

VOICE OF THE MOORS

NYMA - PROTECTING THE NORTH YORKSHIRE MOORS
FOR PRESENT AND FUTURE GENERATIONS



THE MAGAZINE OF
THE NORTH YORKSHIRE
MOORS ASSOCIATION
(NYMA)

ISSUE 151
SPRING 2023

£3

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Cover: West Beck (©Mel Ullswater)

NYMA MEMBERSHIP

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- Individual £22
- Joint £28

Annual digital membership:

- Individual £15
- Joint £20

10 Year membership:

- Individual £180
- Joint £220

Organisation & Business membership (Annual)

- £40

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Design

Basement Press – 01947 897945 – www.basementpress.com

Printed on paper made from sustainable and traceable raw material sources.

Articles appearing in Voice of the Moors convey the authors' personal views, beliefs and opinions and are not necessarily those of the North Yorkshire Moors Association.

CHAIR'S FOREWORD

Photo © Rita Leaman



Adrian Leaman

CAMPAIGNING

Five per cent of NYMA members' subscriptions go towards our annual membership of the Campaign for National Parks (CNP). In the words of their website, CNP is "dedicated to protecting and improving the National Parks of England and Wales". Its supporters include corporate and individual members as well as the other eleven national park societies

who, like NYMA, represent the needs and interests of National Park users. This all adds up to a lot of campaigning. At national level (that is, England and Wales) CNP have recently successfully engaged with the Westminster Government on 'bailout' emergency funding for the National Park Authorities, tabling amendments to the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill to help strengthen landscape protection, and improving engagement with parliamentarians and their staff – you can read more about this in Nick Hall's article on page 7.

Less prominent, but just as important, are activities undertaken by our fellow National Park Societies across England and Wales. These include peatland restoration and the removal of plastic tree guards (Yorkshire Dales); opposition to fracking (Peak District); support for rights-of-way orders (Brecon Beacons); flood protection (Norfolk Broads); support for wild camping (Dartmoor); opposing the use of plastic in forestry (Exmoor); dark skies protection, hedging (Lake District); protecting commoners' rights (New Forest); campaigning against anti-social road use (South Downs); opposing onshore wind farms (Pembroke Coast); and curlew protection (Snowdonia).

NYMA could easily have been involved itself with any or all of these on its own patch. Our immediate concerns have included highlighting untreated sewage in water courses in national parks, the hollowing out of public transport (in particular the Transdev bus route 840 to Whitby via the Hole of Horcum), the expanding Teesside Freeport, and ongoing mining construction and extraction activities. Over a longer period we have been consistently concerned with nature recovery – a commitment that we have returned to again and again through projects like Cornfield Flowers.

Most of the examples above usually involve some disagreement about worth and purpose. Nature recovery is one of the few with which virtually everyone concurs. Our behaviour as individuals towards nature, the examples we set for others, the accelerating loss of species within our own lifetimes despite the best efforts of environmental professionals, pressure groups and charities, and the sense of loss and helplessness with the remorseless destruction of nature, all point to renewed efforts to change attitudes and actions of individuals in their everyday lives. This applies to both nature recovery and climate change. It's a matter of personal responsibility as much as someone else's problem. This is where NYMA will be looking next.

MEET THE MEMBERS

On a more informal note, the winter season of our 'Meet the Members' online socials concluded in March. The ambition was to get insights into our members' passions, especially about the North York Moors. A subtext was to make more use of Zoom as a way of communicating and socialising, especially for those who are wary of it. Our featured guests were all themselves NYMA members - Ian Carstairs, Jamie Walton, Kate Ashbrook, Janet Cochrane, and Colin Speakman. All embraced the Question & Answer format wholeheartedly, giving us new perspectives, with unexpected twists and stories. We have had several requests to continue with a second series next winter. So 'Meet the Members' will be back!

LANDSCAPES REVIEW AND 'MAN OF IRON'

I was fortunate to spend a few days last autumn in Snowdonia attending the annual National Park Societies conference. Our accommodation was next to Waterloo Bridge in Betws-y-Coed. It was the first time I have seen close-up a pioneering design by Thomas Telford (circa 1815, hence Waterloo), now Grade 1 listed as a significant example of early iron technology. The bridge was part of Telford's (now A5) road heading for Anglesey and his Menai Bridge. Seeking more on Telford led me to Julian Glover's book 'Man of Iron', a celebration of the remarkably peripatetic



Waterloo Bridge, Betws Y Coed

Telford and his rollercoaster life. Could that be the same Julian Glover who has exercised so much comment and guarded optimism with the Glover Review of Protected Landscapes? Then the subsequent ominous silences from the government and Defra on its recommendations? Surely not!

ADRIAN LEAMAN

Photo © David Dixon

SPROXTON BRIDLEWAYS



Bridleway gate before clearing

THIS IS a project to improve three bridleways that come together just outside the village of Sproxtton, a mile or so south of Helmsley.

Previously, a number of volunteers from the Ryedale Bridleways Group had been instrumental in the repair and renewal of a bridge over which one of the bridleways was routed (across White Beck, a tributary of the River Rye), and once this was achieved the focus turned to a



Bridleway gate after clearing

second bridleway: this was seriously overgrown with blackthorn and brambles. The work involved a separate group of volunteers, including NYMA Trustee Ray Clarke.

The first task was to cut to ground level and clear away the brambles, some of which were in excess of 20ft long. Next up was cutting back a number of small ivy-clad trees that had been left to grow over the bridleway; once cut down, these were used to reinforce a sparse hedgerow on a nearby field boundary.

The final part of the project was the clearance of years of blackthorn that had proliferated both around and within the

bridleway (see the 'before' photo - you can just make out the gate in the thicket). This was the most difficult task as blackthorn is both spiky and invasive, spreading through suckers growing up from long roots, and you can't simply cut the shoots off as the stems are strong and sharp and could injure horse's feet and puncture mountain-bike tyres. The work involved both cutting down vegetation and digging out roots and included much battling with cruel thorns. After five hours' labouring, the third bridleway was once again accessible to horse riders (see 'after' photo).

DIGGER & CUTS

Photos © Ray Clarke

NATURE RECOVERY - HARNESSING THE POWER IN OUR PARISHES

Photos © Ian Carstairs



Stilt-walkers

WELL, it's all over the media. We are in the 'last chance saloon' to right the wrongs that threaten the planet, the plants and animals that live here and ultimately the natural systems on which we all depend. The gauntlet has been thrown down firmly for nature recovery and for the moment at least increasingly picked up in a multitude of ways, not overlooking the fact that many throughout society have been quietly trying, unsung, to make a difference for years.

The RSPB encourages us to send £10 so that they can help fix the problems. The National Trust and Wildlife Trusts are gearing up too. And, of course, the Government has its schemes for landowners and farmers. But these are all 'top-down' initiatives. Good and worthy as they might be, they are inevitably dependent on the mechanics and processes of the organisations promoting them to deliver the desired outcomes. Their practical effects are thus often driven remotely from the ordinary person in their everyday lives.

Of course, these initiatives by organisations have their critically important place. But what really interests me is the degree to which society in general can be influenced and encouraged to meet the challenge in a very 'bottom-up' sort of way. How, realistically, can the necessary shift in attitude be achieved and fostered in an enduring way when we have heard the same messages so many times before over the last 50 years? Such cultural change requires a seismic shift in the way we all see the world, demanding that we seek more simply to satisfy our needs and limit our self-interest wants. Alongside this taking the pressure off nature has to gain wide acceptance, giving it the space and the 'break' it so desperately requires if we are to reverse catastrophic loss. This is a given.

As Sir David Attenborough so clearly emphasises at the end of many of his programmes, it is "up to every one of us" - a message which bears repeating time and time again.

Taking Sir David's lead, in his Foreword to this edition of 'Voice', our Chair Adrian Leaman touches on this very issue, going to the heart of our attitudes and need for cultural change.

Coincidentally his sentiments have been given a topical focus for me through the example my Town Council, here in Harleston, Norfolk, has set. Based on an aspiration in its adopted Neighbourhood Plan, Harleston Town Council, with the support of County and District Councillors, has adventurously declared the parish to be a local Nature Recovery area.

At first this raised confused eyebrows as to what would be involved, whether there was such a thing and how it would be organised. But once established that there is no organisation, only the concept of nature recovery as a 'badge' under which everyone - be they farmers, developers, organisations and individuals - who takes any positive action can rally with a sense of collective common purpose, the initial response has been amazing. Importantly, it is drawing out imaginative support with enthusiasm and skills from diverse quarters to get the ball rolling, centred on 'Bring Back our Butterflies' as the initial theme, and so far initiatives have included re-seeding of grassland with butterfly-friendly species, a huge butterfly mobile made by schoolchildren and hung in the parish church, and an inspirational launch event - complete with stilt-walkers dressed as butterflies.

The Town Council has sparked a chain reaction through its very simple, non-bureaucratic approach. As such it has been asked: could the formula be replicated elsewhere?

