

FROM THE CHAIR

MISSING OPPORTUNITIES

Our recent decision not to proceed with the proposed nature reserve at Moss Side has left a few questions unanswered. Did we decide too hastily? Given time far worse areas have become valuable nature reserves. A visit to the former coalfields of Yorkshire would confirm this. How many of you saw the rubbish tip grow on and around Marton Mere?

We had the chance to create something of our own and leave behind a flourishing reserve with a wealth of common species, those common species that are permanently threatened by our constant concern with the rare and beautiful.

Early enthusiasm among our members led us down the road to meetings before, after and instead of work. Maps and plans were pored over letters written and endless phone calls made. At some stage we must thank our Secretary for all that work and apologise for his embarrassment when conveying our decision to Newfield Jones.

On a more positive note, the developments at Rossall will present us with an opportunity to be involved in an exciting venture. Promotion of our coastal heritage has suddenly become popular. The Ribble Discovery Centre, Marshside RSPB reserve and developments at Morecambe clearly demonstrate how coastal conservation has become the vogue. The development at Rossall will be more than a seawatching hide, it will exist to educate everyone about our coastline. We will be able to talk to people and show them our birds. Will you support our ideas for coastal zoning to save a place for the birds?

At our July meeting I mentioned the launch of a Friends of Marton Mere group. This group has the support of Blackpool Borough Council but will be separate from any influence from members or officers of the Council. It will exist to promote the nature reserve to local people and visitors and also raise funds for the purchase of materials and equipment for use on site. It will not seek to influence the management of the reserve. Here is another opportunity to become involved.

At the same meeting one of our members raised the issue of tape luring rare birds into view and asked if the Club had a policy on this matter. I have no strong views on this when birds are lured at ringing sites in the name of science. Night time sessions have been held to lure feeding Storm Petrels ashore partly in the hope of attracting rarer species, but this seems acceptable.

We cannot make rules forbidding members tape luring, that is up to the individual. If you think we need a firm policy here is your opportunity to comment by writing to our newsletter editor. That's one opportunity lost and three to go - are you going to take one?

L.G.B.

A SLIGHTLY ALTERNATIVE VIEW

In 'From the Chair' our Chairman Len questions whether we came to the correct decision in deciding not to proceed with the purchase of the extra three and a half acres of land at Moss Side and asks did we decide too hastily?

My answer to that is yes - we decided too hastily that we would go ahead. I myself like a lot of members got very excited about the club owning its own reserve. What could be better? At last a chance for the club to own something tangible, something to pull the club together, real conservation in action! That was before I had seen the site. On visiting it, I began to have doubts. A case could be made for conserving the wet reed bed area promised to the club free of charge, but were the club really going to spend £3,500 on a particularly uninspiring piece of grassland which had in part been used as a spoil dump by the builders, the like of which could be found all over the Fylde, holding only common species? I was of the opinion that if someone else bought the land for grazing losses etc. none of the species present would disappear. Looking at the land surrounded on two sides by houses I wondered how long it would be before the residents children began to use the land for a playground etc. Again how many of our members would come birdwatching here or want to do conservation work? Len states that far worse areas have become nature reserves but we are generally talking about far larger areas and not in such close proximity to houses with no warden. I therefore came to the conclusion that we came to our senses just in time and saved our money perhaps for better causes in the future. It now remains to be seen whether the builders still donate the original land offered to the Club. Unfortunately Len and our Secretary Paul spent a lot of time on the project and thanks are due to them for that. However, as I found out myself when I was Secretary things don't always work out as the Club officials would wish.

On a more agreeable note, I wholeheartedly support the Club's involvement in the proposed centre at Rossall, and feel this is a far more worthy cause for the Club to support and put money into. This is a facility that all our members can use and the public can be informed about the importance of waders and the estuary. It will promote our hobby to all and is a result of our excellent relationship with Wyre Borough over the years. I urge all our members to use and support it.

