

Loughborough Naturalists' Club



www.loughboroughnats.org

Southern Marsh-orchid ©Steve Woodward; Hare © Jim Graham;
Eupeodes corollae © Hazel Graves, Jay © Jim Graham.



Annual Report 2024

LOUGHBOROUGH NATURALISTS' CLUB

COMMITTEE AND OFFICERS

as at 30 November 2024

President	H Ikin
COMMITTEE	
Chair	Vacant
Vice-chair	Vacant
Honorary Secretary	S Graham
Honorary Treasurer	ML McLoughlin
Membership Secretary	G Fisher
Indoor Meetings Co-ordinator	Vacant
Outdoor Meetings Co-ordinator	P Proudlove
Members	M Buckley J Brown K Moore P Wilkinson
OTHER OFFICERS	
<i>Heritage</i> Editorial Panel	J Graham H Graves ML McLoughlin S Woodward
Librarian	H Ikin
Records Co-ordinator	ML McLoughlin

SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2024

Looking back over the past year, the Committee has certainly had its work cut out behind the scenes to ensure that the Loughborough Naturalists' Club has remained viable in the absence of key Officers including Chair, Vice-chair and Indoor Meetings Convenor. Where *Heritage* was concerned, a lack of authors and an ever-diminishing number of Members submitting wildlife records became a major challenge in producing the high quality publication that our Members had become accustomed to.

It became clear earlier on in 2024 that certain changes would be required to keep the Club going, the details of which were published in the December 2024 Newsletter and again in March 2025 as a set of proposals to be put to the Members' vote at our AGM on 12th April 2025.

From the wonderful programme of talks, our popular field outings, the ongoing highly successful and exciting project at Home Farm, Nanpantan, through to *Heritage*, Newsletter and other superb publications such as Steve Woodward's and Helen Ikin's 'More than Meets the Eye', the Club has had much to be proud of thus far and as ever I have felt very privileged to be a part of this journey.

Despite the recent, well-publicised difficulties in keeping things running smoothly, the true spirit of our Members has kept us buoyant throughout this challenging period and we are once again looking ahead to a bright future for the Club, albeit in a slightly re-modelled format.

Going forward, one of the things we are proposing to introduce, for example, is a [News Page](#) on the LNC website that will provide up to date details of Members' observations, Field Trips, Trip Reports and notice of natural history talks around the County, without having to wait for quarterly newsletters to come out. We hope that Members will submit their findings and articles of interest via the website and help to make this an interactive, real-time platform for the Club, bringing it firmly into the 21st Century!

First and foremost however, we are asking for your support for the modified initiatives and hope that we will see you at our AGM in April where the future direction of the Club will be a key item on the agenda.

In the absence of a Chair, I would like to take this opportunity to warmly thank my Committee colleagues Graham, Hazel, Margaret, Peter P, Kate, Jenny, Peter W. and Jim for their unwavering support in my role as Secretary, together with invaluable guidance as ever from longstanding Member and previous Committee Member Steve Woodward.

Finally, my gratitude goes to all our Members for continuing to subscribe to this wonderful Club and to those who through their participation, have made our talks and Field Trips thoroughly enjoyable.

We are fortunate indeed to have such a wealth of local natural history knowledge and experience within our Membership.

Long may we be able to celebrate this and continue doing what we love best!

Sue Graham
Honorary Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2024

This is my overview of the financial report for 2024. Full account copies are available on request, and a fully signed copy will be lodged with the AGM documents. These have again been independently checked.

There is no escaping the continuing steady drop in Membership but with the future reduction in expenses, it will have no effect on the overall financial standing of the Club.

Sale and distribution of the second print of 'More Than Meets The Eye' is steady, and will continue to return funds for future publications.

Home farm Project: these funds remain in the NatWest account and are not shown in the simplified overview below. At the end of 2024, we were contacted by the Funders inviting us to re-bid to make the overall total of £5,000 (approx. £1,250 more). We placed a bid for some technology that will allow us to have a 'recording presence' during the months we are not allowed on the Farm, and to increase our dataset on bird ringing activities, which was unanimously accepted by the Funders.

We are showing a small surplus this year, but I make no point of it as it is mainly due to Gift Aid reclaim, covering two years. However, moving our indoor meetings to Woodhouse Eaves has cost us more than Quorn. It is a much quieter location and a better place for parking, whilst also providing a screen and projector.

We continue to be in a healthy position and I again proposed to the Committee that there is no increase in the Membership fee for this year and thus present this report for scrutiny and comments.

M.L. McLoughlin

Simplified Income and Expenditure for 2024

Income	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	Expenditure	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>
Subscriptions	£747.00	£837.00	Affiliations & Subscriptions	-£75.00	-£70.00
Miscellaneous Sales	£0.00	£0.00	Speakers' Fees	-£160.00	-£195.00
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	£372.77	£0.00	Hire of Room, Meetings	-£348.84	-£328.00
Entrance Charges	£42.00	£120.50	Printing	-£230.41	-£303.64
Donations	£145.20	£155.18	Postage	-£103.45	-£162.75
Sales of MTMTE	£183.50	£419.00	Insurance	-£212.24	-£212.24
			Equipment	£0.00	-£1.80
			2023 Cheque not cashed	£50.00	-£0.00
			Donations	-£0.00	-£200.00
			Beverages for Meetings	-£36.53	-£0.00
			MTMTE expenses – reprint	-£0.00	-£811.22
TOTALS	£1,490.47	£1,531.68		-£1,116.47	-£2,284.65
+Surplus / -Deficit	-£374.00	-£752.97			

