

ADASTRA

2004



**An annual review
of wildlife recording in Sussex**

published by

The Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre

ADASTRA 2004

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by the

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The cover picture is of a polecat, a species whose return to Sussex has been recently confirmed (see page 7).

The drawing is by Osvaldo Negra and our thanks are due to the artist and the Museo Tridentino di Scienze Naturale, Italy for permission to use it.

QUALITY NOT QUANTITY

For the first time since *Adastra* has been published I am going to try to avoid concepts of 'how many' records we hold and 'how many' reports we have produced and try to shift the Record Centre's paradigm away from concepts of 'quantity' and further towards concepts of 'quality'.

2003 was certainly the year of hold-ups and the unraveling of some complex problems. 2004, by contrast, was the year that we tried to bring SxBRC forward in terms of scope and coverage and a great deal of work went into establishing the systems to input and report on records efficiently, effectively and professionally.

SxBRC work is shared as always between the core staff, office volunteers (many thanks) and contractees working on shorter-term projects. The consolidated work of all these people is finally seeing some light at the end of the tunnel as data entry is now not only possible, but actually pretty quick. In addition, reporting, rather than being simply quicker and more straightforward, is becoming more comprehensive with more information than ever going out in our enquiries.

Early in the year, through some funding from English Nature, we were able to go through the quality of the species and habitat data held by SxBRC and HBIC (Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre, our neighbours). This piece of work was undertaken for all data that is held for the area of the proposed South Downs National Park. The purpose of the report was to look at the extent and compatibility of the data over the three counties (East and West Sussex being distinct counties). This piece of work highlighted the shortfalls of our data (and some strengths) and thus established a strong driving force in Sussex to improve the data sets that were shown to be lacking.

Leading on from this report our work with the Sussex Branch of the British Dragonfly Society in preparing the data for the book *The Dragonflies of Sussex* provided an example of how a strong focus on a particular species group will eventually produce a clean and up-to-date data set. It is a process that has certainly set some new SxBRC standards and established principles that we would like to put into place for many other datasets.

The quality of species data is defined by several things, only some of which we can tackle in the Record Centre (namely inaccuracies in grid references and site names and obviously inaccurate records). For all other aspects of quality control we are really dependant, as always, on the advice of our County Recorders. Through best use of the technology available to us, the continued good will of the Recording Community, and trial and error, we are trying hard to ensure that we take a closer look at all our data sets this coming year. If you are a County Recorder and you haven't been approached by us in the past few months about the whole concept of 'data flows', then you surely will in 2005!

As a retrospective 2004, seems to have been the year that we stopped running and finally had a chance to stand still and be a bit more creative about our approach to the Record Centre functions and operations and we hope that 2005 will carry this further.

Henri Brocklebank Biodiversity Record Centre Manger

UNDER-RECORDED AREAS:

A Chance to Explore Deepest, Darkest Sussex.....

Have you ever driven past a meadow, or seen a wood on a map and thought "I wonder what it is like in there?" Well this might be your big chance to explore such a new area, probably quite near to where you live. Why? You will be shocked to know that out of the 4046 1km grid squares in Sussex there are no less than 333 (8%) for which SxBRC does not hold ANY records.

In addition, 5% contain only 1 record, 28% 2-10 records and 59% over 10 records. On average SxBRC hold 181 records per 1km grid square.

Here are the five 1km grid squares with the most records:

1. TQ9217 on the Pannel Valley with 37,339 records
2. SU8415 at West Dean Woods with 23,936 records
3. SU9727 at Ebernoe Common with 23,913 records
4. TQ9317 at Rye Harbour Nature Reserve with 20,568 records
5. SU8813 at Levin Down with 18,940 records

We all have our favourite places to spend a day recording because we have a knowledge of the area and we know where we are more likely to find that interesting lichen, plant, fungus, bat or bird. It is great to know an area so well and to give it on-going surveillance, but sometimes it is exciting to visit a new area, as no one knows what you might find there?

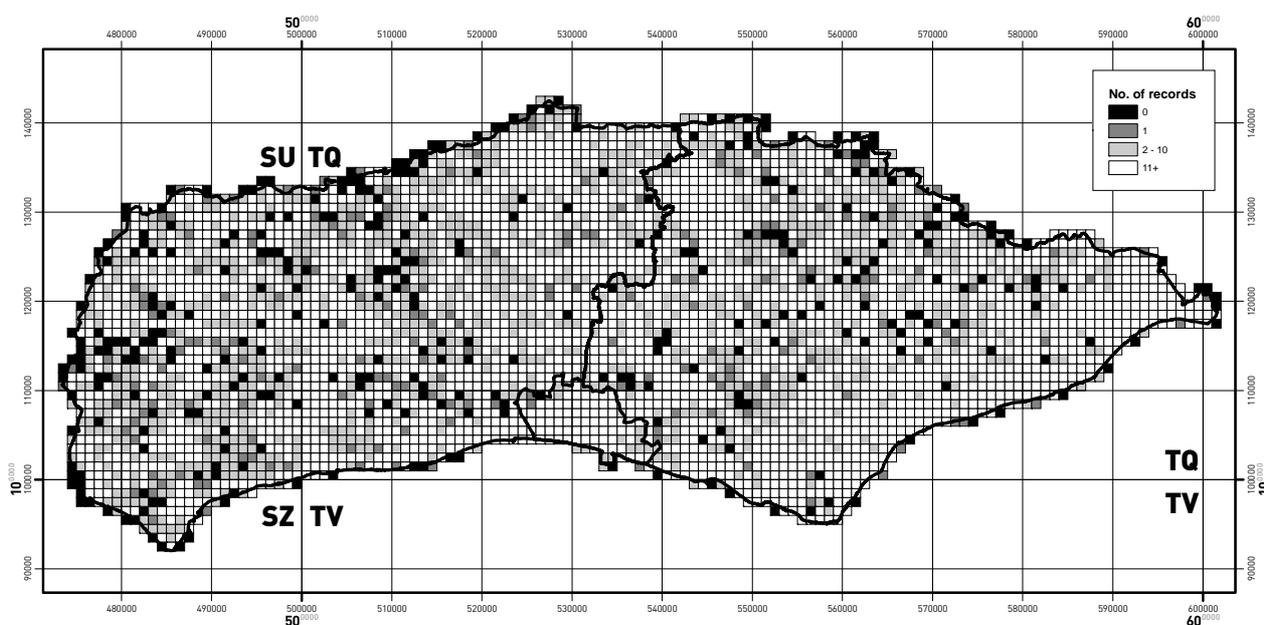
We used to name tetrads that were lacking in records (thanks to your enthusiasm all of these are now covered!) but we are now focusing our search down to 1 km grid squares. The map below shows which squares have records and which have none, or few. If you would like a list of all of the grid squares please visit our website: www.sxbrc.org.uk/stats/grid-squares or contact Penny Green on 01273 497521, or pennygreen@sussexwt.org.uk for a list.

We hope this exercise highlights the need for exact grid references rather than site centroids for large sites. We have no doubt that many of the squares on the map have been recorded, but that the grid reference provided refers to the centre of a larger site, which could be in another 1km grid square to the observation itself.

(At many sites phenological studies are, of course, of great importance and many records are of the same species seen over consecutive days, weeks and years. In the next edition of Adastra we will look at squares with the highest number of species records).

We look forward to hearing of your finds!

Penny Green
Biodiversity Records Officer



RECORD CENTRE SURVEY UNIT

The Survey Unit has had a busy and interesting year. Spring 2004 saw the production of a conservation assessment of Wilmington Green and Monken Pyn for Wealden DC. This was followed by the completion of the Wooded Heath Report for the Weald Heathland Initiative, which was launched at the National Heathland Conference in September. Throughout the summer, a number of surveyors carried out NVC mapping of thirteen of Sussex Wildlife Trust's priority reserves – including The Mens, Ebernoe Common/Butcherlands, Pevensey Marshes, Old Lodge and Ditchling Beacon. These maps have been digitised on ArcView GIS and will assist the SWT Reserves Team in their management strategies. In autumn, we produced a report on the countrywide distribution and status for the rare Cut-grass *Leersia oryzoides* for the Environment Agency. Finally, in December, after much hard work by all involved, the draft of the Floodplain Forest Concept Study was submitted to the Sussex Floodplain Forest Group. I would like to thank all those who have worked for the Survey Unit in the past year – without you, there just would not be a Survey Unit!

Theresa Greenaway
Survey and Research Officer

THE ON-LINE LIBRARY OF SUSSEX BIODIVERSITY

Many documents are now available on-line rather than, or as well as, printed publications. This year we are publishing a selected list of these. If there are others you would like to see included in the future, please send details to the editor.

- ADASTRA editions – 2001, 2002, 2003
<http://www.sxbrc.org.uk/Adastrapublication.htm>
- Diptera associated with ghyll woodlands in Sussex
<http://www.prassociates.co.uk/environmental/articles/ghyll.pdf>
- Habitat and species action plans in Sussex from the Biodiversity Partnership
<http://www.biodiversitysussex.org/>
- Occasional papers
- Sussex Craneflies (Diptera: Tipulidae)
<http://www.prassociates.co.uk/environmental/articles/cranefliesArticle.htm>
- Sussex Hedgerow Inventory
<http://www.sxbrc.org.uk/hedgerows.htm>
- Sussex Rare Species Inventory species list
<http://www.sxbrc.org.uk/RISpecieslist.htm>
- Wooded heaths in the High Weald: a research report
<http://www.highweald.org/caring/pdfs/woodedheathindex.pdf>

SUSSEX BIODIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP REVIEW OF 2004

The Estuaries Habitat Action Plan (HAP) was published in March 2004. This plan gives details of Sussex estuarine habitats and species, their importance in terms of ecology, flood protection and amenity as well as the threats that they face. Current and potential action to protect, restore and create estuarine habitats is the main focus of the plan.

Coastal habitats are declining across the country – particularly in the south east. This is a significant loss to both wildlife and natural coastal protection. These areas are extremely important wildlife habitats and the Government has international obligations to protect and enhance them. Threats include development, sea level rise, pollution, recreational pressures and navigational dredging.

Coastal habitats are the subject of a number of Sussex HAPs:

- **Coastal Vegetated Shingle, Saline Lagoon, Reedbed and Floodplain Grassland** HAPs have already been published and are available on the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership website: www.biodiversitysussex.org/

- The **Estuaries** HAP covers three important intertidal habitats – mudflats, seagrass beds and saltmarsh.
- The **Maritime Cliff & Slope** HAP is at the consultation stage and will, hopefully, be published in 2005.

The **West Sussex Mineral Sites** HAP was funded by the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund. It shows that nature conservation and the need to extract sand and gravel for the construction industry can work hand in hand. For the first time mineral operators, mineral planners, ecologists and geologists have put their heads together to formulate a strategy that reconciles apparently conflicting interests.

The production of this innovative plan is simply a first step toward a better integration of the market demand for minerals and the needs of West Sussex wildlife. The working group will now oversee the long-term implementation of this plan.

West Sussex County Council worked hard in 2003 to produce a Minerals Local Plan that not only met the needs of the industry and national targets but also protected the environment. Now by working with the minerals industry, planners, ecologists and geologists, the Council is going a step further and leading the way to ensure that land worked for its mineral resource ultimately provides major improvements for wildlife and geology.