Len goes on to mention tape luring birds. Again I have to agree with what he says. Personally my experience is that a bird reacts to a tape critically as it would to another male in its territory. It becomes agitated at first but if repeated too often it soon ceases to react and taping becomes ineffective. It is far less harmful than luring tired migrants from the sky with a tape to be ringed or taping feeding petrels to land. There appears to have been an explosion of this kind of activity within the last couple of years. These activities are however looked on as being legitimate. It is somehow different from taping a bird to observe it - it is done in the name of science we are told - indeed who would dare to suggest that the ringers are hoping to catch a rare passage migrant to fondle or hoping to trap a Swinhoe's Petrel?

A.J.H.

TAPE LURING - AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE 'ALTERNATIVE' VIEW

Coincidentally as the person who raised the issue of tape luring, and now typing up the newsletter as a one-off, I find myself in a position to respond to the Chairman and Editor's thoughts on this subject in the same issue.

The main thing I find odd about AJH's argument is that he seems to say that we should ease off tape luring to observe birds because it is, allegedly, less harmful to the bird than luring it to ring it. Since when did the bird club ignore wrongful acts because allegedly greater wrongs were taking place.

An important point about ringing is that, like it or not, it has a scientific justification. Like Alan I am sometimes sceptical about the value of some ringing, especially the deliberate trapping of rarities. However ringing is a licensed and policed activity which has undoubtedly increased our knowledge of migration. It is thus rather churlish to compare it with tape luring a bird so you can 'tick' it.

Len says that tape luring is a matter of individual conscience. This is true up to a point, but unless I am very much mistaken the wilful disturbance of Schedule 1 breeding species on their nesting grounds is a criminal offence. I believe people went tape luring Quail on Pilling Moss, though I have no proof. At the last meeting I said the Little Bittern was a bit of a special case, but was it really? It was a calling male on potential breeding habitat. What gives one or two selfish birders the right to harass it just so that they can see it? Who can prove they did not cause it to depart sooner than it otherwise might have done?

In one of those happy coincidences the night I spoke at the bird club, having left early, I was extremely fortunate to hear a species which is something of a rarity in the Fylde and Lancashire. I informed Maurice when I got home but told him not to put the news out. We went to the site the next night and it was clear the bird had moved on. Only then did I make the news public. It is a sad reflection on the Fylde Bird Club and 'progress' in birding that to put this bird's welfare first I had to suppress its occurrence, because I couldn't trust some of my birding colleagues to behave properly.

I am not in the business of witch hunts, I would simply like to see people who profess to be bird lovers matching their words with action. I believe that if tape luring was only carried out by newer members the long-standing members would be trying to educate them to mend their ways. But because the main exponents of this activity are long-standing members who can make or break birding reputations there is a conspiracy of silence. Next time you are at a twitch and somebody reaches for a portable cassette player, be brave, speak out for the bird which can't speak for itself.

Stephen Dunstan

RECENT REPORTS

APRIL

April was mainly dry with generally warm sunny weather until about mid-month. It then turned cooler with heavy rain towards the end of the month. Winds were generally light north westerly or south westerly. with a short period of southerlies around the second week.

At Starr Gate 25 Red-throated Divers moved north on the 13th, 37 were off there on the 20th with a Black-throated. A Little Grebe was on the Mere on the 15th-16th with a pair seen on the 18th. On the 5th 11 Gannets and 1 Fulmar were seen in a one hour watch. Four Fulmars were off South Prom on the 20th together with 47 Gannets in calm conditions. Highlight of the month were the two Glossy Ibis found by Bob Danson which roosted at Pilling Lane Ends from 20th to 29th. A few geese continued to be seen Over Wyre with the Snow Goose still present until 15th. A Greenland White Front was at Pilling on the 5th together with a Barnacle. A good record was an unringed Ruddy Shelduck at Freckleton Naze on the 20th whilst a male Scaup was on the Naze on the 21st.

