

### Main Work Party reports.

- 31st October—Strumpshaw Stone-pit**—Whole area cut with two mowers in operation, and raked and cleared to spoil site.
- 14th November— Moulton Pit-wood**—General tidy up of wood carried out, with some pollarding and coppicing and the mowing and clearance of nettles.
- 28th November—Snowdrop acre**—Annual maintenance of area. Cleared two fallen trees and branches felled by the strong winds. Nettles scythed raked and cleared and a general tidy up carried out.
- 12th December—Railway Wood, Strumpshaw**—Annual tidy up of site. Clearance of some fallen tress, scythed around shrubs and cut back bramble. Bird boxes (three, all used) checked and cleaned.

### Additional work carried out.

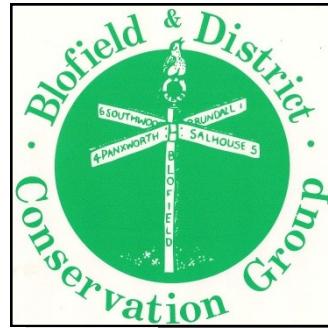
- 4th November—Blofield Church**—The front section of Churchyard mown and some raking and clearance carried out.
- 6th November—Blofield Church**—Continuation of raking and clearance of areas mown on the 4th Nov.
- 10th November—Blofield Church**—Completion of areas mown on the 4th Nov .

### Work Party Dates 2016

All work parties start at 10:30am, finishing at 1.00pm.

- 2nd January—Lingwood Pond
- 16th January—CWS Howes Meadow
- 30th January—Jary's Meadow
- 13th February—CWS Walsham Fen
- 27th February—Tree planting, details to follow, check website.
- 12th March—Buckenham Woods
- 19th March—Holly Lane Pond.
- 2nd April—Jary's Meadow

A good turnout at our two CWS is requested as there is always plenty to do.



### BADCOG NEWS.

No.181 January 2016

**President: Richard Hobbs**

**Chairman: Ernest Hoyos**, Sunny Cottage,  
Buckenham Woods, Lingwood  
Norwich NR13 4HG.  
Tel 01603 712913

[www.badcog.co.uk](http://www.badcog.co.uk)

### BADCOG Winter Walk

Saturday 4th December

On a somewhat windy but very mild winters morning, 17 BADCOG members and friends (and a dog), turned up for the annual BADCOG winter walk. Our starting and finishing point this year was the East Hills Café at the Brundall marina.



After pre-ordering our lunches at the café, we were on our way by 10.45am, heading back towards Brundall railway station. Once we'd crossed the rail track we turned right and along the public footpath running parallel with the railway. This took us to the Brundall Strumpshaw main road, about 200m short of the railway bridge. Continuing under the bridge, we turned left along a footpath which crosses over the Norwich to Yarmouth railway line. Going through a small housing estate we eventually came out to open countryside looking across the Lackford Run and the wet meadows beyond. It was along this water course in 1999 that BADCOG planted 6 black poplar and 20 alder trees, most of which are still doing well today. Ernest was able to point out the trees to us and explained how over time, the footpath has been diverted (to help the farmer) and also altered by walkers avoiding the heavy vegetation along the edge of watercourse and any boggy areas.

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Continuing north, we had a good view of both Braydeston and Blofield Churches, with Braydeston's newly re-pointed and restored tower showing up brightly against the grey skyline. Here, the ground rises up to Braydeston Church and once at the top we had a great view over this interesting wet valley.

Turning left (west), we headed towards the Brundall-Blofield road, but stopped short of the road as David Pilch had arranged for us to have a walk around Cremer's Meadow. This meadow is now owned by the Brundall Parish Council and managed by the 'Friends of Cremer's Meadow' group (see November's News Letter which can be found on the website). Work is still in progress here before it can be opened to the public, but since the summer a lot of work has been done and will continue over the winter months.



To protect itself the Hornet Moth looks exactly like a Hornet

While we were walking around the meadow, Mike Blackburn pointed out the damage done to the poplar trees by the Hornet Moth, a member of the Clearwing family of moths. At the base of some of the poplar trees were holes, about the circumference of a pencil. This is caused by the larvae of the moth. A female lays her eggs at the base of a poplar tree, the larval food plant. The larvae hatch and feeds on the tree, burrowing beneath the surface of the bark, near ground level or just below. It then overwinters as a larva then continues to feed on the tree for another summer before overwintering again as a cocoon. The following summer, once fully developed the adults emerge and can often be found on poplar trees straight after emergence, resting beside the exit holes. Near the base of the tree you may find pupa cases nearby. Unfortunately, too many larvae feeding on the same tree can damage the tree and make it unsafe!