Balances 31 Nov 2024	<u>2024</u>	<u>2023</u>	Notes:
Cash in Hand	£84.61	£40.14	
NatWest Current Account	£5,002.95	£4,831.24	
NS&I Account	£6,360.84	£6,312.00	
Current Assets	£11,448.40	£11,183.38	

Produced by: ML McLoughlin

Checked by: AB Bass

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT FOR 2024

Our loyal and long standing members continue to be at the heart of our club. Many are still with us as we enter our 65th Anniversary year! Demographic changes and the decline of membership clubs, together with the knock on effects of COVID and difficult economic circumstances have meant that unfortunately our overall numbers have declined over the years of course. Although we still numbered 75 members at the end of 2024 that is still a 40% reduction on the year 2013 when I first became the membership secretary. Happily we still continue to attract new members, albeit not at the rate we would like. Last year a further 4 members joined us and this current year has added a further three so far, so we remain a 'going concern'!

For those who have so far overlooked renewing their membership for 2025, we would be delighted if you wished to continue with us for another year. Subscriptions are due on 1st January each year regardless of the time of year you joined – unless this was in the last three months of the previous year, when your following year's subscriptions are included. So, if you are amongst the quarter that has so far overlooked your renewal, we hope you will forgive this reminder.

As usual, please forward you cheque other payment to me at the usual address found elsewhere in this report. You can also hand your subscription in person to any of the committee by cheque or in cash or pay by bank transfer if you prefer (account details below). Or you may wish to set up an annual standing order to avoid overlooking this task in future.

Rates remain unchanged for 2025 at just £12 for Full membership or £17 for Family membership (including additional person at the same address).

If you require any assistance regarding membership or have a query regarding your subscription, please contact the membership secretary, Graham Fisher (tel. 01509 890077 or email grahamfisher@outlook.com). Please also be sure to let us know if you change your contact details, especially your email address, so we can keep our records up to date and keep in contact regarding talks, walks, and other items of interest.

Finally, if you have not done so already and are able, please consider Gift Aiding your subscription to enable us to reclaim an additional 25% of your subscription from the tax man! Please contact us for a form.

Graham Fisher – Membership Secretary March 2025

Club's account details for bank transfer or standing order:

Bank: NatWest Bank
Account Name: Loughborough Naturalists Club
Account number: 89289307
Sort Code: 60-14-10

HERITAGE REPORT

Heritage continued to be produced with quarterly editions, although due to lack of records or writers, some species accounts were combined and appeared in the last quarter of the year. Members continued to use the dedicated NatureSpot recording system which we have up and running. This has helped with the co-ordination, collecting and collating of Club records and is being exceptionally well managed by Margaret McLoughlin. We would like to thank all those Members who took the time to submit their records.

The Editorial Team

PUBLICATIONS

Steve and Helen's Grace Dieu report "More Than Meets The Eye" continued to be exceptionally well received and the second batch that was ordered has also sold in good numbers. There are a few available and Members can buy at a much reduced rate of £16.00. Please contact Sue Graham to arrange purchase and collection/postage.

A full list of publications and downloads are available on the Club's website:

www.loughboroughnats.org/publications

CLUB ACTIVITIES DIARY FOR 2024

We had a full programme of Indoor Meetings and Wildlife Field Trips which were enjoyed by all who participated.

INDOOR MEETINGS

- 13 January Lichens; presented by Ivan Pedley
- 14 February Special Joint Meeting with LRWT Charnwood Branch – When the Kite builds... WHY and HOW we restored Red Kites across Britain; presented by Mike Pienowski
- 9 March The Geological Treasures of Leicestershire & Rutland; presented by Frank Ince
- 13 April LNC AGM and Members Evening
- 14 September The PETER GAMBLE MEMORIAL LECTURE: Butterflies and Butterfly Recording in Leicestershire and Rutland; presented by Richard Jeffery (County Butterfly Recorder)
- 12 October Bats are Amazing; presented by Peter Proudlove
- 9 November Wildlife Recording at Rutland Water; presented by Tim Sexton
- 14 December Peru – Natural History and Culture; presented by Dave Robinson

WILDLIFE FIELD TRIPS

Wednesday Morning Outings took place throughout the year.

- 10 January Attenborough Nature Reserve; Led by Kate Moore
- 7 February Market Bosworth / Shackerstone Area; led by Steve Woodward
- 6 March Melton Country Park; led by Jim and Sue Graham
- 3 April Battram Wood, Battram, led by Peter Proudlove
- 8 May Home Farm, Nanpantan; led by Margaret McLoughlin
- 5 June Johnsons' Meadow SSSI, Woodhouse Eaves; led by Kate Moore
- 3 July Aylestone Meadows, Leicester; led by Jim and Sue Graham
- 7 August Castle Hill Park, Anstey; led by Jim and Sue Graham
- 4 September Stanford Reservoir; led by Kate Moore
- 2 October Charnwood Lodge National Nature Reserve, Coalville; led by Margaret McLoughlin – Cancelled due to access road being flooded
- 6 November Beacon Hill; led by Peter Proudlove
- 4 December Market Bosworth Country Park; led by Steve Woodward