The answer to the question is both 'No' and 'Yes'. 'No' because the momentum so far is driven by spontaneous actions of many different residents who have emerged to take on the mantle in ways that suit themselves. It follows that it cannot be the same in any two places as this depends on the individuals in the community, and the very structure and geography of the parishes. But the answer about the overall approach is most definitely: YES.

To this end NYMA's Council is exploring ways in which this approach could work to support parishes over wider areas in and around the Moors in parallel with the potential for a similar initiative in the vicinity of the York, Selby, and Pocklington area. Will it work? Maintaining momentum is always the hard part. It is very early days; we can only try and see.

IAN CARSTAIRS

Schoolchildren with seeds



RIVER POLLUTION IN THE NORTH YORK MOORS



Leaking sewage pipe, Egton Estate



The River Esk

Photos © Oliver Foster

THERE is huge concern nationwide about untreated sewage being discharged into inland watercourses and the sea, with an Environment Agency report in March 2023 revealing that there were over 300,000 spills after storms into rivers or the sea in 2022. The figures represent a decrease over 2021 – but only because of the drier weather in 2022.

Sadly even our National Parks, including the North York Moors, have not escaped, despite legislation which is supposed to afford them the highest level of landscape and biodiversity protection. Untreated sewage is being discharged here into rivers and streams by Yorkshire Water, which charges their customers to treat and make safe their sewage before it is released into the environment. But instead, they rely on an outdated regulation – the Water Industry Act 1991 – which allows them to discharge untreated sewage through “storm overflows” whenever certain criteria are met.

Under a recent Defra plan and the Environment Act 2021, water companies are legally obliged to reduce the number of so-called ‘storm-to-spill’ events and the impact of discharges. Yorkshire Water claim they are planning to update their infrastructure, but in most cases it is not a priority and will not be looked at until after 2030.

At NYMA, we are shocked that the overhaul of polluting sewage treatment works in the National Park is not being prioritised. As Adrian Leaman, our Chair, puts it: “not only does this contravene the statutory purposes of National Parks to protect and conserve the wildlife and biodiversity in our National Park, but as many rivers and coastal streams have their headwaters in the National Park then any pollution there impacts on the whole length of the watercourse.”

In 2021 there were at least 11,587 hours over 1,746 separate occasions when almost 50 of Yorkshire Water Sewage Treatment plants discharged untreated sewage into watercourses in the North York Moors. The problem is exacerbated by the extreme weather events we are increasingly seeing.

Olly Foster, owner of the Egton Estate and spokesperson for riparian interests along the River Esk, commented: “the unique population of Freshwater Pearl Mussels in the Esk has not bred successfully for decades. Poorer quality water due to increased pollution from untreated sewage and detergents used in washing machines and dishwashers is not helping their recovery. The mussels rely on migratory salmon and trout for a key part of their life-cycle and they too are struggling due to pollution.”

Olly further explained that in some cases the waste isn’t even reaching the sewage treatment plants and during heavy rainfall events is being forced out of manholes. As well as being a nuisance to landowners, the raw sewage can be seen by visitors to the National Park; for instance the photo above (top left) was taken from a permissive bridleway on the Egton Estate. Yorkshire Water has since sealed the manhole – but the problem has migrated elsewhere, illustrating the pressure the fragile network is under.

In many cases a practical solution lies in separating clean water from road gullies, land drains, roofs, etc. before it reaches the Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) pipes. Separating out the clean water not only reduces pollution, but it also provides opportunities to increase buffer capacity by creating small ponds and wetlands which enhance biodiversity. This also potentially reduces sedimentation and helps flood alleviation – a multiple win for the environment and communities.

We call on:

- Politicians and regulators to put more pressure on water companies to stop polluting our rivers through the use of outdated ‘storm-to-spill’ legislation.
- OFWAT to prioritise investment in infrastructure by Yorkshire Water to stop polluting our National Park watercourses.
- Yorkshire Water to work constructively with local communities, land managers, the National Park Authority and others to find practical solutions to keep clean water out of their CSO and divert it to wetlands, ponds and ditches which will enhance biodiversity, reduce sedimentation and help flood alleviation.
- NYCC Highways to divert water from their road gullies out of CSO and into local wetlands, ponds and ditches so as to properly respect their legal duty to support National Park purposes.
- Defra and the National Park Authority to encourage the delivery of local practical solutions by providing support and catalyst funding.

As ‘Voice’ goes to press, we await confirmation of the Government’s announcement that a cap on fines to water companies will be lifted, and that money from fines will go into a ‘water restoration fund’ managed by Defra, rather than accruing to the Treasury as currently happens.

NYMA COUNCIL OF TRUSTEES

BIRD MIGRANTS TO THE MOORS - WHERE ARE THEY?

THE North York Moors are home to a large number of birds of a wide variety of species. Some are year-round residents that just move around locally to find food. Others visit from northern Europe to avoid cold winters, and yet others make an annual round trip to warmer climes, often to Africa, returning to the Moors to breed and raise their young. Most, if not all, are declining in numbers, for a variety of reasons mainly connected with human activities.

The group arriving annually from Africa is of major concern, with their numbers declining 25-60% in the last few decades. The birds concerned include Whinchat, Cuckoos, Nightjars and Tree Pipits, which can all be found on the moorland, with Spotted Flycatchers and Redstarts in the forests and Common Sandpiper along the rivers. House Martins, Swallows and Swifts are still to be seen, while Sand Martins can be found along riverbanks. Whitethroats and Lesser Whitethroats frequent hedgerows, and in wetter places, Sedge Warbler and Grasshopper Warbler can be spotted. Ring Ouzel and Wheatear still hang on, and in some places possibly Wood Warbler and Pied Flycatcher, but far fewer in number than of yore.

RESEARCHING THE DECLINE

Much research has been done to understand this decline, with a vast amount of data compiled since the technology to follow birds' movements precisely became available. Historically, it was known that Africa was a major destination, but by which routes, how long it took, and how the birds found the food needed to travel so far were unknowns. Recently, however, the development of a variety of location tags has meant that their movements can be tracked with a surprising degree of accuracy. These tags come in various guises. The three most commonly used are:

Cuckoo in flight



Migration route of Coo the Cuckoo

- Geolocators, weighing less than a third of a gram. As they use simple technology - a battery, a light sensor, a clock and a memory chip - they are fairly cheap. They record light levels, from which local dawn and dusk can be calculated and used to estimate latitude. The downside is that the bird has to be re-trapped to allow the data to be downloaded. Accuracy is around 150 km. Geolocators have uncovered the migration routes of birds such as Swift, Nightingale, Wood Warbler and Spotted Flycatcher
- PTTs (Platform Transmitter Terminals) use the Argos satellite network, devoted to environmental studies. Satellites 'hear' the signal from the tag as they pass overhead and by using the Doppler effect calculate a position for the tag, with an accuracy of a few kilometres. (A good illustration of the Doppler effect is the sound of a fast train changing as it passes you, after moving towards and then away from you.) The advantages of this method are low power consumption and instant location during satellite passes.
- GPS is the most accurate (but most expensive at up to £2000 plus running costs), giving fixes accurate to a few metres. They weigh 1g upwards, though the smallest only store the data, so the bird needs to be re-caught to download it. Larger and heavier tags, such as those used on Cuckoos and gulls, will transmit their position via satellite daily.

COO THE CUCKOO

A Cuckoo nicknamed Coo was fitted with a GPS tag near Fylingdales in 2015. You can see from the map that he travelled through Italy before crossing the Mediterranean and the Sahara, ending up in central Africa. He headed back via West Africa and Spain, a journey of some 5,000km each way taking around 6 weeks, which required him to build his fat reserves before leaving and to stop enroute long enough to find food: invertebrates such as caterpillars and beetles and anything of a suitable size that

flies. Here lies the main problem. Insect numbers have plummeted everywhere due to climate change, deforestation, and heavy use of insecticides. If birds can't feed, they can't fly. Data gathering is essential, but a new report by scientists from the RSPB and British Trust for Ornithology (BTO) says that despite decades of research into the reasons for these declines, our understanding of them remains incomplete, largely due to the complexities of studying species all year round across several continents.

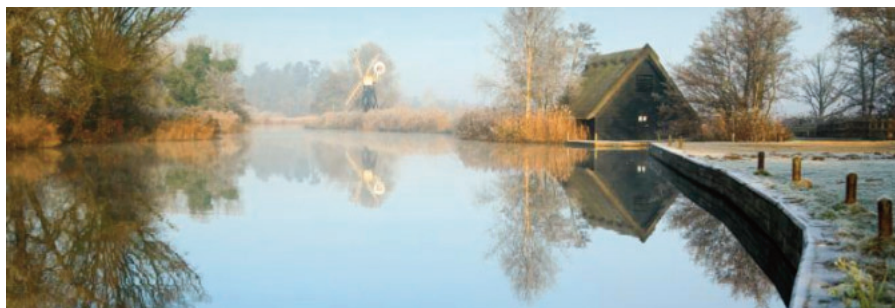
The authors of the report emphasise that time is of the essence, and that we urgently need to re-focus from research to practical conservation measures. Continued declines of familiar species including Cuckoo, Swift and Turtle Dove are evidence that time is running out.