A pupa case often found at the base of a poplar tree

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## The collective nouns of animals and birds.

Many will be familiar with the term a '**Murmuration of Starlings**', the collective noun of starlings, flocking and spiralling around the sky, before coming to roost, normally in reed-bed in our part of the world. Some may have witnessed this spectacular event at Strumpshaw RSPB!

I wonder just how many are aware of the collective nouns of some of our other local birds, such as a '**Sedge of bitterns**' or a '**Siege of herons**'. The first reflects the specific habitat of the bittern whilst **siege** recognises the patient way in which a heron will wait for its prey, just as an army will patiently wait for the surrender of an enemy under siege. **Siege** however, should not be confused with a **herony**, a place where heron breed.

Pheasants, which are abundant locally, have a few collective nouns. **Brood** for a family of pheasants, a **bouquet** for a general gathering, a **brace** for a pair of shot birds and a '**Nye of Pheasants**'. There are many variations in the spelling of the collective noun **Nye**, including **nide**, **nie** and **ny**. The word means a hatch or nest of pheasants and relates specifically to the young. It's believed that the word is derived from the French word **nid**, meaning nest.

A '**Herd of curlew**' harks back to the time when curlews were a source of meat and once could be seen in large numbers on meadows and fields. The term can be traced back to the fifteenth century when curlew were regularly eaten (along with many other birds which we would not think of eating today!) Many will have read in the EDP that numbers of curlew have dropped in recent years and are now under threat. In the past, we have seen curlew at Howes Meadow, which is ideal habitat for this splendid bird.

The source of the above is from a book called 'A Murmuration of Starlings' by Steve Palin and contains many more interesting collective nouns.

Tony Mc

## **Autumn Favourites**

**By Hans Watson**



Most birdwatchers look forward to autumn, with the anticipation of seeing scarce migrants, or perhaps, just seeing old favourites. For those birdwatchers who love waders, autumn offers excellent opportunities to see birds that have bred in the high arctic, and are now travelling south to escape the Arctic winter. Some of these waders stop only for a day or two, and are passing through to lands much further south, but many are content to stay on the Norfolk coast. The autumn of 2015 proved to be quite a good season in the Yare valley, for one of my favourite waders, the Greenshank. This year, as in most years, I erected one of my small portable hides on the edge of one of the pools where they were feeding, in order to watch them at about 4 to 5 metres range. At this distance, it is possible to hear the little low notes they utter when they are close to one another, and I much prefer watching them at this distance, than through binoculars or my telescope at 200 to 300 metres.

Greenshank are amongst the most alert and wary of all waders, and I have noticed on a number of occasions that once a Greenshank settles to feed near my hide, then other waders often arrive to feed. It is almost as though they respect the judgement of the Greenshank, regarding it being safe to settle there.



I have often wondered why my emotions are so stirred by Greenshanks and other sandpipers. Is it because I seem to encounter them, like old friends, when I am in far flung foreign lands? Or is it because they remind me of the happy nights when I was camping in Lapland and was lulled to sleep in my tent by the song-flights of Greenshank and Wood Sandpiper? Certainly the happiest birdwatching moments that I recall, have often coincided with the appearance, or presence of these fabulous birds.

After visiting this very interesting site, we continued to walk on public footpaths and bridleways which kept us well clear of the busy roads. These footpaths took us in between gardens and houses and I find it fascinating that all these footpaths still exist despite all the development! After seeing bits of Brundall some of us had never seen before, we eventually came out onto the platform at Brundall Station and then made our way back to the café. Here we were met by a few more members who had joined us for a very enjoyable lunch.

Once again we were very lucky with the weather for this annual walk and I think it safe to say everyone enjoyed it. It was not the 4.5 miles as published, but still just about right.



**Braydeston Hills**

## **BADCOT Talks.**

**8th January**—A talk by Jean Smith on The History of Linen Manufacturing in Norwich

**12th February**—Will Burchnall of the Broads Authority on the Broads Landscape Partnership Scheme.

**11th March**—**Hans Watson**—A talk about his visit to India.

**8th April**—TBD

**All talks are held on the second Friday of the month in the School Room of the Methodist Chapel, Chapel Road, Lingwood.**

**Start time is 7:30pm**

**Refreshments are available.**

### **Otter at Walsham Fen.**

This photo was taken at Walsham Fen with a camera trap. Unfortunately, the camera only got one shot of it. We shouldn't be surprised that otters visit the site, as it's the same water course that feeds Fairhaven, a place where they are often seen. TM