Med Gulls continued to be seen regularly at the Mere with a first winter there on the 3rd and adults noted on the 1st, 2nd and 15th. An adult was also seen at the Naze on the 2nd. Terns began to move through in numbers with 21 Common south, 35 Sandwich south and 5 Arctic north on the 20th. An Arctic Skua went south on the 5th off Starr Gate.

On 29th an Osprey passed through the Mere and a Peregrine was seen there the next day. Waders were also on the move with 2 Greenshanks and 1 Spotted Redshank at Arm Hill on the 6th. On the 12th the first Common Sandpiper appeared at the Mere with 2 there on the 15th, 1 was also at Lane Ends, Pilling on the 22nd with 136 Golden Plover there on the 26th. A Green Sandpiper was present at the Mere on several dates from the 6th-18th with a Whimbrel there on the 18th and a Ruff from 22nd-24th. At Freckleton entrance pool 3 Little Ringed Plovers were noteworthy on the 20th with a Greenshank and a Spotted Redshank there on the 27th.

Two Great Spotted Woodpeckers were at Hackensall Wood on the 7th with 2 males and 1 female at Longwood, north of Lytham Hall, on the 12th. More hirundines began to appear with 250 Sand Martins roosting at the Mere on the 8th and 2 Swallows there that day, with a House Martin the next day. Three Swallows at Pilling on the 5th appeared to be the first reported with one in off the sea at Rossall on the 6th and 95 Meadow Pipits also there on that day.

The only Yellow Wagtail reported was a male at the Mere on the 25th. A White Wagtail was seen at the Mere on the 27th with 6 noted opposite Clifton tip on the 30th. A Tree Pipit was at the Mere on the 30th.

Warblers began to arrive slowly, with a Willow Warbler at the Mere on the 7th and 12 there by the 15th, one was at Longwood on the 12th together with 2 Blackcaps. There was a maximum of five male Grasshopper Warblers at the Mere by the 25thwhilst one at South Prom on the 27th was unusual. A Stonechat was at LSANR on the 29th with 25-30 Wheatears there on the 27th and 18 on the 29th. A Ring Ouzel was seen at the zoo car park on the 13th. Nuthatches were still being seen in Hackensall Wood to the 18th and 2 Jays were at the Naze on the 20th.

MAY

The first few days were warm and sunny with light south east winds before it went cool and windy with northerlies and some welcome rain. High pressure then took over again with temperatures rising towards month end.

On the 3rd 6 Red-throated Divers were off Starr Gate and on the 18th a juvenile Black-throated Diver flew past there very close inshore. In the early part of the month a male Red-breasted Merganser was regularly at Marton Mere. On the 5th 7 Fulmars flew south off Starr Gate.

On 10th a Little Egret was found on Warton Marsh together with 2 Spoonbills. Two male and three female Eiders were noted at the same venue on the 16th. On the 9th a pair of Garganey were seen at the Mere and then proceeded to become very elusive, being seen on and off for the rest of the month. A male was also on Newton Marsh on the 3rd. A Peregrine was at Lane Ends on the 11th. On the 15th a Sparrowhawk was sitting on Lytham Hall whilst on the 18th a Kestrel brood was noted on Yates Wine Lodge on Talbot Road. On the 3rd 6 Whimbrel were seen off Starr Gate whilst just outside our area 641 roosted at Barnacre Reservoir on the 7th. On 19th 30 Black Tails and 37 Bar Tails were on Warton Marsh with 24 Black Tails on the scrape at the Mere on the 2nd. A Little Ringed Plover was noted at the Mere on the 8th and the 11th with a Turnstone there on the 16th.