They suggest that the biggest difference for the greatest number of species can be made by improving wintering and breeding habitats across Europe and Africa. Examples include planting and conserving native trees in regions of Africa that hold wintering migrants, or where birds stop to refuel during migration, and protecting some species from hunting along their migration routes. Many of the countries concerned are extremely poor, however, their expanding populations demanding more space to farm, for which trees are often felled. Just how the necessary measures can be taken remains a major obstacle.

MIKE GRAY

For more information, follow this link: <https://www.bto.org/about-press-releases/act-now-save-migratory-birds-scientists-say>

FUNDING LIFELINE FOR NATIONAL PARKS



The Broads

I N FEBRUARY it was announced that National Parks in England, including the North York Moors, will receive an additional £4.4 million government bailout to help with the 'existential crisis' they are facing. The funding will see each of the ten National Park Authorities (NPAs) in England receive a one-off payment of £440,000 for this year. This will increase the North York Moors' budget by 10% for 2022/23.

This result comes after vigorous efforts from Campaign for National Parks (CNP) and National Park Societies such as NYMA to highlight the scale of the crisis caused by successive government cuts. Core funding for National Parks has fallen by 40% in real terms over the last decade, coupled with inflation and rising costs. This worsening economic picture has led to NPAs from North Yorkshire to Dartmoor sounding serious alarms about their viability. Many have been forced to consider desperate decisions – closing visitor centres, shutting down ranger services, and selling off publicly owned land.

We wrote to the Chancellor ahead of last year's Autumn Statement, warning of the severe consequences that cuts were having on vital frontline services, and we're glad that the Government has been

listening. The announcement also included a very welcome commitment to extend the Farming in Protected Landscapes scheme until March 2025. In Wales, however, we expect funding to flat-line in the next financial year with no sign of any similar additional money.

The move shows that public pressure is working. We are pleased that the Government has recognised the vital importance of these beloved national assets. The bailout throws a much-needed lifeline to our National Parks during challenging times, and we believe it must be the start of a new deal coupling greater powers with long-term funding.

A properly resourced National Park network – combined with new powers to drive investment from water companies and other bodies – is essential to sustainable economic growth, tackling the climate and biodiversity emergencies, and enhancing people's health and wellbeing. The Government's target to halt the decline in wildlife populations, for example, can only be achieved by prioritising nature in protected landscapes.

We are continuing to press the Government to ensure that National

Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty have the powers and resources they need to thrive for the future. Thanks to campaigning by CNP, there is an amendment tabled in the Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill that would take forward key recommendations from the 2019 Glover Review of Protected Landscapes. This would see National Parks and other protected landscapes being given vital new powers and duties so they can do more for nature recovery and people's access. We're looking to secure cross-party support for the amendment in Parliament and recently met with the Landscapes Minister Trudy Harrison to push the Government on accepting these much-needed proposals.

Campaign for National Parks works tirelessly to ensure that protected landscapes get the powers, resources and political backing they deserve. It's only through memberships, donations and gifts in wills that we can continue this work. From just £3 a month you can become a Friend of National Parks: visit www.cnp.org.uk/join to sign up. Even better, if you are already a member of NYMA, you can join CNP for a year at a discounted fee of just £12 p.a.; please email katja@cnp.org.uk to access this scheme. Along with other National Park Societies, NYMA pays an annual levy to CNP to support their work. This is based on the number of members, and amounts to approximately 5% of the membership subscription.

NICK HALL
Political Affairs and Campaigns Manager, CNP

CHERRIES

Photos © Nan Sykes



Wild cherry tree



Wild cherry blossoms



Bird cherry racemes

ALMOST worldwide, cherry blossom is synonymous with spring – and maybe more than anywhere in Japan, with its blowsy, spectacular displays of huge pink-blossomed trees. These displays have been copied in many other countries where conditions are suitable.

THE WILD CHERRY

In Britain, our native Wild cherry *Prunus avium*, also known as gean or mazzard, is equally beautiful, though more delicately so. It is probably our most seasonally ornamental native tree with its sudden but transient suffusion of pure whiteness, especially visible as the flowers appear just before the leaves are fully out. The flowers only last a few days – less so if it is windy – after which the ground is covered briefly by a white carpet. Two years ago I came across one tree on the nearby woodland edge in early April, in full bloom and also full of peacock butterflies enjoying the nectar – an unforgettable moment!

The individual flowers are five-petaled, on stalked clusters of two to five blooms. They are followed by a stoned fruit, usually red but sometimes yellow or black, some sweet, some sour – but all loved by birds. The leaves are a long oval, alternate, serrate and pointed, often bronze-tinged on first opening and turning red in the autumn; another blaze of colour. The bark is distinctive, being reddish brown with a silvery sheen in the sun, cross-grained, and in older trees peeling in horizontal bands.

The Wild cherry grows in light, mixed woodland, often on the sunny edges where it can grow into a medium-sized tree, and it suckers easily from its roots to form colonies. It can also be found in hedgerows where, when regularly cut, it survives as a shrub. It is planted as an ornamental specimen tree too, often in memory of the transience of life. It is commoner in the south of the country than in the north, around the Moors being quite widespread but scattered.

CHERRIES IN POETRY AND SONG

It was in the past referred to as ‘the tree of paradise’, with the white blossoms taken as a symbol of purity, innocence and beauty, as in A. E. Houseman’s poem:

“Loveliest of trees, the cherry now
Is hung with bloom along the bough,
And stands about the woodland ride
Wearing white for Eastertide.”

In contrast, the sweet red fruits were a tempting summer treat, commonly sold on the streets as reflected in the old parlour song: “Cherry ripe, cherry ripe, ripe I cry, full and fair ones come and buy,” or in the poem “Bread and Cherries”, by Walter de la Mare. An old proverb states “a cherry year, a merry year”, and in the past cherry fairs were held in many towns in June or July. But not all fruits are sweet, hence the title of the 1930s song “Life is just a bowl of cherries”, with some good ones and some bad ones. Judging from all these past references, Wild cherries must have played a large part in the life of our ancestors.

A TREE OF MANY USES

As well as being relished raw, probably since prehistoric times, cherries were made into puddings, syrups and liqueurs. They were also used as medicines. They are full of vitamins and minerals, and are also antiseptic, antioxidant and anti-inflammatory. Thus, as well as being good for general health, they were used to treat gout, post-viral syndromes and fevers. The stalks were made into infusions as an astringent tonic for coughs and bronchial complaints, cystitis and amnesia. When damaged, the bark oozes a gum which was used by children as a bitter-sweet chewing gum, useful too for coughs.

The Wild cherry’s timber is strong but not very long-lasting. It is reddish brown with a good grain and takes a polish well, so it is often used for small ornamental items, and in the past for thatching spars (used to secure layers of straw or reed on a thatched roof).

THE BIRD CHERRY

We also have another native cherry species, generally a more northern tree, which is not so well known but equally beautiful – the Bird cherry, *Prunus padus*, or the hag or hack berry. The Latin names are confusing as the species name for the Wild cherry

'avium' means bird, while the 'padus' of the bird cherry is just its old Greek name!

The Bird cherry is a smaller tree that prefers damper, non-acidic ground, and is often found near streams, usually in light mixed woodland or hedgerows. Its flowers are also white, but smaller and fragrant. They grow in loose racemes, sometimes called 'white lilac'. The flowers appear in late May to June after the oval, pointed, serrated leaves have opened, so are not so obviously visible as with the Wild cherry, but they are just as

beautiful when seen close to. Small black, bitter, astringent fruits follow later in the year, not edible by humans but again loved by birds. The leaves turn a vibrant yellow in autumn and the dark grey-brown bark has been used as a sedative treatment for headaches and heart problems.

Have a walk along our woodland rides this spring and enjoy the blossoms, take note of where they are, and return in late summer to taste the fruit – if you can beat the birds to them!

ANNE PRESS

MICHAEL STYLES - A TRIBUTE

Michael Styles, owner of the delightful Fossil Museum and bookshop in Robin Hood's Bay, sadly died in February. Bénédicte and Mike Windle knew him well through the North East Yorkshire Geology Trust.



Michael Styles with students

MICHAEL was originally from Oxfordshire and opened a bookshop on Chapel Street in Robin Hood's Bay when he retired from the police force. He probably chose the area because he was a fossil collector. We first met him in his bookshop, where he had an excellent section on local interest and geology which we raided each holiday. When we moved permanently to Robin Hood's Bay and Mike set up the North East Yorkshire Geology Trust, it took two hours of intricate and well-argued discussion to convince Michael to join the Trust – and through his association with it, he became known for his knowledge as a fossil collector rather than simply a bookshop owner.

Michael found some amazing fossils during his years in North Yorkshire. He used to think a remedy for his bad back was to carry a rucksack full of rocks and fossils back from Port Mulgrave! He filled his museum with high-quality replicas of dinosaur skulls, and his knowledge of ammonites was incredible. He gave us crates of 'rubbish' ammonites, as he called them – the ones that were not complete when the nodules were split – so we could give them to the primary school children we did workshops with through the North East Yorkshire Geology Trust. They were treasures for the kids.