The plan is available on West Sussex County Council's website at www.westsussex.gov.uk/BAP and also on the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership website at www.biodiversitysussex.org/

The first Sussex **Hedgerows** HAP was published in June 1999. The Hedgerows HAP Working Group carried out a five-year review and published the updated HAP in June 2004.

The revised HAP includes:

- Updated information on the current status and distribution of hedgerows in Sussex
- The results of hedgerow restoration work under Defra's Countryside Stewardship Scheme
- Updated information on current action, including the Sussex Hedgerow Inventory Project
- Details of the relevance of existing and proposed incentive schemes to hedgerow maintenance and restoration work
- Revised targets and actions to improve and extend the network of hedgerows in Sussex
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The Hedgerows HAP, together with a one page summary, is available on-line at www.biodiversitysussex.org/

The **Lowland Heathland** and **Chalk Grassland** HAPs are currently under review.

Species Action Plans (SAPs) look at the ecology and distribution of a species in Sussex as well as factors that affect its population. Current and potential action in Sussex is highlighted, together with details of habitat requirements and management.

SAPs for both the **Glow-worm** and the **Great Crested Newt** were published on the website in 2004. The plan for the **Marsh Mallow Moth** has been completed and will be on the website early in 2005.

SAPs for the **Otter**, **Black Poplar** and **Water Vole** have been revised and will be published early in 2005. The Sussex Otters and Rivers Partnership, together with the Sussex Floodplain Forests Group have been working hard to encourage sympathetic habitat management and active conservation measures that will reverse the decline of these species.

The Sussex Biodiversity Partnership Newsletter is published twice a year and contains articles highlighting some of the biodiversity projects and action taking place around the county. Please contact me if you would like to be added to the mailing list.

There will be a new Biodiversity Partnership Officer in the spring. I am leaving the post but hope to maintain some involvement with the Sussex Wildlife Trust and so keep in touch with many of you.

All the Sussex Biodiversity Action Plans are available on the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership website at: www.biodiversitysussex.org

Alison Wright, Biodiversity Partnership Officer
01273 492630, or email: biodiversityofficer@sussexwt.org.uk

FLORA (VASCULAR PLANTS)

During 2004 the Sussex Botanical Recording Society (SBRS) has completed recording in 17 tetrads spread across the county, as part of the Botanical Society of the British Isles (BSBI) Local Change initiative, 2003/2004. This project will compare the results for these two years recording with records collected during the BSBI Monitoring Scheme 1987/1988, which covered the same tetrads across the country.

An initial analysis of the results shows that, in all except for one tetrad (TQ10J), we have recorded a net gain in species compared to the 1987/1988 survey. On average we recorded 348 species for a complete tetrad. Looking in more detail at the results some interesting points emerge. Compared to the 1987/1988 survey the species lost most often are all natives (the two lost from most tetrads are the grass *Cynosurus cristatus* (Crested Dog's-tail) and *Pilosella officinarum* (Mouse-ear-hawkweed). Interestingly, after these two species the next 5 species lost from most tetrads in East and West Sussex are different. The list of species found this time but not recorded in 1987/1988 is much more similar for the two counties and, perhaps unsurprisingly, is dominated by introductions with the most frequent newcomer being the hybrid between our native Bluebell and Spanish Bluebell *Hyacinthoides x massartiana*. We look forward to comparing our results with those from elsewhere in the country.

The second major initiative for 2004, was the launch of the recording work leading to a New Flora of Sussex. This will be the first full account of the flora since A.H. Wolley-Dod's flora of the county, published in 1937, and first update since Peter Hall's Sussex Plant Atlas, 1980 and Mary Briggs's Supplement in 1990. It is hoped to complete the field work by 2010, with publishing following as soon as possible after that date. It will be interesting to see if the changes discerned from the small sample of tetrads visited during the Local Change recording, are borne out in the data recorded across the whole of Sussex.

If you would like to be involved in this project, please contact either of the authors of this article, who will be only too willing to assist and advise you.

Several Society members have been undertaking special projects during 2004, and the following two are particularly worthy of a mention.

Frances Abraham has undertaken a study of *Leersia oryzoides* (Cut Grass), recorded in scattered localities in the upper reaches of the River Arun and a lake at Shillinglee. West Sussex is now the last remaining stronghold in Britain for this scarce species of river and ditch banks, as it has disappeared from previously known localities in Dorset and Somerset, and only remaining in Surrey as a re-introduction. This makes the Sussex populations particularly important.

In the East, Pam Marchant has been carefully recording in Filsham Reedbeds, the Sussex Wildlife Trust Reserve between Bexhill and Hastings. This marvellous wetland habitat is wonderfully diverse with species such as *Utricularia australis* (Bladderwort) and *Oenanthe pimpinelloides* (Corky-fruited Water Dropwort).

Paul Harmes & Alan Knapp

MOSSES & LIVERWORTS

Two major articles on Sussex bryophytes by Howard Matcham, our recorder, are due to be published in Sussex Botany and the Newsletter of the Sussex Botanical Recording Society during 2004. Readers are therefore directed to these for information rather than repeating some of the key points here.

LICHENS

The rate at which our knowledge of Sussex lichens increases continues at its usual pace. At least five new species have been added to the Sussex list since the last report. Once again, thanks must go to Jacqui Middleton for the huge enthusiasm and drive she brings to organising the Sussex Lichen Recording Group. Our first meeting this year added two new species to Sussex. These were *Pertusaria lactescens* on Stopham Bridge as well as *Corticifraga peltigerae*, which was on a sandy road bank nearby. This second species is a lichenicolous fungus. These grow on other lichens. The host is *Peltigera rufescens*, and the lichen forms small necrotic patches on the surface of its host. Lichenologists are becoming increasingly interested in this neglected group of lichens on lichens, and any little dots or sick looking patches on lichens are well worth a second look. *Corticifraga peltigerae* was new to the whole of South Eastern England.

In the autumn, Patrick Roper arranged a visit to study Lancing College chapel. Being a comparatively recent structure, this was not thought to have great potential. However, it turned out to be as rich as many medieval churches, and a good list was made. Close by on a flint, a record for *Pyrenocollema monense* was made. This is one of many tiny lichens which appear as little black dots. These are the lichenological equivalent of the little brown jobs in the birding world. Microscopically, many prove very distinctive, and this is certainly the case with the *Pyrenocollema*.

Surveys in the County have also produced pleasing results. Parham Park, which was the subject of an English Nature study earlier in the year proved to be almost as exciting as ever. With the exception of the sad loss of *Lobaria pulmonaria* caused by the fall of the tree it was on into the lake, all the rare species known to Francis Rose in the 1970's were still present. Interesting additions included *Caloplaca ulcerosa* new to the county and *Caloplaca obscurella*, new to West Sussex. The continued presence of *Caloplaca ferruginea*, now an extreme rarity in South Eastern England was particularly pleasing.

The Wealden Sandrock systems are one of the most important Sussex lichenological treasures. Eridge Rocks has turned up more *Chaenothecopsis parasitaster*, which was found new to England by the Sussex Lichen Recording Group in 2000. This lichen has also turned up on the Chiddinglye Rocks SSSI. *Lepraria umbricola*, new for the county in 2004 and unusual on rock, proves to be one of the most abundant lichens on the sandrock systems. Associated with it, Dr Brian Coppins of Edinburgh Botanic Gardens identified *Micarea prasina* sensu stricto when he noticed little patches of ultraviolet positive material in a collected specimen. This is the first time this segregate of the *Micarea prasina* aggregate has been found on rock.

The Sussex Lichen Recording Group proposes another active year in 2005, and all that is necessary to come along is an enquiring mind. Membership is £2.00 per year. Application forms are available from: Henri Brocklebank, Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre, Woods Mill, Henfield, West Sussex, BN5 9SD. Tel - 01273 492630, e-mail - HenriBrocklebank@sussexwt.org.uk

It is also hoped to embark on a new Sussex Lichen Flora. At least seventy new species have been added to the Sussex list since the Lower Plant Atlas was published in 1991.

Simon Davey, Sussex Lichen Recorder

MAMMALS (OTHER THAN BATS)

UFO's (Under-recorded Furry Organisms)

Climate change is the word on the lips of many a conservationist at the moment. New species are appearing, and some disappearing, however I'm not sure that climate change can be the cause of the most unusual mammal record of 2004....three dead **Mongolian gerbils** *Meriones unguiculatus* in Portslade. Well I know that Portslade is exotic, but this is ridiculous! The Mongolian gerbil is the species usually kept as a pet so they no doubt escape (or are deliberately released) from time to time. Nevertheless, records like these are important. In future years, if this species becomes naturalised in Sussex, we could trace its origins back to places where they were originally discovered. It is as important to record alien species as it is to record native species.

The most common kind of mammal record that the SxBRC receives is from road-kill. This is unfortunate for the creature involved, however it is probably our best way of recording the distribution of more nocturnal mammals such as **fox** and **badger**, in Sussex. The most exciting road kill record that we received in 2004 was from Sheila Wright of a **polecat** *Mustela putorius* in West Sussex.

This mammal, as a native species, after centuries of persecution, declined to a few strongholds in North Wales. In recent years it has been spreading again, first through the Midlands and now into southern England. Our Sussex record is close to some of the recent wild polecat records from Hampshire and Surrey.

The wild polecat is very closely related to the polecat ferret *Mustela furo x putorius* which often escapes from captivity and is known to breed with wild stocks. The identity of our Sussex example has, however, been confirmed by the Vincent Wildlife Trust who are researching the spread of this mammal and have retained the Sussex specimen in their freezer. The unaided return of a wild mammal that looked as though it was lost to the area for good is certainly something to celebrate, but it remains our only Sussex record for the time being.

Brown hares appeared to be more abundant in 2004, I personally saw them in four different locations across Sussex, one site with three animals – this is promising, however they are under-recorded, as are other species such as mice, rats, shrews, stoats, weasels and hedgehogs. Yet we all see them (alive and dead) when we are out walking and driving. So please can you help? By starting to make note of where and when you see them, your recording will help build up a better picture of the status of mammals in Sussex.

A fun way of recording small mammals in your garden is to invest in a Longworth mammal trap, these are easy to use traps which allow you to catch small mammals such as mice, shrews and voles, and once you have identified them you let them go back in to the wild. Remember though, to inspect the traps regularly: shrews in particular can die of starvation within a very short time if they are not recorded and released. If you would like to learn more about the identification of small mammals, the Mammal Society holds various identification workshops. To find out more about these please look on the Mammal Society website: www.abdn.ac.uk/mammal/ or call them on 020 7350 2200.

Don't forget that you don't have actually to see the mammal to take a record; mammals are brilliant at leaving signs or "calling cards" where they have visited. If you take a walk around woodland look out for signs of dormice, a distinctively nibbled nut is a sign that they are present. Hedgehog droppings can easily be found in gardens and on pavements, badger latrines can be found along fence-lines, and rabbit warrens or mole hills are all easily seen in the countryside, yet these species are all under-recorded. **Wild boar**, still doing well in East Sussex, is another species more frequently recorded from its signs than from actual sightings.