Good numbers of Terns continued to be seen off Starr Gate early in the month. The 3rd was an especially noteworthy day with 125 Common Terns going north, 6 Little Terns moving south and 14 Arctic Terns going south. A huge movement of Black Terns nationally saw 45 going south off Starr Gate, 25 at the Naze and 10 at Marton Mere. In addition there were 17 Arctic Terns at the Naze. A first summer Little Gull went south off the promenade on the 3rd also and a Med Gull was seen at the Mere on the 11th. On the 10th 3 Puffins flew south off Starr Gate with 2 Razorbills going north there on the 18th.

A nice surprise awaited our Treasurer on the bird race when a female Citrine Wagtail dropped in front of him at Newton Marsh. No doubt about this being the bird of the month. Several Yellow Wagtails were also seen at Newton Marsh during the Citrine's stay also. Cuckoos were noted on Lytham Moss on 2nd, Warton Marsh on the 3rd and at the Mere on 15th, 17th and 19th. A Tree Pipit was on LSANR on the 13th.

Early in the month warblers continued to arrive. Two Garden Warblers and a Wood Warbler were in Stanley Park on the 1st with a Grasshopper Warbler on the golf course near Woodland Gardens the same day. A Sedge Warbler in Ashton Gardens, St. Annes on the 8th was unusual. Three Lesser Whitethroats were at Stanah on the 21st and three frequented the Mere on various dates. Spotted Flycatchers became evident towards the middle of the month with 1 at the Naze on 19th, 1 at LSANR on 21st and one in Alan Stamford's back garden on the same date. By the 9th there were 9 singing Grasshopper Warblers in the area of the Mere, the Nook and Herons Reach with a female Whinchat at the Mere on the same date. A noteworthy record was a Redwing at the end of Queensway in St. Annes on the 31st.

JUNE

June was very unsettled with periods of heavy rain making it the wettest June for 100 years. Winds were generally light but strong westerlies occurred towards month end. Temperatures were well below normal for the time of year.

On the 1st a Great Crested Grebe was off Starr Gate. Manx Shearwaters began to appear with 6 off South Prom on 1st, 3 on the 7th and 1 on the 8th in calm conditions. A pair of Goldeneye flew south off Starr gate on the 1st with 9 Razorbill going north on the 8th. On the 12th Maurice Jones found a Little Bittern at Marton Mere, the third month in succession the Fylde played host to a good bird. It proved elusive at first spending long periods calling in the reedbed without being seen. However it did show more towards the end of its stay and was last seen on the 23rd. Two male Wigeon were on the Mere on 8th whilst on 15th a Partridge with chicks was noted on LSANR.

Towards the end of the month a Med Gull was reported taking bread at Fairhaven. At the beginning of the month 32 Arctic Terns moved north off Starr Gate on the 1st. Great Spotted Woodpeckers were reported breeding in Marton Mere Caravan Site on the 22nd and on the 12th a Barn Owl was noted flying out of Mere View Barn. Not many reports of waders were received, a Little Ringed Plover at the Mere on the 1st, a Whimbrel at the Mere on the 13th and a Ringed Plover there on the 14th being the only ones. Two male and one female Cuckoos were seen at the Mere on the 10th with a pair over on the 14th when a Kingfisher was also noted. One hundred Sand Martins roosted at the Mere on the 12th and 13th with 300 there on the 17th and 18th. A Chiffchaff was singing at the Mere on the 17th with a Garden Warbler in song near the RSPCA on Lytham Moss the same day. On the 4th a male Whinchat was singing on LSANR with a female present for one day only. At Warton Marsh 2000 Starlings were reported on 29th. Treecreepers reportedly nested at Marton Mere Caravan Site. Six Long-tailed Tits were a rare sighting at the Mere on the 10th and a family party was reported on 17th near the RSPCA on Lytham Moss.