The Geology Trust's objectives were to protect the geology and landscapes of the region and share our passion and knowledge of rocks and fossils with as many people as possible. Michael took an active part with his pop-up shops at our events, and through leading fossil walks on Robin Hood's Bay beach. He

spent hours setting up his fossil displays at the Rosedale Show, where the Trust had a marquee 5 years running, bringing his Allosaurus skull – T-Rex's granddad – in the back of his van. He never tired of explaining about ammonites and fossils whilst selling shark teeth necklaces and excellent plastic dinosaurs. When he moved his bookshop to new premises and created his fossil and dinosaur museum, he made sure all children went home with a treasure in a small paper bag, perhaps a shiny rock with googly eyes (he spent evenings sticking them on), a hematite fridge magnet for mum, or a mini soapstone dinosaur.

He was also an ardent supporter of our Student Programme, taking them on walks and spending evenings with them. He also liked, as part of our events programme, to take people on arduous hikes in the local countryside looking for traces of industrial heritage, and admiring waterfalls. Michael had a great fondness for these and would bring back photos of them taken on his travels.

He used to visit his mother regularly in Oxfordshire, and spent a few weeks with her around Christmas each year before going to fairs in the US and France to restock his bookshop. He closed his shop for the winter months, and started to travel more for leisure when his mother died in her mid-nineties. He went on a dinosaur dig in Montana, and to Africa and to Nepal, where he enjoyed the magnificent landscapes. Here, he found an opportunity to make the Geology Trust global by sponsoring bio-gas generators in its name that, to this day, create energy from waste for villagers in a remote corner of Nepal.

BÉNÉDICTE AND MIKE WINDLE

Michael's shop in Robin Hood's Bay



A TIME OF TRANSPORT TRANSITION FOR THE NORTH YORK MOORS?



Moorsbus at Hutton-le-Hole

I F YOU live in the North York Moors, whether or not you are a member of NYMA, you are almost certainly heavily dependent on your car to support your way of life – to get to work, to visit friends and family, to shop, to get to the doctors' surgery or make a hospital visit.

It is difficult to imagine that this has only been the case for the last 60 years or so, as cars have become available to the majority of the adult population. Faced with formidable competition from a far more flexible form of travel, former networks of local bus and train services have been allowed to decline and, in some cases, disappear.

For that small minority who are too young or old to drive, and those who have health issues or never held a driving licence, this has produced ever reducing levels of mobility. Slowly and steadily public transport, especially in rural England including much of North Yorkshire, has been reduced to skeletal levels of little real use. This is despite the fact that railways have enjoyed something of a revival in the last three decades. Bus travel, on the other hand, has almost invariably become more expensive and more sporadic. Free off-peak travel for senior citizens introduced in England in 2008 by Gordon Brown did bring many older people back to the buses. But since Covid struck, many in this age group, responding to messages about buses and trains being 'unsafe' (unlike, it seems, pubs, night clubs, music and sporting events) are still too frightened to travel.

The decline has now turned to crisis, as bus operators faced with high fuel costs and driver shortages are struggling to

maintain schedules. Many operators are now slashing timetables. Cancelled buses create even more uncertainty for users.

An acute example in the North York Moors is the 128, the strategic bus route along the southern edge of the National Park that connects Scarborough, Pickering, Kirkbymoorside and Hemsley. For years it has been an hourly 'clockface' service, but this summer, having struggled to maintain a confusing, now withdrawn, X28 'express' service, the service has been slashed by 50%. On Sundays the service terminates at Pickering and is down to just four a day, leaving communities as large as Kirkbymoorside and Helmsley with no all-year Sunday travel opportunity, thus creating a huge incentive to buy a car.

Even our wonderful, nationally acclaimed Moorsbus, restricted for the last few years to a few weekends in the summer peak season, faces a bleak and uncertain future. As costs rise and funding opportunities disappear, there is uncertainty about the 2023 service, despite NYMA's continuing annual support. At the time of writing, we expect that the service may operate only one day a week in two or three months of the summer, a fraction of what it used to be.

DOES THIS REALLY MATTER?

Well, it does. We are living through a period of perhaps momentous change, when there is no guarantee that when faced with increased taxes, rising energy costs, mortgage interest and food price inflation, a newly impoverished Britain

can maintain the lifestyle its citizens believe is their right. That includes high levels of car ownership, with the proportion of households without a car having fallen from 48% in 1971 to 22% in 2021.

The United Nations Environment Programme notes that even to limit global warming to levels within which humans can survive – an increase of 1.5°C over pre-industrial averages – there is “no credible pathway in place”, and therefore the only way to limit the worst of impacts of the climate crisis is a “rapid transformation of societies”. UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres has said: “We need to tell the truth. The truth is that impact of climate change on a number of countries in the world is already devastating”.

Levels of summer heat approaching 50°C are already making parts of North Africa and even southern Europe uninhabitable for human beings (thereby accelerating the problem of mass migration). While within Northern Europe, including the UK, increasingly frequent extreme weather events, including disastrous floods and drought-induced crop failures, along with moorland, woodland, and even wheatfield fires, make it clear that ‘business as usual’ is not an option.

This will affect all of us, even those of us living in relatively cool and prosperous North Yorkshire. And in a car-based society there is the utter absurdity, in ecological terms, that to travel 10 miles to go shopping or for a walk, with our bodies weighing around 70kgs, we need to transport another tonne of metal, plastic and rubber to enable us to make that journey, and in doing so use environmentally damaging fossil fuels. Nor are electric cars the solution, requiring huge quantities of the Earth’s resources including rare metals – most of which are controlled by one totalitarian mega-state, China – as well as putting huge demands on the National Grid.

Guterres rightly suggests that transformation is about taking individual decisions, cutting our consumption of fossil fuels and high energy dependency. For many people, the most difficult issue is reducing their car dependency. Yet cutting our personal use by even 10% can make a difference. This can be achieved by reducing journey lengths, car-sharing whenever we can, and where and whenever possible using public transport. Public transport also generates a need to walk, so a further environmental and health benefit.

CREATING CHANGE

Change must start at the bottom in terms of personal travel choices but also at the top with policy-makers and funding decision-takers. It means persuading authorities like North Yorkshire Council and indeed the North York Moors National Park Authority, neither of which provide a penny of support for Moorsbus, to prioritise the provision of decent, regular local bus services, so that people living in the larger villages and small towns in and around the Moors can choose a less car-dependent or even car-free lifestyle. Minimum basic service standards need to be determined, perhaps at least hourly, seven days a week. North Yorkshire Council’s policy of not supporting Sunday bus services is utterly reprehensible. What is urgently needed are properly integrated bus services and affordable multi-operator ticketing, as in other European countries. Why not create shared taxi services to serve remoter villages or provide evening links from railheads?

There need to be real financial incentives to persuade people to switch to the bus, whilst at the same time increasing motoring and parking costs, recognising that every single car journey accelerates the intensity of climate crisis. We need to encourage young people especially to adopt a car-free lifestyle and offer them the basic services they need to do so. In any case, a car-based lifestyle could soon be unaffordable for all but the most fortunate.



If this seems wildly unrealistic, then it’s time to listen to the warnings of climate science. The human race could, within the next few decades, face extinction.

Should NYMA be doing anything about a crisis which is both international and local? Yes, by encouraging our own members to undertake greener travel choices, and to lobby the North Yorkshire Council to massively increase its disgracefully inadequate public transport budget. When it comes to our own NYMA events and activities, we should ensure that green travel options are available.

And yes, let’s find ways to persuade our local authorities, including the National Park Authority, to make Moorsbus not just a struggling summer seasonal service, but a daily integrated public transport network for local communities as well as visitors. Only if there is a decent, affordable alternative will people leave their cars behind and take the bus for at least some of their journeys. The truth is, as more enlightened local authorities in other rural areas of England such as Cornwall have shown, that well-planned, well-promoted bus services can cover most if not all their costs, at least between larger settlements. Infrequent, badly coordinated bus services deter passengers and lose money in a spiral of decline. By allowing many bus services to be reduced to useless levels, North Yorkshire Council is actually wasting, not saving, public money.

As the economic and social impacts of climate change intensify, this will no longer just be a requirement for a small minority, but an essential requirement for the survival of a civilised society. In the context of the North York Moors National Park and the conservation ethic that underlies it, travel choice and transport are crucial issues.

An issue for the North York Moors Association to lead on, and for our members to show an example, both in our campaigning and in our personal travel choices.

COLIN SPEAKMAN

The Moorsbus logo features the word 'MOORSBUS' in a bold, yellow, sans-serif font. The letter 'M' is stylized with a green mountain peak shape integrated into its top left corner. The logo is set against a white background with a thin blue border.

The Moorsbus team have been working hard to secure funds to support the 2023 network.

If you would like to be notified when our timetables are available, please email friendsofmoorsbus@outlook.com. If you would like a timetable booklet posted to your home, please send a DL sized stamped addressed envelope to 4 Foundry Cottages, Wrelton, Pickering YO18 8PF.

