



Upper Clun Community Wildlife Group

www.ShropsCWGs.org.uk



April 2018

Dear Member,

2017 was another great year for the Group. Thank you!!!

Attendance at the Annual Meeting to Celebrate Wildlife in the Upper Clun on 16th November was again very good, considering the size of the local population – nearly 30 members turned out, including some new ones. The results of the Bird, Plant and Butterfly Surveys in 2017 were outlined, and plans for 2018 were discussed. Leo Smith spoke about the decline of Curlews, down to only 8-9 pairs from 20-22 in 2007, a decline of 60% from when we started, and he updated us on the “Save our Curlews Campaign” (see below). Marie Zennick re-launched the nest box scheme for Pied Flycatchers and Redstarts, including ringing of chicks, and Amber Bicheno spoke about the activities of a new sister Community Wildlife Group in the Rea Valley.

The Management Committee was re-elected, and a new Publicity Officer, Karen Mitchell, has been co-opted. Thank you, Karen, and welcome. She has already ensured better coverage of our activities in the Clun Chronicle, and produced posters asking people to send us Curlew records. The number of addresses on the mailing list, individuals and couples, is now 188.

We've done a great job over 11 years, and we've got a solid body of achievement to show for it.

Annual Reports

A full Annual Report for 2017 was distributed at the Public Meeting, and everyone who came should have one. Otherwise, if you want a copy of the full 2017 Report, it's on the website.

A short Summary Report is enclosed for all members.

Thank You

If you undertook a Bird, Plant or Butterfly Survey last year, or sent in some results or observations, thank you very much for your efforts. The Group couldn't function without you!!!!

New Data Protection Laws

New laws are being introduced on 25 May, and after that date we can only keep records of your personal information (email address, postal address and phone number), and send you information about UCCWG and related activities, if you have given your explicit consent. You have previously given your consent, so we will continue to send you our mailings, but you can withdraw your consent at any time by notifying the Secretary, Jacky Harrison (contact details below). We will not give your details to anyone else, and we will post a Privacy Statement on the website, and propose it for adoption at the Annual meeting next November.

Save Our Curlews Campaign

There is a real risk that the haunting bubble of the Curlew will be lost from our area forever. We must do whatever we can to help prevent this, and we want every member to help too, please. If you can put the attached poster up somewhere, please do so.

The first step is to locate the nest sites, so if you see or hear a Curlew anywhere in the area, please tell Michelle Frater (01588 640909, email michellefrater@outlook.com).

Bird Group members will be out looking at places where they have been seen in recent years, but every extra pair of eyes and ears can make a difference, so if you are looking for ideas for local

Secretary: Jacky Harrison Reilth Top, Bishops Moat SY9 5LL

(tel: 01588 620666 email jackyharrison51@hotmail.com)

walks, look at the Curlew map in the report, or on the website. If you do help, please stick to public rights of way, and don't disturb either the birds or the landowners.

Once a site has been identified, we will seek landowners' permission to find the nest, and put an electric fence around it to protect the eggs from predation and livestock. See Annual Report.

Promoting Conservation

We made a successful joint application with *Land, Life and Livelihoods* to Natural England's Facilitation Fund, for money to employ people to work with, and advise, farmers on managing their land to maintain and enhance the important landscape and species of the area. The aim is to join up fragmented habitats by promoting complementary work on neighbouring farms. The project has to be farmer-led, and launch meetings will be held in the next couple of months.

Plant Group

The Plant Group will again concentrate on surveying existing Wildlife Sites, and potential new ones, with Landowners' permission. If you are interested in helping please telephone Fiona Gomersall (01743 284295, email Fiona@eadstudio4.co.uk).

Butterfly Surveys

Dennis Twist has given up organising them. Thanks a lot for what you've done, Dennis!!! If you want to help this year, please contact Rob Rowe, email rob@robrowe.co.uk phone 01588 630648

Lapwings, Barn Owls, Kestrels and Red Kites

We have found no breeding Lapwings since 2011. If any try and breed this year, we need to know as soon as possible so we can locate them and try to arrange some nest protection. Barn Owls and Kestrels are both very scarce, use the same habitat, and need our help. Kites are spreading, but we are still trying to find all the nests. If you see Barn Owls and Kestrels at all, or evidence of breeding Kites, please ring or email Michelle (contact details above).

Michelle also sends out an email Birds newsletter, so let her know if you would like to receive it.

Swifts

Swifts are declining rapidly. We are working with the Shropshire Swift Group, to record nest sites and promote conservation. We would like someone new to co-ordinate it. If you can help, please contact Peta Sams on shropshireswifts@gmail.com or phone 07941 654869

Clun & Bishop's Castle branch of Shropshire Wildlife Trust

We work closely with the branch, to ensure our activities complement each other, and we don't duplicate or compete. There are five outdoor events coming up: **Sunday 13th May at 5.00am: Dawn Chorus walk in Clunton Coppice; Saturday 23rd June at 8.30pm: Swift walk in Clun; Saturday 21st July: Working party - help clear Himalayan Balsam; Thursday 16th August at 6.30 – 8.30 pm: A walk in the Long Mynd heather; Saturday 22nd September at 10.00am: Fungi Foray at Clunton Coppice.** Details of meetings – location, leaders, costs etc. - can be found on our website. Evening talks start again in September, on the third Wednesday of each month. For bookings or more information, contact Mary Eminson meminson@btinternet.com, or 01588 640921.

Website and email

A website has been set up for all the Community Wildlife Groups in the Shropshire Hills, including the Upper Clun Group. The address is www.ShropsCWGs.org.uk

The website describes the work, activities and programme of each Group. You can find information about the survey groups, and the Management Committee, on it.

We now use email to communicate more with members. If you want to receive this information, and we don't already have your email address, please send to Jacky (details above).

Annual Public Meeting

The Annual Public Meeting is at 7.30pm on Thursday, 15th November. Please put it in your diary.

Best wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Leo Smith

