
- 14 September Target: 200 and Tweets, presented by Bruce White
- 12 October The Wildlife of Transylvania, presented by Jamie Gould
- 9 November The Wonder of Willow, presented by Tim Sexton
- 14 December Member's Evening and Mince Pies

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Wednesday Morning Walks

- 9 January Queen Elizabeth Diamond Jubilee Wood
- 6 February Bradgate Park
- 6 March The Outwoods
- 3 April Bagworth Heath
- 1 May Charnwood Lodge
- 5 June Grantham Canal
- 3 July Swithland Wood North
- 7 August Cloud Wood
- 4 September New Lount Nature Reserve
- 2 October Ulverscroft Nature Reserve
- 6 November Albert Village Lake
- 4 December Watermead Country Park North

HERITAGE REPORT

It has been a difficult year for the production of *Heritage*. As mentioned frequently previously, this publication only exists due to the input of our Members and friends. Once again, we are grateful to those of you who have contributed records during the year – it is very much appreciated. We realise that a number of our long-standing Members do not find it quite as easy to record their sightings as they once did, and are not travelling quite as far as previously, but records even from gardens or on your shopping trips are just as valid and important and we would encourage you to continue sending them to us, no matter how few.

We are always looking for leading articles for *Heritage*, and would be pleased to accept short articles on any Natural History subject. Perhaps changes that you have noticed over the years in a particular species, habitat or environment.

Unfortunately, a number of our species authors have had to relinquish their roles and both Peter Gamble (butterflies) and Eric Webster (flowers) are no longer able to contribute their expertise to the publication. We are so very grateful to them both for their most informative and interesting insights over many, many years. We are trying our very best to cover these two very important aspects of our flora and fauna. If you would like the opportunity to contribute, please let us know. We are also still in need of writers for the other groups. You do not have to be an expert and it is a good way to learn about the subject.

Our thanks go to: Baz Forgham, Graham & Anona Finch, Jim Graham, Hazel Graves Helen Ikin, Tony Onions, Helen Shacklock and Steve Woodward who contribute in the write ups for *Heritage*.

The Editorial Team

PUBLICATIONS

Update to Scans on DVD

The DVD of the Club's Survey Reports, *Heritage* and Annual Reports is available to Club Members free of charge (ask Steve or Helen), and to non-members for £10 (via the Hon. Secretary, Sue Graham).

Older Club Publications

These titles are still available on request:

- Groby Pool
- Benscliffe & Blakeshay
- Ulverscroft
- Leicestershire Coleopterists
- The Spiders of Leicestershire & Rutland
- The Birdlife of Swithland Reservoir
- DVD: Scans of Biological Records 1961-2010