THE SKIPPERS

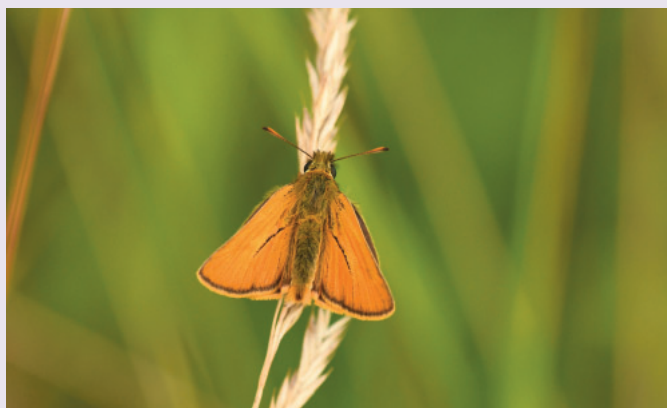
THIS FAMILY of butterflies are moth-like in appearance and are the most primitive of the family of butterflies. There are eight species found in the UK, with three of them found in the North York Moors National Park. I will cover them all here, starting with those found in the Moors.

They are all small, lively insects with broad, hairy bodies, and their antennae are a long way apart at the base. The Small and Large Skipper sit in a characteristic pose with the fore- and hindwings held at different angles. You are likely to see these two species anywhere in the National Park where there are areas of longer grasses which are not cut.



LARGE SKIPPER

This is probably our brightest coloured skipper. The male is often seen perching alertly on sunlit vegetation, ready to confront any passers-by. On warm sunlit days they are often seen fleetingly, dashing around and around. There is a single brood in the year, with the butterflies seen flying in late May until the end of August. They have distinctive 'pearly' markings on the wings, which helps distinguish them from Small Skippers. They are fond of visiting wildflowers, and the female lays eggs on clumps of grass. They over-winter as caterpillars hidden in a strong tubular cocoon made from grasses and silk.



SMALL SKIPPER

Small Skippers appear in early June and fly until the beginning of September. They are found feeding on a variety of wildflowers, with a preference for purple knapweeds and thistles. The male Small Skipper has a long, curved sex-brand - this is a special structure used to produce scent, which can be seen as a black streak on its forewing. As the name suggests, this butterfly is smaller than the Large Skipper - the two can sometimes be seen flying together. As with the Large Skipper, the caterpillar of the Small Skipper overwinters in the sheaths of longer grasses. This

is the reason why longer grasses should not be cut back too soon, as you may impact the number of surviving caterpillars.



DINGY SKIPPER

The Dingy Skipper is quite different in appearance from the previous two and can easily be mistaken for a day-flying moth. It is very active on days of sunshine, when it can be found buzzing low over vegetation, often stopping to bask on bare ground. It rests with its wings open on warm days but overnight, or whilst resting during dull weather, it rests in a moth-like posture with its wings closed and wrapped around its body. The Dingy Skipper is on the wing from late April until late June. In the North York Moors it is often found where there is Bird's-foot Trefoil, since this is its most frequently used larval foodplant. Good places to see the Dingy Skipper are around Hawby Hill, Dalby Forest, Ellerburn Bank, and Yatts Farm.

OTHER SKIPPERS

The other five skippers found in the UK are covered briefly below.

Essex Skipper: The Essex Skipper is similar in size and appearance to the Small Skipper, and their habitats and flight periods also overlap, making identification quite difficult. This is best done by looking head on to the butterfly. If the antennae look as if they have been dipped in black ink, it is an Essex Skipper; if they are more orange in colour, it's a Small Skipper. It has been found recently in parts of Yorkshire.

Silver-spotted Skipper: This is a lover of warm chalk downland where the turf is short and broken. It is at the northern end of its range in the UK, and is currently found no further north than the Chilterns.

Lulworth Skipper: As its name suggests, this butterfly is found in the Lulworth area of Dorset, on south-facing grassy hillsides and cliffs. It is at the very edge of its range in the UK. On hot days it can be very abundant and is distinguished by the crescent seen on the forewing, which is most obvious on the female.

Chequered Skipper: This is the brightest of the skippers found in the UK and until recently was only found on the west coast of Scotland. It became extinct in England in 1976 but has just been reintroduced into the Rockingham Forest in Northamptonshire.

Grizzled Skipper: A butterfly of the southern UK, it is found in diverse habitats including woodland rides, dunes, heaths, and disused railway lines. It rarely visits flowers and is easiest to identify when it is basking on bare ground. It can be seen flying as early as late March.

MARTIN PARTRIDGE

THE DAFFODIL DALE WALK

THIS 5-mile walk explores footpaths on the eastern side of Farndale and returns along the well-used daffodil route beside the pretty River Dove. There are sections of rough ground and several sturdy ladder stiles giving access to fields and open moorland with boggy areas.

Limited parking is available by the village hall in Church Houses for a donation.

Go east from the village hall and visit St Mary's churchyard. St Mary's Church was built in 1831 on the site of a medieval Friary, and each spring the churchyard and the surrounding dale blossom with a carpet of wild daffodils, believed to have been planted by the friars.

Take the path to the right of the church and cross a footbridge leading into a meadow. Go diagonally through this field and rejoin the road after passing between two gates. Turn left and follow the road past the old school house to the minor road junction. Turn right at the junction and immediately left to follow a footpath sign and proceed southeast up the hill.

Follow the gully up to a stony cairn, having negotiated two stiles. Go diagonally past the cairn, in the same direction (south-easterly) for about 250m, towards a ladder stile in the wall. Cross the stile and follow the wall, at the end of which look for a bridleway going to the right down the hill. It passes through woodland full of bird-feeders - and spoil heaps which are probably the remains of old ironstone workings from the (not very productive) Blakey/Farndale Outcrops and Drifts mine (1873-97). Pass through a gate and descend through fields to Oak Cragg.

Immediately on reaching the road take the ladder stile on your left into the next field. Cross the small stream and turn sharp right towards another ladder stile beside some corrugated iron sheets. Climb over this and cross the boggy field - it is slightly drier if you keep left, but then return to the boggy path across to the next stile. Cross fields and two more stiles, and now follow the rough path alongside a wall through old bracken, looking out for daffodils growing on the footpath. There are two stone stiles to negotiate, then continue alongside the wall to the access road to Cragg Cottage, which you pass as you turn right and descend to Low Mill, crossing the River Dove via a bridge.

From Low Mill follow the daffodil trail alongside the River Dove back to Church Houses, passing the Daffy Café and the Feversham Arms to reach your car.

However, if you would prefer to avoid the crowds there is an alternative well-signposted walk available from Low Mill. From the footbridge at the start of the Daffodil Trail, instead of turning left on the obvious route alongside the River Dove, go through the gate straight ahead and follow the paved path by the hedge, over another footbridge, and through a couple of gates up towards High Wold House. Follow the path here towards Cote Hill Farm but turn left before you reach it and drop down through a couple of fields till you reach the river, then follow the tourist path to Church Houses.

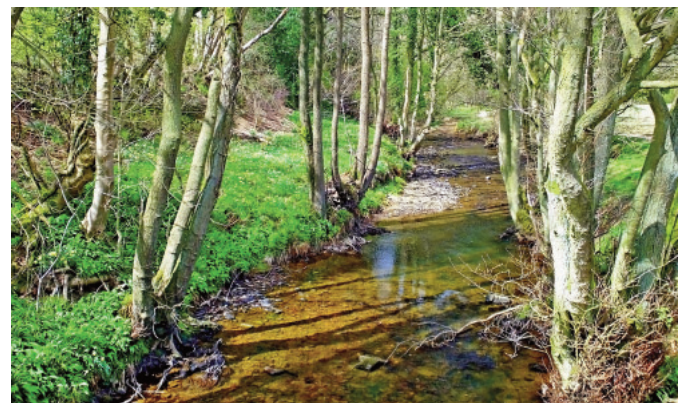
As ever, you should use the relevant OS Explorer map (North Yorkshire Moors Western Area OL26) to supplement these notes. There are toilets near the carpark in Low Mill.

TIM & JANE DUNN

Low Mill in spring



River Dove in spring





HARRIET WRAGG ELGEE: THE SHELL GIRL

Harriet Wragg Elgee at the standing stone, Danby Rigg, photographed by her sister, Ethel Joy Wragg, c. 1929

On 31 December 1933 *The Sunday Sun*, a Newcastle paper, published a short profile of Harriet Wragg Elgee, noting her as one of the few women museum curators in the country. In the short piece Harriet described herself as 'an archaeologist, educationalist, lecturer, authoress and poetess'. She was all of those things, and also the wife of Frank Elgee, Middlesbrough-born North York Moors naturalist and archaeologist, who is the more often remembered of the two. Harriet had succeeded Frank as curator of the Dorman Memorial Museum, Middlesbrough, after the deterioration of his health in 1932, resigning in 1938 to look after him when his health declined still further.

A MEETING OF MINDS

Frank Elgee had published 'The Moorlands of North-Eastern Yorkshire: Their Natural History and Origin' in 1912. The book was the result of over fifteen years of research in which he acknowledged the help of Northallerton teacher, Harriet Wragg, whom he had met the previous year at Danby, where he was holidaying. The book was published with the aid of subscribers, one being Harriet, while another was her sister, Ethel Joy Wragg. After 'Moorlands', or perhaps more accurately, after meeting Harriet, Frank became increasingly interested in the archaeology of the moors. Having married in 1914, Frank and Harriet moved to Comondale in 1920. When 'Early Man in North-East Yorkshire' appeared in 1930, the subscribers list again included Harriet and her sister.