If you would like a mammal recording sheet, or would like to submit a batch of mammal records, please get in touch: pennygreen@sussexwt.org.uk or call on 01273 497521.

Penny Green
Biodiversity Records Officer

BATS

The hunt for the **greater mouse-eared bat** *Myotis myotis* continues but as there may only be one individual in the country and it could have a range of up to 50 Kilometres, finding one hunting on a summer evening might be problematical. However if anyone does see a very large bat flying along country roads, or over newly mown hay, or even low down close to the ground in orchards PLEASE let the Sussex Bat Group know.

Reporting of any known bat roost is vitally important as there are many roosts in the towns or countryside that we just do not know about. We are at last getting a few of the local authorities to take the question of bats and developments seriously, but they are very bad at identifying the sort of

development that should have bat surveys commissioned. Ideally these surveys would be done before the planning application is considered. This can save the planners much time and help with their planning application throughput statistics, but it can also help developers save money by knowing what might be needed in mitigation should bats be on a site.

This brings us back to reporting bat roosts, if the Sussex Bat Group and/or the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre have a record of a roost then we can inform the planners of its existence and not only have a chance to safeguard an important bat habitat, but also stop a developer being prosecuted and maybe facing a large fine or even imprisonment.

This winters hibernacula counts have started, the first one in mid December with slightly higher numbers of bats for the time of year compared to last December including three **greater horse-shoe bats** *Rhinolophus ferrumequinum* in one hibernation site the most seen at one time in any Sussex site. Is global warming allowing these bats to extend their range beyond the West Country?

Martin Love

Recorder, Sussex Bat Group

DOLPHINS, PORPOISES & OTHER MARINE MAMMALS

2004 turned out to be a very good year for dolphin sightings along the Sussex coast. A total of 26 separate bottlenose dolphin *Tursiops truncatus* sightings were recorded during the year, the earliest sighting occurred on the 29 January from Lancing beach. However the earliest sighting for the year was of 2 harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena* at Galley Hill, Bexhill.

For the second year running, the Sussex Regional group (Sea Watch Foundation) monitoring programme received a contribution of funding as part of the Wildlife Trusts' South East Marine Programme. This 2004-05 project, entitled 'Marine biodiversity and aggregates in South East England', is supported by English Nature, through Defra's Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund. This allowed us to increase the number of watch sites by organising Cetacean ID training at Worthing, Brighton and Hastings. To help maintain support and to feed back reports of sightings to all volunteers on a regular basis, a e-smart group was created with members limited to the volunteer programme. This funding also allowed us to increase our efforts during the Sea Watch Foundation National Whale and Dolphin Watch event. The main Sussex manned watch at Brighton Marina was visited by many members of the public throughout the day and several smaller watches during the weekend 28 and 29 August were also successful. We had a sighting of a bottlenose dolphin at the Brighton site (28th) and a report of 2 bottlenose dolphins at Eastbourne. On the 29th bottlenose dolphins were also sighted off Hastings and Eastbourne.

The funding has also allowed us to spend more time this year on data analysis, the majority of which are sighting reports currently held by the Sussex regional group (since 1991) and the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre. We are also attempting to gather Sussex cetacean sightings that are held by other organisations. The majority of Sussex sightings are bottlenose dolphins and harbour porpoise. Other sightings include common dolphins, pilot whales, Risso's dolphin, striped dolphins, Atlantic white-sided dolphins and minke whale. The sighting of humpback whales a few years ago off Hastings was unfortunately never substantiated (although they were definitely large baleen whales). Historical strandings include a killer whale on Hove beach 1936 and a blue whale, the skull of a right whale on Brighton beach 1896 and a blue whale near Roedean, Brighton in 1833. These latter stranding reports date back to a time when cetaceans were more common around the UK and worldwide before large scale commercial whaling.

Funding towards a second hand laptop from the Sussex Biodiversity Recording Award has made it possible to download dolphin monitoring data from our T-pod off Brighton without bringing it to a land base. We have still had some deployment problems due to obtaining a safe mooring, so it has only been working for part of the year but we have high hopes for 2005.

Harbour porpoise sightings are on the increase in Sussex and some interesting sightings have been reported by Andy Phillips for the Hastings area. Unlike bottlenose dolphins which largely travel from west to east, harbour porpoise seem to reach Sussex from the east end of the Channel and occasionally

have been observed in my main watch area at Brighton in recent years. Both common and grey seals have been observed on occasions in Brighton and parts of West Sussex.

Stephen Savage,

Sussex Regional Co-ordinator Sea Watch Foundation and County Recorder for Sea Mammals.

Website: www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk

Hotline number to report sightings: 07773 610036

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

Another year has passed and, as ever, amphibian and reptiles enthusiasts saw new challenges in 2004 from setting up toad patrols to dealing with planning issues in Sussex, changes which will affect all wildlife groups. We also had the task of finding an Editor for our Newtsletter and I am pleased to say that Patrick Roper, who also edits this publication, agreed to undertake the task.

The year began with the usual **common toad** migration to their spawning grounds and two sites that had previously gone into decline saw miraculous recoveries. These included a site at Offham road near Lewes which in the past had seen thousands of toads crossing but, for some reason went into a decline. This could have been due to the management of the dykes they spawn in and/or the busy road they had to cross both to spawn and to return to their habitat, no one knows for sure. A new toad patrol has been set up with the challenge of dealing with a very busy road with no footpath and all credit goes to those who undertook the task in 2004. We hope the toad numbers continue to grow. The other site was at Litlington, which again had gone into decline but now appears to be recovering well.

Later in the year we received the results of the garden pond survey organized by West Sussex County Council in conjunction with Alf Simpson and, although the number of forms returned could have been greater, those we did get showed a good cross section of amphibians and reptiles in the gardens concerned. Our thanks are due to Penny Green of the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre for collating the data into a report.

We continued attending various events taking along display material and organising pond dipping if possible as well as coping with the ever-increasing demand for survey work. We also continued to offer talks and information both to groups and individuals.

The end of 2004 was particularly busy for the committee as we hosted the South East Herpetofauna Groups of Britain & Ireland (HGBI) conference in November as we do every three years. This day gave members the opportunity to hear key speakers including excellent talks from Trevor Beebee from the University of Sussex and Sue Young from the Kent ARG on toad decline; Rob Free on heathland regeneration; Chris Todd on the work of the South Downs Conservation Board; Henri Brocklebank, Sussex Biodiversity Centre on recording; Matt Shardlow from Buglife; Jim Foster from English Nature and Mike Frost from Southern Water.

Jenny Bacon, Chair, Sussex Amphibian & Reptile Group

BIRDS

The Sussex Ornithological Society (SOS) maintains the only comprehensive database of bird records for the combined counties of East & West Sussex. The database currently holds just under 700,000 records. These comprise records comprehensively for all years since 1989 and for selected species for years back to 1962. The current rate of capture exceeds 50,000 per annum (2003 = 59,000).

Records are received from: members of SOS, major national surveys (e.g., Wetlands Birds Survey (WeBS), Breeding Birds Survey (BBS), Migration Watch (BTO)), national & county single-species and habitat surveys (e.g., Heathlands, Nightingales, Nightjars (2004)), local sea-watching counts, major recording centres (e.g., Rye, Pagham & Chichester Harbours, RSPB, WWT, etc.), non-member birdwatchers and members of the general public.

Records may be submitted in various ways: in manuscript on the Society's recording forms, by electronic entry and direct transmission (using either the Society's 'Cobr-aid' system or other approved

'excel' software), and by e-mailed messages. Occasional records are sometimes accepted by 'phone. Records of species defined as scarce in the county or rare nationally should be submitted with a written description of the bird(s) for consideration by the relevant records/rarities committee for acceptance and publication.

The Society maintains a web page (www.sos.org.uk) of news and information about the Society and its activities and matters ornithological pertinent to its objectives. It includes: a section of 'Guidelines for the Submission of Records' to assist observers in the submission of their sightings; a means for submitting reports of 'sightings'; and a section of 'Recent Sightings' of interest to birdwatchers. Records submitted to 'sightings' by e-mail are forwarded to the Recorder for manual entry to the database.

Developments are in prospect for on-line submission of records via the Society's website by those connected to the Internet. Similarly, the BTO has recently developed its on-line Migration Watch reporting system (which for 2002 & 2003 was available for only a few months in the year) into the new BirdTrack system available all-year for the on-line submission of observations by anyone connected to the internet and who registers with the system. After processing and checking, the data are then transmitted to the Society for inclusion in its database.

The Society answers a considerable number of requests for ornithological data from ecological consultants and other responsible organisations (e.g., local government). These are usually prompted by the requirements of planning legislation arising from land use changes. Discussions are in prospect for the development of closer co-operation with the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre for the sharing of ornithological records and the answering of requests for data by its partners and commercial organisations.

The Society is always seeking volunteers to help with conducting surveys and to familiarise potential volunteers with what is involved and offer practical advice on surveying techniques and practices a teach-in by experienced BTO staff is being organised for early-2005.

John Hobson, Sussex Ornithological Society

GRASSHOPPERS AND THEIR ALLIES

Perhaps the most interesting record received in 2004 was that of a *Meconema* sp. (oak bush-cricket) spotted in a garden centre near Crawley. It was assumed to be a nymph of *Meconema thalassinum* but the recorder later wondered if it could have been an introduced example of the Southern oak bush-cricket *Meconema meridionale* a species that was recently found to be established in gardens in Surrey. Another interesting record was of several stridulating males of Roesel's bush-cricket from the roadside south of Falmer suggesting that this insect is now firmly established in the south of the county.

It would certainly be interesting to undertake a structured survey of the Orthoptera that appear to be extending their ranges and also to take stock of the vulnerable species that are associated with special types of habitat. There is nothing like the prospect of a new atlas to stimulate recording and it appears that support could be forthcoming from the Biodiversity Record Centre for such a publication, so please keep sending records to Woods Mill.

A visit to Woods Mill on 10th November started rather well as a male Lesne's earwig *Forficula lesnei* was resting on the wall by the front door - a new one for the reserve's species list.

The change of weather in September sent Orthoptera populations into steep decline although on a sheltered south-facing bank at Fishersgate, a female grey bush-cricket *Platycleis albopunctata* was still present on 16th November and one female and a stridulating male of common field grasshopper *Chorthippus brunneus* were still present on 11th December.

John Paul, county recorder for Orthoptera and related orders

BUTTERFLIES

The records for 2004 form a part of the continuing monitoring that will contribute to the national Butterfly Conservation's update of the *Millennium Atlas*. All the data ensures that we can be alerted to population changes and guide our local and national conservation effort. It's been another year of ups and downs. February began with a very mild southerly air stream and on the 4th I received the first report of four **painted ladies** seen at Eastbourne and soon there were many more. The highest number recorded was 41 on Feb 8th. These were all nectaring on Eastbourne sea front from winter heliotrope, *Petasites fragans* and *Viburnum* sp. Inland sightings came from Midhurst, Horsham, Ashdown Forest, Ebernoe and Isfield among others. By the middle of February winter had returned and I thought all must have perished but at least one specimen survived and was seen near Horsham in March.