There are not many places that I go birding that haven't changed quite dramatically since I first went there, and all these changes have been for the worse from a conservation point of view. To give a few examples, Wesham Marsh suffers from improved drainage, over-grazing and ever increasing pressure from shooters to such an extent that it remains virtually birdless throughout the winter, and the breeding birds are disappearing. Ribby Hall and Old Camp, a perfect example of what can be achieved if you don't give a toss about wildlife and you have the resources to 'tidy the place up', grub out that unsightly scrub, plough up that rough grassland, dig out those underground air raid shelters (full of hibernating bats), flatten all the old buildings (home to Barn Owl, Little Owl, Kestrel and yet more bats and destroy every last vestige of natural habitat, once rich in birds like Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat and Reed Bunting to name but a few. The whole area, over 100 acres, is now one big field growing vegetables for the ever increasing prison population, so even prisoners are having an effect on what use we put the land to.

Ribby Hall, just next door to the old camp, has also seen its fair share of change, from a fairly derelict old mansion, it has been transformed into luxury appointments and 'tidied up' along with the surrounding woodland which is now, yes you've guessed it, a caravan park or should I say caravan and luxury chalet park, horse riding stables, squirrel nutkins crazy golf course, squash courts, kids playground, restaurant etc etc. Another 100 or so acres tidied up beyond recognition.

Singleton Hall, barely recognisable from just a few years ago, the 'let's tidy up' brigade have had a field day here. Yes most of the mature trees are still standing and from a distance you might be forgiven for thinking that all is well, you'd be wrong. On closer examination you will see all the dead wood has been taken out along with most of the undergrowth and what remains, rhododendron and ground covering ivy only prevents any chance of regeneration. It wouldn't surprise me if they planned to re-plant it with things like flowering cherry, lilac and magnolia etc. It used to be a favourite place with the Fylde Ringing Group, but since all the 'improvement' there's precious little to ring, gone are the large winter roosts of thrushes and finches, and if there's any ringing to be done, it should be the necks of all those people who want to destroy anything and everything that they consider in need of improvement because it isn't as tidy as their garden. To these people I have just one message. Stick to your bedding plants, exotic shrubs and green desert lawns and leave the 'jungle' to the experts.

The sad fact of all this is that we are all helping to pay for this wanton destruction in the form of government grants, paid for out of public funds, but don't all go applying for a grant for your local patch, it only applies if you are going to 'IMPROVE' it.

Monty Myerscough

HELP

LOOK FOR GULLS WITH COLOUR RINGS

200 Juvenile Lesser Black-Backed Gulls have been colour ringed at three NW breeding colonies this year to study inter-colony movement and feeding sites used. YOUR sightings are important. Please help.

All the colour rings are on the left leg. Rings are bright green with a white letter to indicate the breeding colony.

R is for Ribble Estuary Nature Reserve

T is for Tarnbrook Fell - Bowland Forest

W is for South Walney Nature Reserve

Send details of date, place, number of birds and letter on ring to the local warden or contact:

*David Sowter 5 The Grove, Penwortham, PR1 0UU.
Telephone: 01772 749220*



**Fylde
Bird Club
LANCASHIRE**

FYLDE BIRD CLUB
BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 8:00 PM ON WEDNESDAY
THE 21 ST OF MAY AT BLACKPOOL CRICKET CLUB

Present

Chairman; Secretary and 30 members.
Apologies were received from Don Rusling and Peter Bainbridge.

Minutes of the Previous Meeting

The minutes of the last business meeting held on the 19th of March were read and approved.

Matters Arising Covered under the Agenda items.

Correspondence

Newton Marsh SSSI

The Secretary stated that he had written to the RSPB and English Nature stating the case for reserve status and/or improved management for Newton Marsh. He reported that in follow up telephone conversations both bodies were fairly optimistic that some improvements may be possible. Although the RSPB had stated that the site met their criteria to qualify for consideration for purchase, the complex land ownership and usage arrangements in place meant that it was highly unlikely that this would be possible. It had come to light that the site was an SSSI because of its wintering birds and not because of its breeding birds. The RSPB were keen to see the site's designation modified to take account of the breeding birds and to this end the Secretary passed on a request from the RSPB to forward all records of breeding birds, particularly waders, wildfowl and yellow wagtail. All records should be supplied to the Secretary and would be treated in confidence and only shared with the RSPB and English Nature.