The Wragg sisters were both school-teachers. Harriet later recalled that she had been offered a tutorial post at Birmingham University, where she had studied, but "after deducting what my mother required if I lived at home, I should have been left with little for my personal needs. My mother did not permit argument, so I declined the offer, decided to leave home, and

obtained a senior post at Salisbury Pupil-Teacher Centre. My father was annoyed with me for quitting the paternal roof. Girls did not do such things then". She also noted that "I had been nervously and physically ill since I was a child, and, owing to lack of sleep, I could only use a fraction of my powers".

There appears to have been an immediate attraction between Frank and Harriet when they met in 1911, two intelligent people sharing a common interest in archaeology, literature and the natural world, and both having been hindered by ill health. Like Frank, Harriet had a record of publication, but hers is now little noted. In 1913 Oxford University Press published 'Selected English Letters', selected jointly with Mabel Duckit, a presumed teaching colleague. This appears to have given her the confidence and the contacts to compile 'Letters Written in Wartime' (1915), again published by OUP.

"Man of the Moors" was a journalistic trope used by Evening Gazette journalist Harry Mead in the best-informed summary of Frank Elgee's life ('Inside the North York Moors', 1978), but Frank himself had coined the soubriquet in early correspondence with Harriet. Harriet cast herself as 'The Shell Girl'. In a prefatory note in 'Moor Boy and Shell Girl: A Fairy Story' by Frank Elgee (unpublished), she explained that she had made an unheralded visit from Northumberland to the Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough. Frank had encountered her unexpectedly in the shell gallery and asked: "How did you get here?" She had pointed to a Venus shell with the comment: "I have just stepped out of that pink shell".

PROMOTING FRANK'S MEMORY

After Frank died in 1944 Harriet took every opportunity to promote his memory, including the establishment of a monument in 1953. This was set on the high moorland of

Blakey Rigg, looking east towards the Loose Howe Early Bronze Age burial mound. The mound itself had been the subject of an excavation undertaken under Harriet's direction, in October–November 1937 (the predictably wintry weather at that season arising from the necessity not to interfere with the grouse-management programme).

Harry Mead wrote of the Elgee Monument: “positioned opposite the Rosedale road, it overlooks the scene of Elgee’s great archaeological dig on Loose Howe” (1978). The excavation account was published in 1949 under the joint authorship of Harriet and Frank Elgee (in ‘Proceedings of the Prehistoric Society’ 15, 87–106). It became clear that Harriet promoted Frank’s reputation to the extent that she herself became invisible. One has to dig deep in scattered archives to find an incomplete manuscript entitled ‘Notes Towards a Biography’ of Frank in which Harriet comments: “Loose Howe, Frank went twice, but very ill, could hardly walk from the road”, while in another unfinished note entitled ‘Life on the Yorkshire Moors’, Harriet wrote: “Our great adventure – or rather mine, for my husband was too ill to share it – was the excavation of the Bronze Age burial mound called Loose Howe”. This appears to have been her one involvement in field archaeology: two timber coffins were excavated and removed from the site, together with a bronze dagger and three pieces of flint from the principal interment and, from the second burial, a Collared Urn and accompanying Accessory Vessel, a perforated axe-hammer, the remains of a second bronze dagger and trefoil-headed bronze pin and a piece of flint.

In truth Frank had suffered poor health from an early age, and his retirement from the curatorship of the Dorman Museum had been brought about by the ill-health that prevented him contributing to the BAAS (British Association for the Advancement of Science) programme in York in 1932, the year the Elgees moved from Commondale to the suburbs of Guisborough. An endpaper advertisement in ‘Early Man in North-East Yorkshire’ confirms that Frank had originally been commissioned to write ‘The Archaeology of Yorkshire’, eventually published in 1933 under the authorship of both Frank and Harriet, while it is clear from Frank’s diary entries that much of the exploration and writing for the 1935 guide to ‘Scarth Wood Moor, Yorkshire, N.R.’, credited to Frank Elgee, must have been the work of Harriet.

[Loose Howe Early Bronze Age burial mound, c. 1900 BC, excavated under the direction of Harriet Wragg Elgee in 1937](#)



Photo © Blaise Vyner



Photo © Dorman Museum

[Harriet Wragg Elgee with Hull Museums Director Tom Shepherd and the City Fathers of the Dorman Museum, 1936](#)

AN ACCOMPLISHED EDUCATOR

In Harriet’s career as a teacher, lecturer for the Workers Educational Association and, from 1936, Curator of the Dorman Museum, she amply demonstrated her ability and skills as an educator. Frank never co-wrote with anyone except Harriet, nor had he fully written-up or published his excavations on Eston Nab. By contrast, she produced an account of Loose Howe and its finds which was found suitable for publication in a national archaeological journal, while the finds were deposited in the British Museum.

With somewhat less justification Harriet also described herself as ‘authoress and poetess’. The surviving archives contain text by Harriet on various folklore topics, including a favourite preoccupation, the Earth Mother, but none had advanced to publication. In a letter to her sister Ethel Joy in 1958, she wrote “I think Brigantes may mean that Brigit was the tutelary god of the Yorks Brigantes. If you come across any old fogeys in your wanderings get them to talk about ‘the olden days’”. She wisely advised “I don’t value written accounts, unless they are obtained without the native knowing they will be recorded”. There is also a semi-autobiographical account of her life before meeting Frank, which is notable only for its absence of event and similarity to her sister’s published memoirs ‘One Life Amid Many’, published in 1967.

Harriet published two collections of poetry. One of these, ‘Poems from Blackamore’ (1925), looks to be a vanity publication commissioned by the author. Uninspiring, cliché-ridden and hackneyed, one short excerpt will suffice:

May came to us clad in green so green
That our grey stone walls looked blue!
At first she ran along the stream:
On sober bushes threw a gleam
Of gaily, like golden rain.
She danced upon the narrow plain
And crooned her last year’s runes again.

From “May”, ‘Poems from Blackamore’

After Frank’s health deteriorated still further, Harriet resigned her post at the Dorman in 1938 and they moved south to Alton, in Hampshire, where Frank died in 1940. In the late 1950s Harriet moved to Colwyn Bay, where she died in 1972.

BLAISE VYNER

[The author would like to thank Louise Harrison, Dorman Museum, Middlesbrough, for drawing attention to a video lecture on Frank Elgee and for provision of photographs.](#)

THE FIGHT AGAINST CLIMATE CHANGE AND BIODIVERSITY LOSS: LAND OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT AND COMMUNITY VOICES

From 2017–2021, Dr Tom Ratcliffe conducted a PhD research project into how people identify with landscapes within the North York Moors and the role communities have in influencing decisions about landscape protection and change. The project was a study of the viewpoints held by a wide range of communities and other key National Park stakeholders and how they connect with the landscapes. Key stakeholders interviewed included the National Park Authority, other government bodies, conservation organisations, landowners, land managers, developers, and local voluntary groups. Tom conducted 58 interviews and used ‘walking interviews’ as his primary method of data collection. Following on from his article in the Autumn edition of *Voice of the Moors* about walking interviews, this article outlines some of his findings concerning land ownership, management and community participation as we face up to the biodiversity and climate emergencies.

Photo © Tom Ratcliffe



Fen Bog Nature Reserve, looking towards Goathland East Moor (beyond the drystone wall), showing the difference between the more varied mosaic of vegetation of the nature reserve and the moorland beyond, managed principally for grouse and sheep.

INTRODUCTION

‘There is an urgent need to address climate change, and to halt and reverse the decline of biodiversity. National Parks have a key role to play in this.’ (Campaign for National Parks, 2021)

Many key stakeholders believe that national parks need to be at the forefront of the response to the biodiversity and climate emergencies. Recent UK government reports have highlighted the importance of these landscapes in the protection of nature, especially through the creation of ecological networks because of their size. Interlinked with climate change, the improved protection of certain national park landscapes, such as peatland, can offer more carbon sequestration opportunities.

In the North York Moors, the National Park Management Plan states that the National Park Authority (NPA) and their partners are looking to achieve “a resilient landscape at the forefront of addressing climate change and nature recovery”. Yet how much ‘buy-in’ does nature protection and the reduction of carbon

emissions have from the largely private ownership and the communities of the North York Moors? Should communities and public bodies such as NPA and Natural England have more power than they currently do to influence land use and management in order to tackle these emergencies?

The management and control of around 80% of the North York Moors is in the hands of private organisations or individuals, although Forestry England – a public body – is the largest single landowner. Of the heather moorland plateau, around 97% is in private ownership. In 2002 the North York Moors was the third highest out of all the National Parks in England for its amount of privately owned land, and there is little evidence that this has changed at all twenty-one years on. The NPA owned just 0.6% of the land within the National Park boundaries in 1991, and by 2020 this figure had declined by a third. Land has become an increasingly expensive commodity that NPA budgets are less and less likely to afford.