The overwintering butterflies emerged slowly in the spring. The numbers of **small tortoiseshell** have returned to normal, the **comma** continues to do very well but the **peacock** population is in decline. Many members remarked on low numbers and short summer flight period. The migrant **red admiral** and **clouded yellow** were not as common as usual. It was not until early autumn that **clouded yellows** were seen and even then not in high numbers. There was a report of one **pale clouded yellow** on October 30th from the Barcombe area.

The **large, small** and **green-veined whites** were widespread and common with several generations. During the mild early winter active larvae of the **large white** were reported from Henfield and Lancing until middle of December.

The **wood white** is one of our most restricted species and its two broods are carefully monitored and counted. Its population size and area of distribution are both increasing due to extensive management and cooperation of Forest Enterprise, Butterfly Conservation, Sussex Wildlife Trust and other land owners. We are extending our searches to other likely sites in the north of West Sussex.

The **small copper** and other blues (Lycaenidae) had a good year with high numbers of **Adonis** and **common blues**. Although the **Adonis** stronghold is in East Sussex there are at least two large thriving colonies on the Downs in West Sussex and also several small populations which with sensitive management may survive. Both broods of **holly blues** were seen in both counties and there was a report of a partial third generation. As usual there were many sightings of **green hairstreaks** on the Downs but also the occasional one from the Weald, e.g. from Warnham near Horsham to Bewl Water on the Kent border. The other hairstreaks had mixed fortunes with very few sightings of **white-letter** but normal numbers of the widespread **purple hairstreak**. **Brown hairstreaks** are monitored mainly by winter egg counts and preliminary results suggest an average year in most places.

For a few years **white admiral** numbers have been low but in 2004 the population increased and this species was recorded in many of its previous sites in good numbers. This species is adversely effected by cold and wet weather in early summer.

The **purple emperor** is an elusive species which is widespread in West Sussex but with patience it can be monitored effectively using time and a good pair of binoculars! We hope to extend our area of search into East Sussex as the emperor is present at Wakehurst Place and Weirwood Reservoir both on the borders of West and East Sussex.

Meadow brown, ringlet and **gatekeeper** all did well and the **meadow brown** especially was counted in thousands at some sites. They had a shorter flight season than usual and had disappeared by the end of August. It is worth taking note of any **marbled white** seen off the Downs as this species is spreading throughout the Weald. Its typical habitat is unimproved grassland containing a variety of grasses which are used as the foodplants at different times of the larval development e.g. *Festuca ovina*, *Festuca rubra*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Dactylis glomerata*. The colonies can often survive on small areas such as verges and field headlands and take a few years to become established. They can be found across Sussex from Iping Common to Ashdown Forest in many woods and along the greensand ridges. We have continued concern for the **wall brown** which is still thriving on the chalk but is only found in extremely low numbers across the rest of Sussex and also Surrey. As yet there has been no explanation for the contraction of its distribution but a reference from Sandars *A Butterfly Book for the Pocket 1939* reads "**wall** generally a very common species but subject to unexplained and sudden local disappearances where previously common, regaining a footing after an interval". It does not seem to

have altered its habit. There were fewer sightings of the **speckled wood** in 2004, but it still remains a common and widespread species. It is interesting to read in Sandars the comment : "Woodland. Increasingly local, lacking where once common."

Is the **speckled wood** going the same way as the **wall**? Watch this space!

A co-ordinated effort was made during 2004 to ascertain the current status of the **pearl-bordered fritillary** in East and West Sussex and all known sites were monitored. The larger sites were holding their own but there were low or no sightings from other areas. This species seems to be still declining and is considered to be vulnerable in Sussex. The **small pearl-bordered fritillary** is present at only three sites in East Sussex and is probably extinct in West Sussex. On a more positive note the **silver-washed fritillary** was recorded in high numbers throughout West Sussex and can be also seen in East Sussex although in lower numbers.

The **dingy skipper** was one of the species which we targetted last year and several new sites were discovered. It was also refound in many of its late 1990 sites and had a successful season. This species is widespread on the chalk but is also found on unimproved grassland, abandoned fields, bridleway verges etc. Its larval foodplant is bird's-foot trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* which thrives on rough and disturbed ground.

Several of our 45 Sussex species are at their northern limit, others such as **clouded yellow** fail to over winter, many are now found in ever shrinking sites and it is up to us to provide wildlife corridors in order to maintain viable populations. Butterfly numbers respond rapidly to environmental change and are declining more quickly than plants and birds so can be used to monitor the effect of man's action on our planet. Building on the success of the butterfly monitoring scheme it is increasingly important to record the wider countryside species as well as the specialist.

Joyce Gay, Sussex Branch, Butterfly Conservation Society dedicated to saving butterflies and their habitats.

LARGER MOTHS (MACROLEPIDOPTERA)

In Sussex 2004 was the most eventful season for the arrival of rare migrating moths from the continent ever. The migrant year started very early, in early February, with arrivals of the **small mottled willow** *Spodoptera exigua* at Heathfield, **bordered straw** *Heliothis peltigera* at Felpham, **scarce bordered straw** *Heliothis armigera* at Ferring, the pyralid *Euchromius ocella* at Ferring and Kingsham near Chichester, and the well-known day-flying **humming-bird hawk** *Macroglossum stellatarum* at Eastbourne, these accompanying a throng of **painted lady** *Cynthia cardui* butterflies across the English Channel. Migrants were still arriving in mid November - but the real rarities arrived during the summer.

The quality of the migrants can be judged by the number of previous vice-county records. For example, after more than 150 years of intensive entomological recording, arrivals of an **orache** *Trachea atriplis* at Peasmarsh and of the pyralid *Acrobasis tumidana* at Peacehaven were the first ever East Sussex encounters, whilst those of the **pigmy footman** *Eilema pygmaeola* at Ferring and of two **oak processionary** *Thaumetopoeidae processionea* at West Wittering were new West Sussex records. Similarly, second vice-county appearances were made of the **balsam carpet** *Xanthorhoe biriviata* and the **rosy underwing** *Catocala electa* near Arundel, of **Clancy's rustic** *Platyperigea kadenii* at Ferring, and of the pyralid *Anania pulveralis* at Pagham. Other rarities from the continent during 2004 included a **pale shoulder** *Acontia lucida* at Chichester, the very beautiful **striped hawk** *Hyles livornica* at Middleton-on-Sea, Ferring, and at Rottingdean, a **Jersey tiger** *Euplagia quadripunctaria* at Ferring, **dark hook-tips** *Drepana curvatula* at Ferring and Pagham, **gypsy moths** *Lymantria dispar* at West Wittering and Chichester (where it was temporarily resident during the 1930's), and 11 **tree-lichen beauty** *Cryphia algae* were also counted along the Sussex coast, a number almost equalling those totalled here since comprehensive recording began in the county.

Native species

For local native moths the 2004 season proved a run-of-the-mill affair - the long periods of disadvantageous weather proved decisive. Nonetheless, high numbers of the **setaceous Hebrew**

character *Xestia c-nigrum* continued to be recorded – hundreds a night were counted in some moth-traps – this modern-day upsurge starting as far back as 1981. The beautiful **lunar thorn** *Selenia lunularia* had been decreasing in the Sussex for more than 70 years and was recently judged as in danger of county-wide extinction, but a sudden increase in sightings since the late 1990's resulted in its removal from the East Sussex list of vulnerable insects this year.

One of the most notable events amongst our resident moths during 2004 concerned the sudden reappearance of the **scarce tissue** *Rheumaptera cervinalis* in West Sussex after a gap of approaching a century. Two specimens came to mercury vapour light near Arundel. This has always been a mysterious species in the county and the source of this latest occurrence is a matter of conjecture. They could have flown the Channel (the most likely option), be representatives of a low density resident population, or even have been accidentally introduced with garden barberry plants *Berberis* spp..

Other important events concerned a single **red-belted clearing** *Synanthedon myopaeformis* photographed near Horsham. Larvae feed internally on the bark of cultivated apple and crab apple *Malus* spp., and probably pear *Pyrus* spp. Only two Sussex trees are currently known to host colonies of this insect, both near Midhurst. And the first *Pyrausta cingulata*, a pyralid moth, to be seen in Sussex away from the Wilmington area for around a century came to mv light at Peacehaven in 2004.

Rye Harbour and Pagham Harbour Nature Reserves have been surveying and accumulating historical information on their habitats and wildlife for many years. Comprehensive moth recording has also been under way for some time. The results of these efforts have made significant contributions to our knowledge and brought the real importance of both reserves to official notice. Pagham Harbour is the leading site in West Sussex for several reed-bed and shingle beach dwelling moths, including the **flame wainscot** *Senta flammea*, **rosy wave** *Scopula emutaria* and the plume moth *Stenoptilia zophodactylus*. Rye Harbour is the most important all-Sussex site for the **dotted rustic** *Rhyacia simulans*, **pigmy footman** *Eilema pygmaeola*, **scarce black arches** *Nola aerugula* and the **Jersey tiger** *Euplagia quadripunctaria*.

Much of the above information was supplied by members of the Sussex Moth Group. For information on the Group, and its aims, activities, and meetings, contact the chairman, Sarah Patton, c/o Woods Mill, Henfield, West Sussex BN5 9SD Tel: 01273 497553/554 E-mail: sxbrc@sussexwt.org.uk

To join the Sussex Moth Group contact the secretary, Tony Davis, at Butterfly Conservation, Manor Yard, East Lulworth, Wareham, Dorset, BH20 5QP, telephone 01929 400209, or e-mail: tdavis@butterfly-conservation.org

For queries and information on Sussex Lepidoptera contact the County Recorder, Colin R. Pratt, F.R.E.S, at 5, View Road, Peacehaven, East Sussex BN10 8DE, telephone 01273 586780, or e-mail: colin.pratt@talk21.com

THE SMALLER MOTHS (MICROLEPIDOPTERA)

The Sussex Micro-moth Scheme is about a year old and we already have 836 species recorded in the county. The two vice-counties, West and East Sussex, have 667 and 601 species respectively. Some of these records are historical and most come from a very small handful of observers – micro-moths seem to be a very specialist area.

This need not be so: two new species in West Sussex this year were recorded by looking at mines on the leaves of trees. *Phyllonorycter platani* mines the leaves of the London plane which can often be found in urban parks. Leaves bearing distinctive 'blotch' mines can be bred through, at the right time of year, to produce tiny golden and white moths. *Cameraria ohridella* is an alien which may destroy another alien. This micro-moth mines the leaves of horse chestnut and a heavy infestation can turn all the leaves brown. The moth was found in a car park in Chichester during 2004 and, indeed, it seems that it may travel on vehicles as industrial estates are also good potential sites.

*Sarah Patton,
Sussex micro-lepidoptera recorder*

HEMIPTERA (PLANT BUGS, LEAF HOPPERS ETC.)

The population of the Red Data Book leafhopper *Macrostelus cyane* that was reported in Adastral 2002 is much diminished and, unfortunately, may be in danger of disappearing altogether. This species lives on floating pond weed *Potamogeton natans*, although quite how it survives the winter months when its food plant has no floating leaves remains a mystery. There are records from only four other localities in Britain, only one of which comes from the last 40 years. The population in question is in a small farm pond near Heathfield. This pond was partly dredged last winter because of a concern that it was silting up. Unfortunately, this disturbance had the effect of encouraging the rapid spread of bulbous rush (*Juncus bulbosus*) across most of the pond. This highly invasive species appears to be choking out the pond weed and hence threatening the survival of the leafhopper. The situation will need to be monitored carefully next year, in case quick remedial action needs to be taken to preserve the population of this rare insect.