## A New Year Bird Inspired Crossword

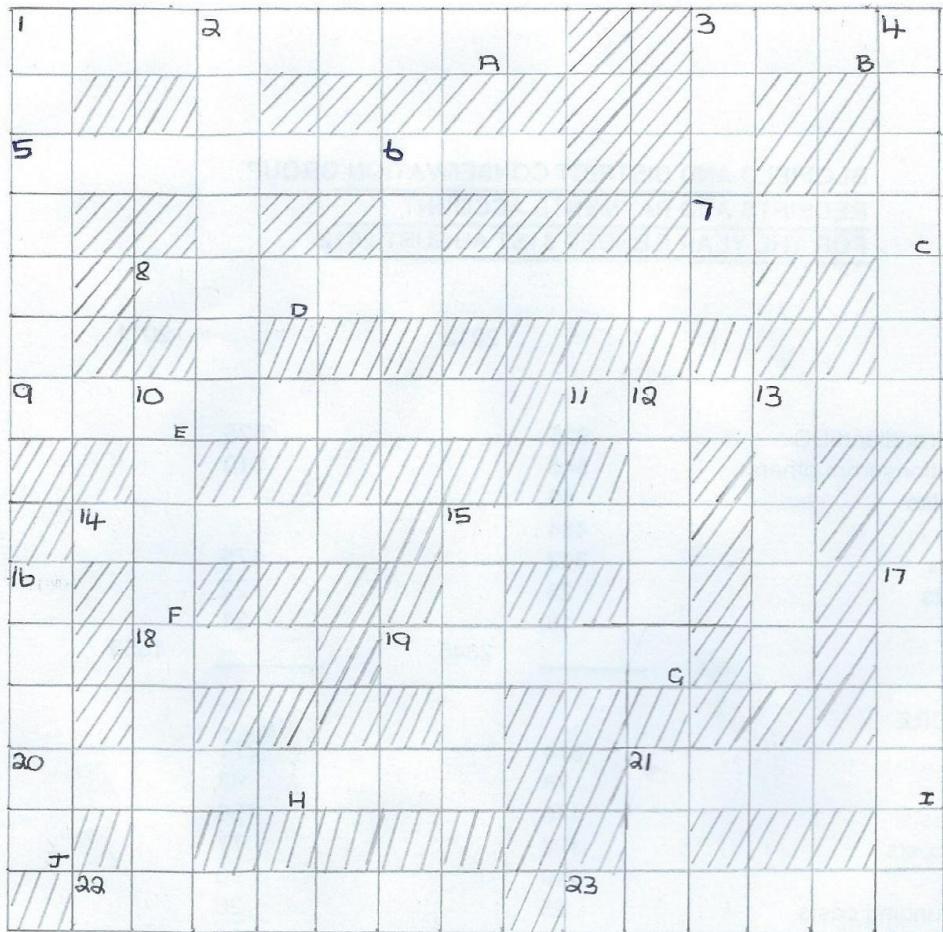
### ACROSS

1. A local attraction at this time of year (9).
3. See 3 down.
5. It does what it says on the tin (9).
7. Not quite a birds home! (4).
8. A summer visitor, unlike its counterparts (10)
9. A Nocturnal insect feeder (8).
11. A favourite food of jays (6).
- 14 and 21 down. More often seen nowadays at the bird table (5,3).
- 15 and 23 across. A royal event held in July (4,6).
18. A food for sea birds (3).
19. Once, a useful tool for man (5).
20. Typical Broadland habitat (8).
21. Sounds like something to sit on (5).
22. At the centre of a Northern food chain (7).
23. See 15 across.

### DOWN

1. One bird within another (7).
2. The sparrowhawk, according to Chris Packham (7).
- 3 and 3 across. Forward facing – typical of perching birds (5,4).
4. 'Butcher' birds (7).
6. The family Strigidae (3).
10. A popular film has taken its name (9).
12. A unique type of habitat (5).
13. Originally, a North American duck (5)
15. Avian pirates (5).
16. A feeding family group of goldfinch (5).
17. A process of ridding birds of parasitic insects (6).
21. See 14 across.

Finally, pick out the letters A – J to spell out a haven for birds (10)



### Contributions to this News Letter

To help with the publication of this News Letter, the committee would be very grateful for any copy, articles or items that any members may like to have published in this News Letter.

Your copy can be either be sent to Tony McKie, Teal Barn, Vicarage Road, Lingwood, NR13 4TT, or via email to [a.mckie57@btinternet.com](mailto:a.mckie57@btinternet.com)

**Thank You**