STAKEHOLDER VIEWS AND CHALLENGES

Landowners and land managers were suggested by this research project to have a large amount of power over residents' and visitors' perceptions of the National Park landscape by means of the everyday decisions they make on land management. Their decisions regarding management, change and the future of the North York Moors landscape thereby have a direct impact on the biodiversity and climate emergencies, as suggested by a resident who lives close to the National Park:

"The people who have the biggest impact [on the landscape] in my personal view are the landowners and the land managers but the landowners in particular. At the end of the day, it's their land and they might have certain restrictions from the planning authority or Natural England or any designations with what they can do to the land but at the end of the day it's theirs to decide if they want to plant trees or not to plant trees or manage it this way or that way."

The extent to which landowners involve local people in their decision-making about land management depends on who the landowner is and their world-view. Owning land in 'national' spaces means it is also the landowners' choice whether and how they communicate with visitors to the area. The extent to which landowners interact with others and the approaches they take affect how much agency local communities have to mitigate the climate change and biodiversity emergencies within the park, especially across the heather moorland, since communities do not have a formal process for providing their voice on land use and land activities outside of the planning system. An interviewee from the NPA stated that:

"It very much depends on the attitude of the landowner themselves [if they consult with communities]. If there's a legal responsibility to them [the local community] they will, but over and above that it will depend on the personality of the landowner."

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

Some estate owners in the National Park provided examples of some very positive community consultation work, sometimes led by employees working in community engagement or wider education roles. Most landowners and managers interviewed agreed that *"there is always more that could be done"* regarding community engagement about land management, yet it needed to be proven to be an effective, informative resource in decision-making, especially as it was seen by some interviewees as expensive and time-consuming.

In recent years there have been challenges from community groups to the power dynamics of how moorland landscapes are managed. The Goathland Moor Regeneration Group was established around 2018 to voice concerns about environmental issues in the local area including the moorland. Elsewhere in North Yorkshire, the Friends of Ilkley Moor opposed grouse shooting on Ilkley Moor, which led to the activity being banned by Bradford Council in 2018. However, these challenges are still rare in the North York Moors.

Following extensive research with the different stakeholder groups, it was apparent that there was demand from certain communities for wider consultation opportunities in the land management process. The evidence indicates that a deliberative approach to public participation that gives the local community a communication platform on land management issues can bring the community closer to land managers in terms of beneficial knowledge and trust. In addition, this approach can connect community identity and knowledge with landscape planning and visioning.

As evidenced at a Heather Trust public event involving the Goathland Moor Regeneration Group in 2019, public engagement activities can enhance the relationship between



Goathland Moor, looking towards Wheeldale Lodge, showing the typical pattern of mixed-use agriculture of the North York Moors, including moorland, pasture and woodland.

Photo © Janet Cochrane

land managers and the local community and offer opportunities for widening participation through democratic, debating platforms. They can also provide opportunities for people to challenge dominant landowner and resident assumptions about land management in the Park. These platforms could take the format of an active community group, a parish council, a youth council, a citizen assembly or a citizen science project. Furthermore, if there is greater community involvement in land management processes, then more people may care for and look after the land, which is critical as we face up to the biodiversity and climate emergencies.

Although the mechanism for greater involvement is not straightforward, there are precedents from elsewhere. For instance, in the South Downs National Park some estate managers working with local communities and the NPA are creating whole estate plans which are in alignment with National Park purposes, visioning and special qualities. These plans can provide background information for planning applications by a landowner (or other stakeholders) and planning decisions made by the NPA. The NYMNPA have started to propose this approach to at least one estate on the Moors. Have land managers in the Moors considered putting together their own management plans working in tandem with local and visiting communities, the NPA and Natural England?

One of the main conclusions of the research project was that it is vital for landowners to work in partnership with communities, visitors and other key stakeholders whilst strategic planning with a long-term vision in mind to achieve sustainable landscapes which have positive impacts on biodiversity and the carbon emissions they release. The NPA, Natural England and other public and private bodies (including NYMA) should continue to help bring these stakeholders together and provide resources and education to support the National Park Management Plan vision.

TOM RATCLIFFE

LECTURER AT YORK ST JOHN UNIVERSITY AND NYMA TRUSTEE

Background to the project

The PhD research project was hosted by the Social Sciences Department at Northumbria University, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) and in partnership with the Heritage Consortium Network at the University of Hull.

SHIPWRECK IN THE MOORS!

IN A REMOTE moorland valley in the heart of the North York Moors lies a stranded ship. It has been there for thousands of years, ever since a huge boulder fell from the nearby cliffs at the close of the Great Ice Age some eight to ten thousand years ago. This rock, over sixty feet long and nearly twenty feet high, is estimated to weigh 1500 tons. It is reminiscent in shape of the bow of a ship, hence it is known as 'The Ship Stone'.

Tripsdale is a seldom visited tributary of Bilsdale. Access demands effort from whichever direction one approaches. The route from Chop Gate climbs via William Beck Farm up to Nab End Moor where an unsightly although convenient game-track leads one over to near the centre of the dale. Upstream and downstream from here is not easy walking at any time of the year, and almost impossible in summer when the head-high bracken obscures the rocky hillsides – and the midges are at their worst! Also, it's a potentially dangerous place as parts of the valley are pock-marked with old jet workings, often obscured by vegetation.

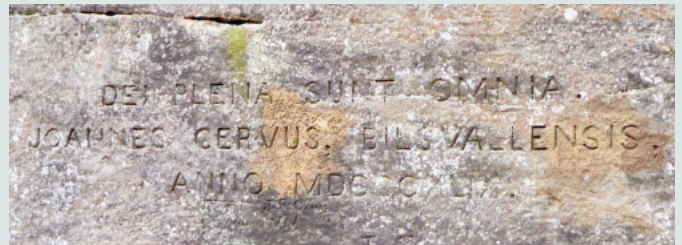
A visit to the Ship Stone is, however, comparatively easy. From the rough stone and concrete bridge in Tripsdale (grid ref SE 582988) follow the game-track eastwards uphill to the first left-hand bend. From here follow a small path downstream, following the contour. Pass a low square of stones on the right which was reputedly once the cottage of a cobbler who used to walk to Town Green, further up Bilsdale, and sit outside the now long-closed Fox & Hounds, selling his wares. In a short distance you will arrive at the Ship Stone. A Latin inscription on the side reads:

“DEI PLENA SUNT OMNIA.
JOHANNES CERVUS, BILSVALLENSIS.
ANNO MDCCCLXIX.

This translates as: “All things are full of the Creator. John Hart, a man of Bilsdale. 1849.” John or Jonathan Hart was born in Tripsdale in 1824 and is recorded as the schoolmaster at Ingleby Greenhow in 1861. He later emigrated to the USA, died there, and is buried in Hawaii.



Cobbler's Cottage, Tripsdale



Inscription on the Ship Stone

The name 'Thripesdala' appears in the 12th century Rievaulx Chartulary. The name may come from the Old English word 'Thrippele', a moveable framework fitted on a cart, or 'Thripel', meaning 'instrument of torture'. Having visited Tripsdale at the height of the bracken and midge season I think the derivation from Thripel is the most appropriate!

Another fascinating feature of Tripsdale is the presence of two ancient watercourses – but that's a story for another issue of 'Voice'.

ALAN STANIFORTH

CROMBIE WILKINSON SOLICITORS DISCOUNT LAW CLUB

WE ARE delighted that local law firm Crombie Wilkinson has joined NYMA as a Business Member and is supporting us in a number of other ways – including offering discounted legal fees for NYMA members.

Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors is one of North Yorkshire's largest and long-established law firms. Over the next few months 'Voice of the Moors' will include short articles on aspects of their legal services, which include Conveyancing, Wills and Lasting Powers of Attorney, Estate and Inheritance Tax planning, Elder Client legal services, Probate, Family Law, Mediation, Business law, and Dispute Resolution. With offices in Malton,

Pickering, York, and Selby, they are conveniently located for many NYMA members, and you can also access their legal services over the phone or by video conferencing, or home visits can be arranged.

Through the Discount Law Club*, current NYMA members will receive a 12.5% discount on legal fees (this applies where you are liable for your own legal costs without recourse to third party funding). To access the service, phone one of the Crombie Wilkinson offices – you can find contact details at <https://www.crombiwilkinson.co.uk/>. When you make your initial enquiry or book an appointment, let the legal advisor know

that you are a member of NYMA. Once verified, you will become a member of the Discount Law Club and assigned a personal membership number. For any questions, please contact Sarah Edwards, Marketing Manager at Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors, on 01904 624185.