General sweeping of hay meadows at Bedelands Farm near Wivelsfield produced large numbers of the distinctive red and black froghopper *Cercopis vulnerata* on 12th June. Adults of this species rarely occur outside quite a narrow window between late May and mid June. These and related insects are called froghoppers on account of their bulbous heads that superficially resemble that of a frog. However, Americans call this family spittlebugs because the immature stages (nymphs) reside inside 'cuckoo spit', a foamy ball that protects them from drying out and possibly also from predators. These spittles are very common on the leaves and stems of a wide range of plants in May and June. Interestingly however *C. vulnerata* is the one species in this family in which the nymphs live underground where they feed on plant roots.

Other interesting Hemiptera caught on the same occasion included nymphs of the rather local leafhopper *Idiocerus laminatus* that is normally associated with aspen *Populus tremula* and the distinctive but somewhat local shieldbug *Eurygaster testudinaria*. Shieldbugs have received a welcome publicity boost in the last year with the publication of a useful AIDGAP fold-out chart (available from the Field Studies Council) and Roger Hawkins's splendid short monograph: *Shieldbugs of Surrey* (published by, and available from, the Surrey Wildlife Trust). In spite of its focus on the distribution of these species in a different county, this book contains a wealth of useful information on habitats, foodplants etc that applies equally well to Sussex.

Other interesting records for the past year include a male and female of the nationally notable planthopper *Oliarus panzeri* at Amberley Wildbrooks on 29th June and a single individual of the curious ant-mimicking capsid bug *Hallodapus rufescens* at Lullington Heath on 30 June. Also, a single specimen of the rhopalid bug *Liorrhysus hyalinus* was swept on Ashdown Forest on 17th June.

Alan Stewart and Peter Hodge, Sussex recorders for leafhoppers, planthoppers and plant bugs.

ACULEATE HYMENOPTERA (BEES, WASPS & ANTS)

2004 has seen a lot of recording activity in the area covered by A.F. Brazenor during the 1940s (collection in the Booth Museum). This activity is due to the redoubtable Steve Falk, probably better-known for his illustrations in *British Hoverflies* and as a Dipterist generally. Steve has been a keen observer of the aculeates for many years and has greatly increased the knowledge of this group in his home territory of Warwickshire.

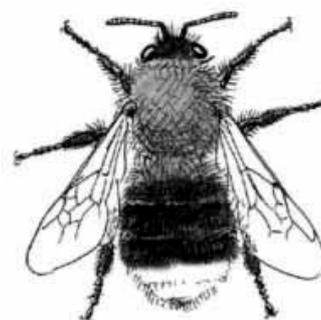
It is now the turn of the eastern Sussex Downs to receive his attentions, thanks to his parents deciding to move to this area. Among many important species known from this area, Steve re-found one which has been missing since Brazenor's time *Halictus eurygnathus*. There are a large number of specimens of this species in the Brazenor collection, tempting one to surmise that it must have been common at the time. However, this is a eusocial species having an annual nest with a queen and a number of workers. Furthermore, it has readily visible nests which are made in very obvious positions, such as along worn paths; so the number of specimens may reflect Brazenor's commercial sense as he was a Natural History Dealer with a shop in Brighton's Lanes (later run by Watkins and Doncaster before they moved to Kent). This latter view is supported by the long series of several other rare species in this collection and the relatively shorter runs of some more widespread species. Brazenor would hardly have been oblivious to the commercial potential of this species, with less than a dozen localities ever

known for it. In 2004 Steve swept it from *Centaurea nigra* flowers at four localities between Eastbourne and Lewes, basically the same area where Brazenor knew it. It is probable that this represents a continuing colony of this medium-sized bee (about 10mm long) and that the lack of recording effort in this area is as much to blame as any loss of the species.

Lack of recording cannot be blamed, however, for another exciting find, this time at Ambersham Common in West Sussex. This excellent common is close to me in Midhurst and has, as might be expected, been visited many times, both by myself and other entomologists. This June I took a relative beginner to aculeates, Jon Webb of English Nature Headquarters, to Ambersham to join Peter Hodge and myself as we undertook one of our West Sussex Heathland monitoring visits. Jon could not restrain his enjoyment at seeing so many bees and wasps going about their business and, while Peter and I did our recording, made a small collection of bees and wasps for his own information. This collection was passed to me to look over this autumn and I was amazed to see the very distinctive male of a small (c. 4mm) digger wasp *Crossocerus exiguus*. I know this species well from one of only three (now four!) known areas in the UK - the southern Rewell Wood - so have not been passing it over whilst at Ambersham, or elsewhere in the Midhurst area. As near as I can be certain, this represents a new locality and is evidence of range expansion in this species. That it has probably come from the southern side of the Downs is remarkable for such a small wasp, but reinforces the view that claims of species being poor colonisers should be taken with a very large pinch of salt. It may just be that we are poorly equipped to recognise when they have arrived in a new area.

A new colonist which may or may not become an established resident of the British Isles is the bumblebee *Bombus hypnorum*. Relatively large at around 15mm, especially compared with the *Crossocerus* and readily recognisable, at least as a bumblebee, this species has been found in and around Southampton, Eastbourne, Harpenden and Slough since 2000. This pattern of occasional appearance in widely-spread places was followed by the social wasp *Dolichovespula media* for about ten years after its first discovery in the UK (coincidentally by the same Steve Falk at Friston Forest in the late 1970s). Thereafter, as it became well established over a large part of the country, it became the butt of many silly-season horror-wasp stories, due to its habit of making foot-ball-sized nests at about head height in shrubberies and the consequent horror of unobservant gardeners who cut into them when tidying up!

B. hypnorum (see right) is unlike any of our native bumblebees. Its thorax is ginger, the abdomen black and it has a white tail. Any records, especially if accompanied by a photo (it doesn't have to be a superb shot) would be very welcome.



Mike Edwards, county recorder for ants, bees & wasps.

COLEOPTERA (BEETLES)

So far as beetles are concerned 2004 has been a relatively unproductive year. David Hance added two beetles to the county list. *Hypomedon debilicornis* was found in a manure heap at East Guldeford This tiny rove beetle has spread over southern England since its discovery in Nottinghamshire in 1989 and is especially associated with piles of hay. *Xyloterus signatus*, a small bark beetle generally associated with oak, was found on an alder log at Burton Mill Pond. This wonderful site supports several beetles that are not found elsewhere in Sussex, including the reed beetle *Donacia aquatica* which survives nowhere else in southern Britain. Coincidentally I also found a specimen of *X. signatus* this year crawling on a birch stump at Sparite Wet Hole near Rackham. These records are believed to be the first in south-east England for this predominantly north-western species.

During the summer I sampled 40 ponds and ditches between East Guldeford and Camber for English Nature as part of their regular monitoring programme. The rich assemblage of aquatic Coleoptera included the very rare aquatic weevil *Bagous puncticollis* previously only confirmed as a breeding species in the period from 1970 onwards from Pevensy Levels. Also the rare hydrophilid *Enochrus isotae* was discovered in a disused gravel pit at East Guldeford. The only other Sussex site for this species is Piltown Pond where it has not been found since the 1960's.

Lastly, the pretty green weevil *Polydrusus splendidus* (= *P. sericeus*), first discovered in Sussex in Friston Forest during the early 1970's, has recently colonised the lower Ouse valley. A solitary example was found on a hedge near Newhaven in 2003, then in July 2004, it was found commonly on a line of ornamental *Viburnum* bushes behind the Tesco store at Lewes.

It is interesting to note that Jonty Denton lists just over 3,000 species of Coleoptera currently recorded from Surrey (vs. 2948 in Sussex), which is a land-locked county half the size of Sussex. His work is due to be published this year and it should then be possible to examine the differences between the beetle faunas of our two counties.

Peter Hodge,
Sussex coleoptera recorder.

DIPTERA

The hill soldier fly *Oxycera pardalina*, an RDB2 species with black and yellow adults, was found as larvae by Sean Ashworth of the Environment Agency in calcareous springs beneath the Downs at Edburton and Fulking in West Sussex. This has not, according to the SxBRC database, been previously recorded from Sussex and is primarily a western and northern species and joins that select band of 'Atlantic' flora and fauna that we share with the wetter, cooler parts of the British Isles. Another new to Sussex species with a similar sort of distribution was *Paradelphomyia dalei* a small crane fly of carr and wet woodland found in summer 2004 in one of the ghylls in Fore Wood, Crowhurst.

Many of us when walking in spring will be aware of insects like small, black houseflies that sun themselves on logs and walls in areas where willow bushes are in flower. These belong mainly to the Anthomyiid genus *Egle* and the larvae develop in the fallen willow catkins. One of the commonest Sussex species is *Egle minuta* but this was recently split into two species, the other being *E. lyneborgi*. In the examples I examined the new *E. lyneborgi* seems rather more abundant than true *E. minuta* so we have a new Sussex record of something that was there all the time.

The pRDB3 *Acartophthalmus bicolor* turned up in Fore Wood, Crowhurst and in my garden. In the latter case males occupied the upper part of some short wooden stakes and challenged any other males that tried to enter the territory. To watch small flies persistently head-butting like billy goats was a novelty for me, though this behaviour has been recorded in other unrelated species. According to the RECORDER description, the larvae of *A. bicolor* have been found in association with fungi, rancid fat and a dead plaice – quite a gourmet.

One remarkable discovery from Sussex was that of a tachinid fly new to Britain from six examples in a collection in the National Museum of Scotland made by the entomologist T. H. Ford. Originally determined as *Thelaira nigripes*, examination by the Swedish expert on this family, Christer Bergström, showed that they were *Thelaira leucozona*. This species is a parasitoid of caterpillars of the garden tiger moth *Arctia caja* and these British examples were all bred out in 1985 from moth larvae from Portslade and Hollingbury, Brighton.

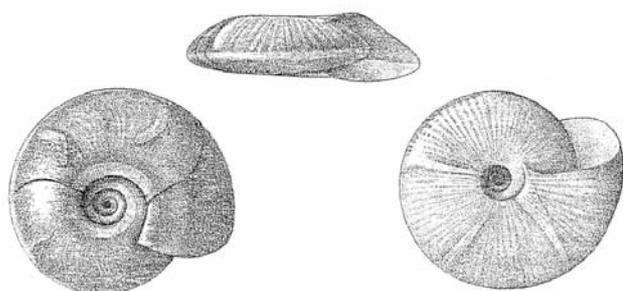
Patrick Roper, county recorder for Diptera

MOLLUSCS

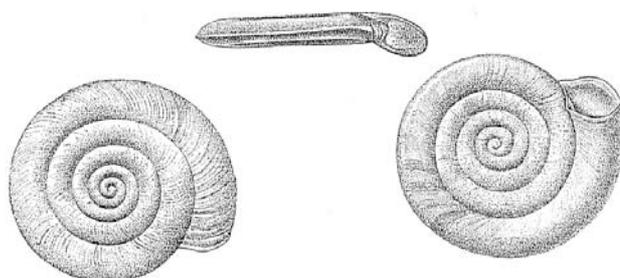
Rare freshwater Mollusca & floodplain grassland in Sussex: a summary.