Agenda

1) Marton Mere

The Chairman reported that the hide which had been upgraded with materials secured by the Club had been destroyed by fire. He continued to say that; although sad it presented an opportunity for us to persuade Blackpool Borough Council to provide a more permanent structure. The cost of a new hide may be met by insurance from the old hide; the possibility of a donation from Bourne Leisure and fund raising events. The Chairman stated that it was understood that residents at the caravan site had deliberately set the hide on fire.

Alan Hinchliffe expressed the view that Blackpool Borough Council should be asked to contribute to the cost of replacing the hide.

Monty Myerscough asked that any plans to upgrade the other hides by the Club should be put on hold. This was agreed.

Frank Walsh stated that the old hide was far too small and that its replacement should be larger. All agreed with this opinion.

It was agreed that the Club should contact Blackpool Borough Council over the issue before the next Marton Mere Management Committee meeting.

The Chairman also reported from the April Marton Mere Management Committee meeting. He stated that the issue of the Mere visitor centre being closed on Saturdays was raised and the concept of new voluntary wardens being recruited specifically to man the centre on Saturdays put forward. The Council had agreed to give this proposal consideration. The Chairman reported that the number of voluntary wardens was currently limited to 12.

Frank Walsh asked why the Visitor Centre had been sited in its current location where it is remote and out of sight from the water. The Secretary replied that the Council had positioned it there to allow easiest access to electrical and drainage services already present for the adjacent pump house. At the time of its introduction, the Council were in dispute with the then owners of the Caravan site and therefore the Caravan Site was not an option for the location of the Centre. Mike McGough suggested that the Club should recommend that the Council investigate re-locating the Centre on the Caravan Site side of the Mere now that the Caravan Site had new owners. This was agreed.

2) Moss Side

The Secretary reported that there had been no significant progress since the last meeting. However the Club was not yet committed to the purchase and Newfield Jones were not pressing the Club yet in any way. Newfield Jones had suggested verbally that a distant completion date would suit them, if the Club found it acceptable for them to maintain a site cabin on the corner of the proposed reserve until their works were complete. The Secretary stated that we were awaiting the outcome of a site meeting with the developers which had been arranged for the 6th of June. It was anticipated that at this meeting, the Club would learn the developer's response to the requests which we had made in writing on 7-3-97.

Announcements

- 1) There would be a Fylde Bird Club/ Wyre Borough Council guided walk at Brock on Sunday 1st June starting at 04:00 am. Volunteers were requested and promised a free breakfast.
- 2) On Sunday 18th August the Blackpool RSPB Group were planning a coach trip to the Bird Fair at Rutland Water. The cost would be £21 inc. admission (which is £7).
- 3) The next meeting would be on Wed 18th June when there would be a Quiz Night and a review of the spring migration.

Any Other Business

1) RSPB Fairhaven

Stuart Meredith reported that the centre was up and running and that talks and all kinds of other events were planned. He requested volunteers to help out with these activities particularly people with a good knowledge of birds. He stated that volunteers would be welcome at all times.

2) Planning Application for a Tip

Dave Mc Grath reported the existence of a planning application to use land south of Todderstaffe Hall as a tip. The Chairman and Secretary agreed to investigate and prepare a response to the Planning Office.

3) Marton Mere

Mike McGough raised the issue of the suspension of a volunteer warden who was also a Bird Club member. He stated that an article and a letter had recently appeared in the Gazette newspaper and that the Club's name had been mentioned and therefore perhaps it should respond. The Chairman read out both of the newspaper articles. Alan Hinchliffe stated that the individual had been suspended for speaking out, criticising the way in which the reserve is run. Alan's view was that he had been treated unfairly because what he had said was accurate. Alan recommended that the Club should support the suspended volunteer, by writing its own letter of complaint to Blackpool Borough Council concerning the running of the Reserve.