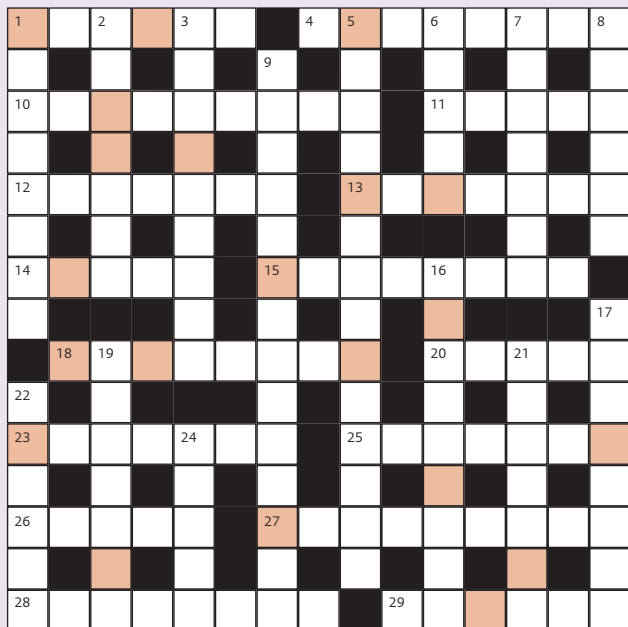


*Please note that the following Terms and Conditions apply: should a conflict of interest arise it may not be possible to act for you; Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors reserve the right to withdraw the discount offer at any time; and the discount cannot be used in conjunction with another discount offer by Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors

CROSSWORD 100 BY AMANUENSIS

To mark the issue of the 100th Crossword compiled by Amanuensis for 'Voice of the Moors', a **PRIZE of a BOTTLE of CHAMPAGNE** will be awarded to the person who submits (by post) the first-drawn correct solution to the puzzle and anagram. See entry details below. Good luck!

The Prize Crossword Puzzle is comprised of a random mixture of cryptic, synonymic, and general knowledge clues.



ACROSS

- 1 Wild flier initially goes recklessly alongside Yorkshire river (6)
- 4 Quite a depression on the moors? (8)
- 10 Cheesy snare? (9)
- 11 Guide young bullock (5)
- 12 A home for female workers? (7)
- 13 Unctuous source of light? (3, 4)
- 14 Spry village near Sandsend one hears (5)
- 15 Where dramatic operations often take place? (8)
- 18 Advocates stop ales fermenting (8)
- 20 Book that contains both old and new (5)
- 23 Said to make everything better? (7)
- 25 Taking notice (7)
- 26 Stick to the rules (5)
- 27 You must be good when on this, or else...? (9)
- 28 Tiny lies result in decrepitude (8)
- 29 Artist scratches a living, perhaps? (6)

DOWN

- 1 Awarded for outstanding contribution to victory (4, 4)
- 2 Ostentatiously luxurious (7)
- 3 Scientific samples (9)
- 5 Recommended education establishment for bad boys? (8, 6)
- 6 To do with an organ (5)
- 7 Mean to state how old you are (7)
- 8 Crazy parent is held in some awe (6)
- 9 Floor covering from the east (8, 6)
- 16 Can be found in a cellar (5, 4)
- 17 Concerning spies used in chemical analysis (8)
- 19 Writers on small particle get payment (7)
- 21 They are completely surrounded by water (7)
- 22 Lets the cat out of the bag (6)
- 24 Basket for swimmers (5)

Anagram: Take the letters from the coloured squares and rearrange in the boxes to solve the anagram:

Clue: Latin name for game bird closely associated with the North York Moors (7, 7, 7)

Entry details: POSTAL SUBMISSIONS ONLY to: PRIZE CROSSWORD, Piper House, 54 Church Street, Castleton, Whitby YO21 2EL by May 31. A bottle of champagne will go to the sender of the first randomly-drawn correct solutions (both crossword and anagram). Photocopies accepted, but we can only accept entries from UK addresses. Name of winner and solutions will be published in Voice of the Moors, Summer Edition, Issue 152.

Name: _____

Address (including postcode): _____

Telephone number: _____

Email (if available): _____



NYMA NEWS

YOU'VE probably noticed that this edition of 'Voice of the Moors' has more of a campaigning focus than usual. Given the climate and biodiversity emergencies, there are simply too many issues to ignore. We've tried to illustrate some aspects of the crises faced by all of us by highlighting local issues: pollution in the headwaters of important rivers in the Moors, the potentially disastrous decline in migrant birds, further reduction in public transport options for accessing our National Park and other rural areas, and possible ways of giving more weight to community concerns regarding land management.

Notes of optimism are sounded too, with news of a bottom-up nature recovery programme in Norfolk which is being rolled out in the Moors, and a last-minute funding lifeline thrown by the Government to the North York Moors and other National Parks in England for 2023 (necessary because previous public funding cuts have thrown National Parks into an existential crisis).

A further positive note is sounded with the Community Earth Festival in Esk Valley and East Cleveland, taking place from April to July. Featuring over 40 events ranging from music and crafts to walks and hands-on nature recovery projects, the initiative has been greeted with enthusiasm by a wide range of community groups, including NYMA, and we are very pleased to have been able to add some sponsorship to the event.

We welcome two new business supporters of NYMA. The beautiful oak 'Mouseman' furniture and crafts created in the village of Kilburn by Robert Thompson's Craftsmen Ltd need little introduction, and there's a fascinating museum on the site as well: their support for our work is greatly valued. The local law firm Crombie Wilkinson Solicitors have generously agreed to sponsor issues of 'Voice of the Moors', and to offer discounted legal services to NYMA members (see page 18). This all helps us to carry on producing a high-quality, quarterly magazine and with our campaigning and other activities - as you can imagine, cost pressures are affecting NYMA as much as any other organisation in the country.

It's been a joy to watch the 8 programmes about Dalby, Cropton and Langdale Forest in the Channel 5 series 'The Secret Life of the Forest' during this spring. We've enjoyed seeing old friends, NYMA members and several contributors to 'Voice' as they display their deep knowledge of the forests, as well as learning about new features of local biodiversity and how the area is managed. If you haven't already seen them, the programmes are available on the Channel 5 'catchup' service. The series was filmed in the summer of 2022, but the Moors are scenic at any time of year. Pete Nelson's striking photo of the road between Rosedale and Hutton-le-Hole (below) shows the moorland awaiting the greenery of spring.



Photo © Pete Nelson

NYMA WALKS & EVENTS



Photo © Dave Moore

SATURDAY 29 APRIL - COMMONDALE CIRCULAR

Meet 10.30 at the clump of trees just west of Comondale (Grid Ref. NZ 657 105, W3W shape.modifies.heeding) for a 5.5 miles walk via Hob on the Hill, Quakers' Causeway, and Black Howes. Total ascent 200m. Please let Wendy Smith know if you are coming - wpsmith7a@gmail.com or 01642 711 980.

SATURDAY 20 MAY - HAWNBY CIRCULAR

Meet 10.30 at Moor Gate carpark (Grid Ref. NZ 539 918, W3W coveted.hagglng.help). The route includes a climb over Hawnbly Hill, some road-walking, foothills of Easterside, and across moors back to the carpark. The walk is 6-5 miles in total. Please contact Kath Mair to book, email kathmair@icloud.com, mobile 07974 288056.

FRIDAY 16 JUNE - DEFENCES THROUGH THE AGES

A Roman signal station, wartime sites from both world wars, a Cold War bunker and even a giant's grave! Wide views ranging from Hartlepool to Hawsker lighthouse (given clarity on the day). This is a 6-mile circular walk led by Jane Ellis. Bring a packed lunch, strong footwear required.

Meet at Barnby crossroads bus stop on the A174 (Grid Ref. NZ 828 132, postcode YO21 3SA, W3W kicks.hasten.cuddled) at 10.20, on arrival of the X4 bus from Whitby bus station which departs at 10.04 and the X4 from Middlesbrough which departs at 08.45 and picks up all along the coast road. Return by the same half-hourly bus from the start point. Roadside car parking is available just off the crossroads, on the Kettleless and East Barnby roads.

Numbers on the walks are limited, so please book your place with the walk leaders or contact Dave Moore, email walks@nyma.org.uk, tel. 01287 669648. Please come dressed and equipped for the weather.

SATURDAY 1 JULY

NYMA's Adrian Leaman will chair a discussion on making the Esk Valley wilder, including the possible reintroduction of beavers. There are several speakers, and the event will be held from 2-5pm in Danby Village Hall, Wellington Close, Danby YO21 2LZ. It is organised by Esk Valley Camphill Community as part of the Community Earth Festival (Esk Valley & East Cleveland). For details see <https://www.eskvalleynews.co.uk/cef-programme>.



OFFICERS OF NYMA

President: Ian Carstairs OBE

Chair: Adrian Leaman

Vice-Chair: George Winn-Darley

Executive Secretary: Janet Cochrane - secretary@nyma.org.uk, 07570 112010

Hon. Treasurer: Brian Pearce

Membership Secretary: Vacant

Other Council Members: Tom Chadwick, Ray Clarke, Albert Elliot, Helen Gundry, Gerard McElwee, Tom Ratcliffe, John Ritchie, Colin Speakman, Andy Wilson, Elaine Wisdom

Walks Coordinator: Dave Moore, walks@nyma.org.uk

NYMA: Glen Cottage, Carr Lane, Scarborough YO13 0SB

The North Yorkshire Moors Association is a Charitable Incorporated Organisation, Registration no. 1169240

www.nyma.org.uk

Facebook: Wild about the Moors

Twitter: @NYMoorsAssoc