Sussex is a county blessed with many examples of floodplain grassland. So important is this habitat in the county that the Sussex Biodiversity Partnership published a Floodplain Grassland *Habitat Action Plan* (HAP) in 1999. Floodplain Grasslands periodically flood and are typically bisected by networks of freshwater or brackish water drains. It is estimated that Sussex has about 12,000 ha, 6% of the total English stock of this habitat. Floodplain grasslands have traditionally been used for animal grazing with some also cut for hay. Sadly, in the last 50 years many areas have been drained, lowering the water table sufficiently to allow arable agriculture. Such changes usually destroy or seriously damage

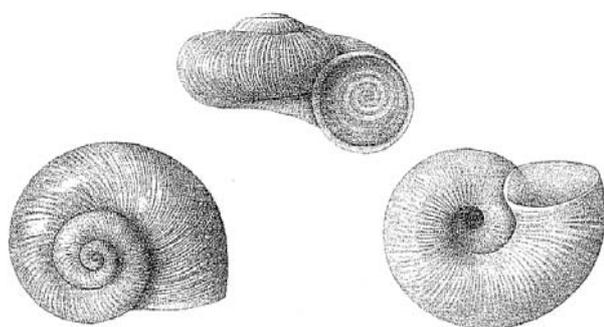
the rich animal and plant biodiversity present in floodplain grassland drainage ditches. Although Sussex has suffered significant losses of this habitat, the worst of the damage has now passed and many areas have stabilised or even improved. The Sussex HAP identifies 21 discrete areas of floodplain grassland and four areas in particular have retained significant blocks of unimproved or semi-improved grassland together with associated networks of drainage ditches supporting rich populations of freshwater plants and invertebrates. These areas include Pevensey Levels, Lewes Brooks, and in the Arun valley, Amberley Wildbrooks and Pulborough Brooks. Four of Britain's rarest freshwater molluscs, the shining ram's-horn snail *Segmentina nitida*, the little whirlpool ram's-horn snail *Anisus vorticulus*, the large-mouthed valve snail *Valvata macrostoma* and the false orb pea mussel *Pisidium pseudosphaerium* can be found in these areas.



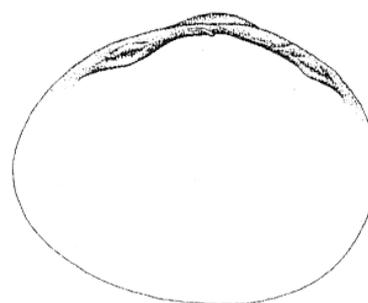
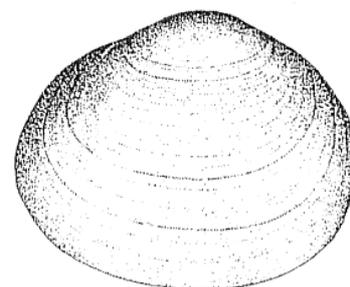
Anisus nitidus (MÜLLER), Schaerbeek. d = 5 mm. — (B.)



Anisus vorticulus TROSCHEL, de la tourbe de Berlare.
d = 4,8 mm. — (E.)



Valvata macrostoma STEENBUCH.
Anderlecht. ×9. — (B.)



Pisidium pseudosphaerium

Records of four rare wetland species in key floodplain grassland ditches in Sussex.

	<i>Valvata macrostoma</i>	<i>Segmentina nitida</i>	<i>Anisus vorticulus</i>	<i>Pisidium pseudosphaerium</i>
Conservation designations (RDB = UK Red Data Book species; BAP = UK Biodiversity Action Plan)	RDB2 (vulnerable); Biodiversity Steering Group <i>Species of Conservation Concern</i>	RDB 1 (endangered); BAP <i>Priority Species</i>	RDB2 (vulnerable); BAP <i>Priority Species</i>	RDB3 (rare) Biodiversity Steering Group <i>Species of Conservation Concern</i>
Lewes Brooks	No clear historical evidence of the species living on Lewes Brooks although a population (now seemingly extinct) was recorded in the Lewes area in ditches at South Malling in 1969. The species has recently been found in a single ditch on the Brooks during a survey of the whole Ouse Valley (Malling to Newhaven 2002 – 2003)	Present (chiefly in north-western corner)	<i>This species is almost certainly now extinct on Lewes Brooks (& Ouse valley).</i> Records rather unclear; probably last recorded in 1977; apparently the site lay under the path of the now present Lewes Bypass (A27).	Quite widespread over whole area.
Pevensey Levels	Locally plentiful	Locally plentiful	Present but with a very restricted distribution	Present and widespread
Amberley Wildbrooks	Never recorded	Never recorded	Rediscovered after in 1996 after a recording hiatus of over 30 years; in a few ditches; chiefly in western sections	A new record to West Sussex in 1996; since found to be widespread in the Arun valley south to nearly Arundel
Pulborough Brooks	Never recorded	Never recorded	Newly discovered in 1997; living in a few ditches, chiefly in the northern sections	Widespread

All of these species appear to require ditches that are 'late successional' in character, containing a dense and diverse macrophytic flora and are little disturbed by ditch clearance operations. Additionally ditches supporting large populations of these species are usually surrounded by grazed fields where livestock (usually cattle) can 'poach' at least one ditch margin to create a mosaic of warm shallows and

graze marginal fringing and emergent vegetation preventing excessive shading that may prevent ditch waters from warming.

Even in areas of pristine, unimproved floodplain grassland, the maintenance of populations of at least some of these molluscs depends upon suitable ditch management. Studies of ditch faunas before and following management suggests that the total clearance of a ditch at one time, particularly if this involves the removal of sediments as well as waterweeds, may remove populations of certain of these species. Recent work on *Anisus vorticulus* in the Arun valley suggests that this species is especially sensitive to ditch clearance and can be lost following the total management of a ditch. Work on one ditch at Amberley Wildbrooks has also shown that management by 'stagger clearance' can maintain populations of the species. This operation entails the alternate clearance of lengths of a ditch with the remaining lengths left untouched. Such a routine allows colonisation of the newly cleared stretches from those uncleared.

Studies also show that populations of *Segmentina nitida* and *Valvata macrostoma* are damaged by inappropriate (too frequent and thorough) ditch clearance work although the bivalve *Pisidium pseudosphaerium* seems most able to recover or recolonise heavily managed ditches.

In my last two Adastra articles I have set down a molluscan challenge and 2005 will be no exception! My next challenge centres on the Ouse valley including Lewes Brooks. The rediscovery of *Anisus vorticulus* would be of considerable importance as would the location of further populations of *Valvata macrostoma* (or indeed finds of these species anywhere else in Sussex!) If you are interested in trying to find these species do make contact and we can discuss the matter further. Go on - get those water nets out and have a dip!

References: There is now a considerable literature relating to molluscan populations and Sussex floodplain grasslands. It is inappropriate in the relatively limited space available in Adastra to cite all of these. One article that addresses many of the issues discussed and also includes a useful bibliography is: Willing, M.J. & Killeen, I.I. 1999. *Anisus vorticulus* – a rare and threatened water snail. *British Wildlife* 412 – 418.

Martin Willing (Conservation Officer), Conchological Society
E-mail: martinwilling@godalming.ac.uk

TERRESTRIAL ISOPODA (WOODLICE)

This is my first contribution to Adastra following my first year as a Sussex recorder and my aims are to encourage an interest among as many people as possible for this fascinating group of arthropods known to everyone, yet studied by few. Hopefully this will considerably increase the number of records and enable us to have a clearer understanding of the distribution and conservation needs of woodlice in Sussex. In future it will, I hope, be possible to extend recording to related groups, both terrestrial and aquatic.

There are 37 native species of woodlice in the British Isles including some real specialists in terms of habitat selection. They vary when full-grown from a few millimetres long to several centimetres in the case of the **common sea slater** *Ligia oceanica* an impressive beast indeed. The majority can be identified with a x10 hand lens, with only a few species needing to be despatched and identified under the microscope.

The most frequently recorded species in Sussex is the **common rough woodlouse** *Porcellio scaber* with 95 records, one of the commonest species in gardens. The **moss woodlouse** *Philoscia muscorum* is the second most recorded species with 90 records; specimens near the coast often displaying yellow and orange colours. The **common pill woodlouse** *Armadillidium vulgare* is the third most recorded species with 84 records; this is one of the commonest woodlice in Britain and I am sure most people will have seen one at some time or another in their garden. It belongs to the group that rolls up into a ball when disturbed. The **common shiny woodlouse** *Oniscus asellus* is another very abundant species nationally; again most people are likely to come across it. Its status is reflected in the Sussex records as it is the fourth most recorded species with 70 records. One of the species with the least records is

Porcellionides cingendus a species with a 'Lusitanian' distribution on the western edge of Europe. It has been spreading westwards for some years and one was recorded by Patrick Roper in Sedlescombe on the 24 February 2004. Since then I have found a couple of specimens; perhaps it is commoner than we think.

One of the most interesting species for which we have 21 records in Sussex is the **ant woodlouse** *Platyarthrus hoffmannseggii*. This is a real specialist, of about 4mm long, white and to be found only in ant's nests. *Armadillidium pulchellum* has only been recorded once in the county. This is an unusual record for Sussex; a species described as having a north-western bias in its national distribution, it is normally associated with limestone. *Halophiloscia couchi* is a species for which we have only three records, one of which I found in shingle below the cliffs at Pett, East Sussex. This species has unusually long antennae, which give the animal a characteristic appearance. It is one of the species restricted to the coast and emerges at night to feed.

So, how well are we off for woodlice in Sussex? Out of the 37 species recorded nationally, we have 19 with a total of about 750 records all told. In summary we have some interesting records but there are still many treasures to be unearthed. Also, it has to be said, there must be many areas where no surveying has ever been done for these interesting little animals as many of our records seem to come from the same handful of sites.

Steve Prosser, county Isopoda recorder

FRESHWATER LIFE

The Sussex Ouse Conservation Society

There has been a decrease in observed numbers of migrating **sea trout** *Salmo trutta* this year, possibly a result of the very hot and dry periods in the summer of 2003. During these episodes, our water quality testing showed decreased dissolved oxygen and concentrated pollutants in the Ouse tributaries, due to extremely low flow rates and high water temperatures. Low summer flows due to over abstraction continue to be a cause for concern during the summer months. The concentration of nutrient salts and other effluent pollutants is also encouraging prolific algal invasion of the spawning gravels.

Our biological monitoring of the tributaries has shown a diverse invertebrate population characteristic of such waters that are in reasonable health. One interesting find was a **hairworm** or **Gordian worm** *Paragordius* sp. in the Northend Stream. These are rarely encountered, but when they do occur, it is often in considerable numbers. They generally present as tangled masses of breeding worms, hence the term "Gordian". The adult worms have a very short lifespan (2-4 weeks for most species). They have no mouths and therefore do not feed. Their sole function is to mate and provide fertilised ova for the next generation. The larvae are parasitic on aquatic arthropods.