Extensive debate ensued and the following views were expressed. It was generally agreed, that while the newspaper articles had mentioned the Club, we were not attributed with any position on the matter and therefore not obliged to enter the debate. It was agreed that the issue of the suspension of the volunteer and the standard of housekeeping at the Mere were separate issues and while the Club might consider commenting on the way the Reserve was run, it should not interfere in disputes between the volunteers and the Council. It was opined that now was the optimum time for the Club to make representations to the Council over its running of the site, while the issue was in the public eye. The Secretary and Chairman expressed the view that the Club had regular opportunities to make representations to the Council concerning the Mere at the Management Committee meetings and that at least in the first instance this was the forum which should be used.

Alan Hinchliffe proposed that the Club should write to Blackpool Borough Council expressing our concerns over the way in which the Reserve is run. This was seconded by Robert Stinger. A vote was taken which rejected the proposal.

4) Invoicing for Advertisements in the 1995 Bird Report

Andrew Myerscough asked if the invoices had been sent out yet. The Secretary replied that he had not done it yet but was aware that he needed to do it.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9:45 pm.

FRIENDS OF MARTON MERE

SUPPORTED BY

BLACKPOOL BOROUGH COUNCIL

In September 1997, the first meeting of the Friends of Marton Mere will be held, date and venue to be confirmed.

Anyone with an interest in Marton Mere Local Nature Reserve is welcome to attend.

The aim of the group is to raise awareness of the importance of the Nature Reserve, and to help Blackpool Borough Council and its officers achieve the aims set out in the Local Nature Reserve Management Plan. We also hope to raise funds, where appropriate, for the purchase of materials or equipment for use on the reserve.

Most important of all, this is an opportunity for the local people to be involved in the management of their own countryside.

We look forward to meeting you on the night. For further information do not hesitate to contact Len on (01253) 768956 or Mick on (01253) 293366



**Fylde
Bird Club
LANCASHIRE**

FYLDE BIRD CLUB COMMITTEE

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD AT 8:15 PM ON WEDNESDAY THE 11TH OF JUNE AT THE HOLE-IN-ONE AT LYTHAM

PRESENT

Chairman; Secretary; Treasurer; Alan Hinchliffe; Paul Slade; Alan Dawe; Dave Pitman and Andrew Cadman.

MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting held on the 8th April were read and approved.

MATTERS ARISING

1) Breeding Birds Survey

Andrew Cadnam reported that he working with Steven Dunstan to progress the job.

Action continuing : Andrew Cadman

2) Rossall Coast Guards Tower

The Chairman reported that Wyre Borough Council had recently voted in favour of converting the Tower into a Birdwatching facility.

Action continuing: Chairman to keep the Committee informed of developments.

3) Marion Mere

The action to put up a persex sheet, (behind which Bird Club promotional material could be displayed), in the south east hide had been overtaken by events. The hide had since been destroyed by fire.

Action: Cancelled

4) Collection of Sales Money for the 1994 Fylde Bird Report

It was believed that the Fairhaven RSPB Scheme would re-open on the 1st May.

Action continuing: Treasurer to secure payment from the RSPB for sales of '94 Reports and return of unsold old reports.

5) New Club Car Sticker

The Chairman agreed to pursue the provision of the a car sticker once in possession of the artwork. The Treasurer handed the artwork to the Chairman at the meeting.

Action continuing: Chairman.

6) Newsletter Copy

Alan Hinchliffe agreed to become the custodian of the Bird Club's Site Guide collection. The Chairman agreed to provide Alan with what Site Guide copy he had. The Chairman had secured a site guide to the River Wyre sites from Wyre Borough Council which the Club could use. This was shown to those present who all agreed that it was suitable.