Robin Pepper

HYMENOPTERA PARASITICA

This vast group of organisms is often very noticeable in the field but few people tackle the difficulties of systematic identification and recording. However, in the *Entomologist's Gazette* a braconid wasp new to science *Microgaster nixalebion* was described by Mark R. Shaw having separated the species from *M. alebion*. *M. nixalebion* is widespread in the British Isles and Europe and has been recorded twice from our area, once from Hailsham in East Sussex and once from Portslade¹ in West Sussex, in both cases being bred from the larvae of its lepidopterous hosts. **Shaw, Mark R.** (2004) *Microgaster alebion* Nixon and its 'var A': description of a new species and biological notes (Hymenoptera: Braconidae, Microgastrinae). *Entomologist's Gazette* **55** (4): 217-224.

¹ Portslade appears to be doing particularly well this year. Not only has it produced a record of the Mongolian gerbil, but also of the new British fly *Thelaira leucozona* and this new to science Braconid.

FUNGI

Mycologists' experiences are that most seasons are below average in richness of fungal fruiting, but are interspersed with the occasional good year. 2004 was one of the most exceptional. The mild weather conditions provided ideal conditions throughout the year from the fruiting of morels in April through to the fruiting of waxcaps into December.

Many sites that have been regularly recorded threw up new species reinforcing the experience that many fungi fruit only sporadically. As an example, the meadows of St Dunstan's Farm are of national importance for their waxcaps and other grassland fungi. The number of waxcap species recorded has been constant for the last few years at 23 species. This year a further 6 species were found in the same fields, making it the second richest site in England and of international importance.

The British Mycological Society held a one week autumn foray at Ashburnham Place in East Sussex. The concentration of such taxonomic expertise along with the benign weather conditions created just under 2,000 fungal records. These included 2 species new to the UK (one of which was *Cortinarius camptoros*). Other highlights included the nationally rare *Russula laccata* at Abbots Wood, *Cortinarius violaceus* at Flatropers Wood, and *Hygrocybe ingrata* at St. Dunstan's Farm.

33 out of about 180 old chalk grassland sites were surveyed on the Brighton Downs between the rivers Ouse and Adur. Several rich waxcap grasslands were found such as Wolstonbury Hill (16 species) and Newtimber Hill (14 species), correcting the perception from earlier surveys that few good chalk grassland sites had been found in Sussex.

Several records have been reported to the SxBRC this year for the distinctive Devil's fingers *Clathrus archeri* (see picture right) including some detailed records from Bryan Hoath, made over a number of years from around Fairwarp.



This species is a native of Tasmania, New South Wales and perhaps South Africa. It was first recorded in France in the Vosges region in 1920. It originally appeared on a site where rotten meat had been buried, so speculation is that it arrived in Australian war rations. It has since spread through several European countries such as West Germany, Switzerland and Norway

The first record of it in this country was from Cornwall in 1945. It first appeared in East Sussex at Uckfield in 1953. There are two distinct clusters in England for this species centred around Penzance and Uckfield. In recent years we have had records from around Chailey Common, Maresfield Park, Hadlow Down churchyard and Fairwarp. The BMS had 53 records for this species, although these recent findings will add to the total.

A related species, *Clathrus ruber*, which is equally distinctive, occurs naturally in Sussex. The lack of sightings of this species indicates it is much rarer.

Peter Russell, West Weald Fungus Recording Group

STONEWORTS (CHAROPHYTES)

Records of stoneworts in Sussex continue to trickle in. Perhaps the most interesting recent record has been that of pointed stonewort *Nitella mucronata* in a ditch on Pevensy Levels near Horse Eye. Most recent UK records of this Nationally Scarce species have been of a variety which is thought to be an introduction. However, according to Nick Stewart, the national recorder for this group, it is likely that the Horse Eye plants are var. *mucronata*, the now very rare native.

In 2004 Plantlife International published an excellent report by Nick Stewart entitled *Important Stonewort Areas: an assessment of the best areas for stoneworts in the United Kingdom*. It identifies areas of European, national and local importance. In Sussex we have two areas of national importance for stoneworts: Thorney Island and the Arun Valley between Pulborough and Arundel. Both support RDB species, and the Arun Valley is also notable because it contains a good variety of commoner species.

A number of areas of local importance are identified, although for some of these there are only historical data. For example, there are interesting historical records from ditches in the Adur Valley and the lack of recent information may be partly due simply to under-recording. Likewise, Pevensey Levels is surely under-recorded. The other major areas mentioned are the lower Cuckmere Valley, the Rye/Winchelsea area, and the Downs between Newhaven and Eastbourne. There are historical records from dewponds on the Downs and, although many of these ponds have been lost, it is always worth checking any which remain – in 2004 Alan Knapp found fragile stonewort *Chara globularis* (see picture right) in a downland dewpond at Friston.



Frances Abraham, Charophyte recorder

Stop Press – January 2005

We have just received some exciting news: a mysterious stonewort which Alan Knapp found in a pond near Wineham in 2001 has at last been confirmed as *Nitella syncarpa* - the first UK record for this species.

BOOK REVIEWS

Sussex Wild Flowers by Mary Briggs MBE

It would be difficult to have more botanical experience than Mary Briggs (known to many Adastra readers) who is a previous President of the Botanical Society of the British Isles, an original Trustee of the Sussex Wildlife Trust, current President of the Sussex Botanical Recording Society and current County Recorder for vascular plants in West Sussex.

In this delightful new book Mary has selected one hundred ‘significant Sussex species’ and written detailed and fascinating accounts of each flower, emphasising not just how to identify species but also about traditional uses for the plant and folklore that surrounds them. She also talks about the distribution of the plant in Sussex, in the UK and in the rest of the world. This provides a fascinating picture of the importance of Sussex as a stronghold for some species and for remnant populations of others.

Sussex Wild Flowers takes you on a tour around the counties of East and West Sussex. It doesn’t give an exact location, so you can still have the thrill of finding a particular plant for yourself, but informs of a particular nature reserve, a stretch of shingle or downland where the plant is to be found.

Mary’s text and the wonderful array of images are all blended together by Richard Cobden, the Trust’s Interpretation Officer. He has used his skills in style and design to create a fresh, modern format for the book and has presented the whole work as an easy to use tool for the amateur or ‘would be’ botanist. The beautiful full colour pictures used to illustrate the text are those of several local botanical photographers and a botanical artist (also known by most Adastra readers!).

We are fortunate to have so many highly skilled and actively recording botanists in Sussex and it is to this group of people that Mary's book is dedicated.

Sussex Wild Flowers is available from Sussex Wildlife Trust at £10.00 (includes p&p).

The Dragonflies of Sussex: a guide to their distribution and conservation

by P. A. Belden, V. J. Downer, J. C. Luck, H. D. V. Prendergast and D. Sadler

Published by The Essedon Press for the Sussex Group, British Dragonfly Society and available from the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre. Price £7.95

After an enormous amount of work accumulating records both past and present, we have been rewarded with an authoritative and attractive book about the dragonflies and damselflies of Sussex.

This 81-page book has chapters on dragonfly recording, conservation and good places to visit, but the heart of the book is the double page spread devoted to each of our resident species illustrated with magnificent colour photographs and distribution maps showing the past and present fortunes of the species in question. There is much useful information on the early stages too, something that will be of great value to those who record via a dipping net. There is also a chapter about the species we have lost and the new arrivals.

This will be a 'must buy' for all our dragonfly enthusiasts, but those who work mainly with other groups are likely to be equally impressed as all of us come across these wonderful insects during our field trips. There will now be no excuse for not giving them the right name and sending such records in with other material so that we can plot the fortunes of our Odonata over the next hundred years.

Let's hope the publication of this volume marks the start of a series covering a wide range of our Sussex flora and fauna.

Whitehawk Hill. Where the Turf meets the Surf.

by David Bangs (*Friends of Whitehawk Hill*) 2004. Brighton: David Bangs.

Whitehawk Hill is a finger of downland that extends through the east of Brighton surrounded by sprawling council estates. It is in an area that many associate with deprivation and social problems. It would come a long way down most people's lists of places in Sussex that are important for their historical, landscape and wildlife value. The Countryside Agency certainly thought so when they excluded it from the draft South Downs National Park boundary. But to David Bangs and the Friends of Whitehawk Hill it is a place to be passionate about and this book explains why.

The first half of the book is a landscape history covering the geology, archaeology and history of Whitehawk from the Cretaceous period to the present day and the second half describes the wildlife including the plants, mammals, birds and insects. Bangs writes about all of these aspects with equal enthusiasm in an easily accessible, chatty style and soon convinces the reader that Whitehawk is indeed a special place. He argues that it has as many valuable archaeological, historical and wildlife features as other, more celebrated parts of the South Downs and more than most. It even has its own unique species, the Whitehawk Soldier Beetle *Malthodes lobatus*, found nowhere else in Britain. Not only that, its proximity to a deprived urban area and the opportunities it offers for countryside access to the local people makes its protection even more pressing. This is the case for Whitehawk Hill to be included in the National Park writ large and also a plea for Whitehawk to get better conservation care. It is an extraordinarily comprehensive review of everything from the history of Brighton racecourse to the beetle population of the chalk grassland. It is a remarkable piece of self-publishing which might have benefited from a firm editorial hand. However, it makes inspiring reading for anyone concerned about the future of their own local countryside and a lesson in how much people can contribute by researching, observing and recording their local history and wildlife.

Bob Platt

Sussex Botany

Edited by P. A. Harmes and N. H. J. Sturt. Published by the Sussex Wildlife Trust

The first edition of this new journal which will be published once a year appeared last March and has been warmly welcomed by all who have seen it.

The aim of the editors is to range widely across the flora of Sussex and the publication will include papers on mosses, fungi and other lower plants as well as the flowering families. The first edition had contributions on scarce fumitories, narrow-leaved pondweeds and waxcap grasslands among other materials.

A journal of this kind provides an opportunity to explore some of the more difficult groups and will encourage recorders to look at some of the plants that have gone down as Generic name 'sp.' With a fresh eye.

Sussex Botany is in A4 format and the first edition has 9 colour pages and a variety of maps and illustrations.. I feel sure that, once established it will maintain a sufficient reader base to enable it to keep going so long as there are botanists to buy it..

WHAT DOES A 'SUSSEX RECORDER' DO?

The county recorders listed at the end of this review are volunteers essentially with a sufficiently good knowledge of their particular group to be able to answer queries that may come into the Record Centre or the Wildlife Trust and to advise on places where or times when there may be a particular need to record their specific taxonomic group. They are also invaluable for their views on any record that may look a bit shaky and needs to be regarded as improbable or of doubtful reliability (we had several reports of great bustards in Sussex after the birds were released on Salisbury Plain last year).

Our county recorders are usually also associated with national societies and schemes which have recording projects of their own and they can then play an invaluable role in working out ways in which such records can be available from our Sussex dataset as well as via the particular project.

One thing recorders do not have to do is produce a formal report on the year's activity, though they are invited to write a few paragraphs on highlights for this Adastra Review and many, over the years, have given presentations on their work at the annual Adastra Recorders Meeting. There is also a Biodiversity Recorders Committee, chaired by Dr Barrie Watson from the council of the Sussex Wildlife Trust, where recorders discuss issues of current importance and advise on recording policy.

As the Record Centre develops year on year it is hoped that the traditionally ad hoc relationships that have been held with recorders and the Record Centre can be formalised so that the County data flows for specific taxa are clearly known and understood and SxBRC can be clear about which data sets it needs to update and how often.

I look after the recruitment, interests and concerns of county recorders and any queries on this aspect of the Record Centre's work should be addressed to me.

Where do I send my records?

A simple question, but one for which there is not a simple answer!

- If you are in touch with the relevant recording group and know there is a procedure in place whereby the County Recorder accepts all records (Sussex Bat Group, Sussex Botanical Recording Society etc.) then please send your records directly to the county recorder who will in turn liaise with SxBRC about record transfer.
- If you are unsure where to send your records please send them to SxBRC and we will ensure that they go to the relevant group or individual.
- If your data includes several taxa and it is too complex to split it please send the records to SxBRC and we will distribute the data accordingly.

Henri Brocklebank, Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre Manager

SUSSEX COUNTY RECORDERS & OTHER USEFUL CONTACTS 2003/4

Any records of any plant or animal should be sent to the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre who will pass it on to the relevant recorder listed below. *Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC)*

Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC)

Woods Mill, Henfield,
West Sussex BN5 9SD
Tel: 01273 497553
sxbrc@sussexwt.org.uk

SxBRC Survey Unit

Theresa Greenaway
Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
Survey Unit
(Address as above)
Tel: 01273 497506
theresagreenaway@sussexwt.org.uk

Sussex Wildlife Trust

Woods Mill, Henfield,
West Sussex BN5 9SD
Tel: 01273 497553

Higher Plants

MARY BRIGGS
(Sussex Botanical Recording Society
West Sussex)
9 Arun Prospect, Pulborough RH20 1AL
Tel: 01798 873234

PAUL HARMES

(Sussex Botanical Recording Society
East Sussex)
10 Hillcroft, Mile Oak Road,
Portslade BN4 2QD
p.harmes01@ntlworld.com
Tel. 01273 880258

Bryophytes

HOWARD MATCHAM
21 Temple Bar, Strettington,
near Chichester,
West Sussex PO18 0LB
Tel: 01243 781238
hwmatcham@madasafish.com

Lichens

SIMON DAVEY
Stable Flat, Downsland Court,
115 East End Lane, Ditchling,
West Sussex BN6 8UR
srdavey@globalnet.co.uk
Tel: 01273 843375

Charophytes

FRANCES ABRAHAM
Old School House, Ebernoe, nr Petworth,
West Sussex GU28 9LD
frances.a@solutions-inc.co.uk

Fungi

PETER RUSSELL
15 Graham Avenue, Patcham,
Brighton BN1 8HD
pjrthe1st@yahoo.com

Amphibians & Reptiles

Records should be sent to the
Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC)
Woods Mill, Henfield,
West Sussex BN5 9SD
Tel: 01273 497553/554
sxbrc@sussexwt.org.uk

River Fish

RICHARD HORSFIELD
Area Fisheries Officer,
Environment Agency, Rivers House,
3 Liverpool Gardens, Worthing,
West Sussex BN11 1TF

Birds

JOHN HOBSON County Recorder
Sussex Ornithological Society
23 Hillside Road, Storrington, Pulborough,
West Sussex RH20 3LZ
recorder@susos.org.uk
Tel. 01903 740155

JOHN GOWERS
East Sussex SOS Conservation Officer
24 Leveller Road, Newick,
Lewes, East Sussex BN84PL
j-b-gowers@supanet.com

ROBERT YARHAM
West Sussex SOS Conservation Officer
22 Luxford Way, Billingshurst,
West Sussex RH14 9PA
robert.yarham@virgin.net

Mammals

Records should be sent to the
Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre (SxBRC)
Woods Mill, Henfield,
West Sussex BN5 9SD
Tel: 01273 497553/554
sxbrc@sussexwt.org.uk

Cetaceans and Seals

STEPHEN SAVAGE (Seawatch)
51 Eastbrook Road, Portslade,
East Sussex BN41 1LN
ALLSAVS@aol.com
www.seawatchfoundation.org.uk
Tel. 01273 424339

Bats

MARTIN R.T. LOVE
4 The Cherries, Rookwood Rd,
West Wittering,
West Sussex PO20 8LT
halcon@globalnet.co.uk
Tel. 01243 513650

Badgers

SOUTHDOWN BADGER PROTECTION
GROUP
Area covered: Brighton - Ditchling –
Herstmonceux - Pevensey.
Recorder: Mr. Carr,
7 Bowden Rise, Seaford,
East Sussex BN25 2HZ
Tel. 01323 895742

HASTINGS BADGER PROTECTION GROUP
Area covered: Hastings Borough - Rother
District.
Recorder: Don Wise,
304 Bexhill Road,
St. Leonard's-on-sea,
East Sussex TN38 8AL
Tel. 01424 439168

WEST SUSSEX BADGER PROTECTION GROUP

Area covered: Hampshire border - Surrey border
–
Rudgwick - Billingshurst - Pulborough -
Littlehampton.
Recorder: Jaine Wild, 1 Sutton Close,
Felpham, Bognor Regis PO22 8EY
Tel. 01243 82580

MID SUSSEX BADGER PROTECTION GROUP

Area covered: Littlehampton - Storrington –
Henfield - Ditchling Beacon - Kemptown.
Rudgwick –
Pulborough - Ditchling Beacon - Golden Cross –
Cowbeech – Heathfield - Bewl Bridge - Kent
border –
Surrey border - Rudgwick.
Recorder: Jan Spooner,
4 The Marts, Rudgwick,
West Sussex RH12 3HH
Tel. 01444 417822

WEALD AND DOWNLAND BADGER PROTECTION GROUP

Area covered: Horsham - Burgess Hill -
Rudgwick.
Recorder: Bob Darting,
55 Nightingale Lane, Burgess Hill,
West Sussex
Tel. 01444 454085

Moths and Butterflies

COLIN PRATT
(County recorder for moths and butterflies).
Oleander, 5 View Road,
Peacehaven, East Sussex.
colin.pratt@talk21.com
Tel. 01273 586780

JOYCE GAY (British Butterfly Conservation
Society - Sussex Branch)
Wellbrook, High Street, Henfield,
West Sussex BN5 9DD
Tel. 01273 492279
jandpg@wellhen.fsnet.co.uk

SARAH PATTON
(Microlepidoptera Group)
c/o Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre
Woods Mill, Henfield,
West Sussex BN5 9SD
Tel: 01273 497553/554
sxbrc@sussexwt.org.uk

Glow-worms

ROBERT and JULIE HOWARD
(Sussex Glow-worm Recorders)
Tulip Tree Cottage, Spinney Lane,
West Chiltington, West Sussex RH20 2NX
Tel. 01798 812141

Spiders

ANDY PHILLIPS
Flat 5, 21 West Hill Road
St. Leonards on Sea
East Sussex
TN38 0NA
Tel: 01424 716919
threecubes@gmail.com

Orthoptera & related orders

JOHN PAUL
Downsflint, High Street, Upper Beeding,
West Sussex BN44 3WN
tatrix@pavilion.co.uk

Dragonflies

John Luck
4 Mill View, Ringmer,
East Sussex BN8 5EP
Tel: 01273 812843

Coleoptera (beetles) & Heteroptera (plant bugs)

PETER HODGE
8 Harvard Road, Ringmer,
East Sussex BN8 5HJ
Peter.J.Hodge@tesco.net
Tel: 01273 812047

Hymenoptera

Ants, Bees & Wasps

MIKE EDWARDS
Lea-side, Carron Lane, Midhurst,
West Sussex GU29 9LB
ammophila@macace.net
Tel: 01730 810482

Diptera (two-winged flies)

PATRICK ROPER
South View, Churchland Lane,
Sedlescombe, East Sussex TN33 0PF
patrick@prassociates.co.uk
Tel: 01424 870208

Hoverflies

ROGER MORRIS (National Recorder).
English Nature. Bullring House,
Northgate, Wakefield,
West Yorkshire
humber.pennines@english-nature.org.uk

Tel: 01924 334500

Hemiptera/Homoptera (Auchenorrhyncha: Leafhoppers & planthoppers)

ALAN STEWART
31 Houndean Rise, Lewes,
East Sussex BN7 1EQ
a.j.a.stewart@sussex.ac.uk
Tel: 01273 476243

Molluscs

MARTIN WILLING
14 Goodwood Close, Midhurst,
West Sussex GU29 9JG
Molluscs@willing.fsbusiness.co.uk
Tel: 01730 814790

Isopoda (woodlice) and related groups

STEVE PROSSER
43 Marchant's Drive
Camber
East Sussex
TN31 2RF
mail@camber43.freemove.co.uk
Tel: 01797 229334

Pseudo-scorpions

GERALD LEGG (National Recorder).
Booth Museum of Natural History, 194 Dyke
Road, Brighton,
East Sussex BN15AA
boothmus@pavilion.co.uk
Tel: 01273 292777

Geology

JOHN COOPER
Booth Museum of Natural History, 194 Dyke
Road, Brighton,
East Sussex BN15AA
boothmus@pavilion.co.uk
Tel: 01273 552586

Marine Records- (see also Cetaceans)

GERALD LEGG
Booth Museum of Natural History, 194 Dyke
Road, Brighton,
East Sussex BN15AA
boothmus@pavilion.co.uk
Tel: 01273 292777

Details of the following organisations and groups are given on the Record Centre's web site at:

<http://www.sxbrc.org.uk/Link.htm>

Bat Conservation Trust	National Biodiversity Network
Brighton and Hove City Council	National Federation for Biological Recording
British Trust for Ornithology	National Trust
Business and Biodiversity	Natural History Museum
Centre for Ecology and Hydrology	NHM/NBN Species Dictionary
Chichester District Council	People's Trust for Endangered Species
Coleopterist	Ramsar
East Sussex County Council	Rother District Council
Eastbourne Borough Council	Royal Society for the Protection Birds
English Nature	Rye Harbour Nature Reserve
Environment Agency	Southern Water
Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group	Sussex Bat Group
Field Studies Council	Sussex Biodiversity Partnership
Flora Locale	Sussex Downs Conservation Board
Horsham District Council	Sussex Moth Group
IUCN Red List of Threatened Species	Sussex Ornithological Society
Joint Nature Conservancy Council	Sussex Rivers and Otters Project
Kent & Medway Biological Record Centre	Sussex Wildlife Trust
Lewes District Council	UK BAP
Mammal Society	Wealden District Council
Mammals Trust UK	Weirwood Nature Reserve
West Sussex County Council	
West Sussex Vegetated Shingle	
Wild Hastings	

SOME VACANT GROUPS

If anyone is interested in becoming county recorder for any of these, or any other vacant group, please contact Henri Brocklebank at the Sussex Biodiversity Record Centre:
01273 497553 or sxbrc@sussexwt.org.uk

Ephemeroptera (Mayflies), Neuroptera, Mecoptera and Megaloptera, (Lacewings, Scorpion-flies, Alderflies and Snake-flies), Coelenterata, Nemertea (Nematode worms), Oligochaeta (Oligochaete worms), Bryozoa, Annelida (Flatworms), Myriapoda (Millipedes).

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