Dave Pitman reported that Geoff Wilby had agreed to write a guide for the Bank Lane area. However he had not yet produced an article on the Rarities committee. The Chairman agreed to ask the Warden of Marton Mere to produce an access guide to the site.

Action: Chairman/Paul Slade produce site guide to River Wyre. Complete.

Action: Dave Pitman to produce an article on the Rarities Committee. -- Action Continuing.

7) Fylde Bird Club Rarities Committee

Dave Pitman reported that the Committee had met in mid May and considered all the 1996 records bar one. The one outstanding record would be considered once a description was received.

Action Complete

8) Proposed Bird Reserve at Newton Marsh

The Secretary reported that he had written to the RSPB on this matter and copied the letter to English Nature. The RSPB and English Nature had written back and both had requested that the Bird Club provide all records of breeding birds from the site. The Secretary reported that he had met the local naturalist who had records of breeding birds, (going back to 1988) and that he had agreed to type up his records and pass them to the Bird Club.

Action: Secretary to co-ordinate collection of records and onward transmission to the RSPB.

9) Proposed Wildfowl Reserve Over Wyre

The Secretary reported that he had raised this issue briefly with the RSPB during a telephone conversation. The RSPB's initial response was that land ownership was not the way to conserve geese. The Secretary offered to further investigate the RSPB's policy when the opportunity arose.

Action: Secretary to contact to the RSPB and the WWT.

10) 1995 Bird Report

The Secretary had still to send a copy to the BTO for review.

Action: Secretary

11) Moss Edge Land Offer

The Chairman and Secretary reported that they had recently attended a site meeting with Newfield Jones Homes. They reported that Reed Warbler, Sedge Warbler Whitethroat; Song Thrush and Reed Bunting appeared to be or were breeding and therefore the species which had attracted the interest of the Club were still there. It was agreed that the membership should be invited to visit the site to view its condition and make a final decision on purchase at the July meeting.

AGENDA

1) Membership

Peter Bainbridge reported that he had sent out reminders to all members who had not yet paid their subscriptions.

The Secretary had re-worked the one page promotional leaflet for the Club and reproduced it employing the Club's new logo. Forty copies were handed to the Chairman by the Secretary. The Chairman agreed to distribute copies to members of the Blackpool RSPB Group.

The Chairman reported that the RSPB at Fairhaven had offered display space which the Club could use to promote itself. The Chairman stated that a co-ordinator was needed for Club promotional material and agreed to appeal for a volunteer at the next Club Business Meeting.

2) Slide Shows

The Chairman reported that rooms were available at both Stannah and Fairhaven which the Club could use to hold Slide Shows. Entry fees could be levied at such events with the proceeds going to Club funds. The Secretary offered to present a slide show and talk at either or both locations, if it was arranged.

Action: Chairman to arrange slide show events.

3) St.Micheal's Show

It was agreed that the Bird Club's presence at the event should be publicised in the press.

Action : Chairman

Dave Pitman agreed to provide slides to the Chairman to allow prints to be made for display purposes. The Chairman showed the prints made from the Secretary's slides for use at last years' show. It was agreed to re-use this material.

4) 1996 Fylde Bird Report

Tony Disley was said to be in the Seychelles and therefore Dave Pitman had not been able to contact him yet with a request for artwork

Action Continuing: Dave Pitman to approach ASD regarding artwork.

The Chairman announced that he had found all the old artwork from previous years which could be reused.

The Treasurer had produced accounts for the production costs and income from the last two year's Bird Reports. The data seemed to indicate that the Report almost breaks even. 1993's report recorded a loss of £14 and 1994's report recorded a loss of £12. Action Complete.

The Secretary requested suggestions for the names of businesses who might be interested in advertising in the forthcoming Report. Several names were proposed and the Secretary noted them.

Action: Secretary to secure advertising.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 11:00 pm.