

Butterfly Conservation
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch

2012 Annual General Meeting



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Hants and Isle of Wight Branch – 2012 Annual General Meeting

Saturday 13th October 2012

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Juliet Bloss, Phil Budd, Dave Green and Jenny Mallett.

2. Minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting.

The minutes of the 2011 Annual General Meeting were unanimously confirmed as an accurate record.

Proposed: Clive Wood. Seconded: Tim Norriss.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

4. Presentation of Accounts.

Nick Radford (Treasurer) presented the accounts for 2011/2012. Summary sheets were available at the meeting. The accounts had been independently audited and approved by BC Head Office.

Total expenditure exceeded income by £1,089.

Total Income was £51,268. This is £19,056 lower than 2010/2011, due in large part to the £20,000 legacy received in 2010/2011. Income from Subscription, Grants and Dividends and Interest was consistent with 2010/2011.

Total Expenditure was £52,357 (excluding Designated Funds). This is £1,084 less than 2010/2011. The cost of managing the reserves was £6,336 higher than 2010/2011, due mainly to the overlap of costs with the change of Reserves Officer. Other costs were fairly consistent year on year.

Designated Funds Balances (also referred to as Restricted Funds) are: Major Projects (£30,000), Reserves Management (£32,000) and June Bailey Education Fund (£11,410). Expenditure items against the Major Projects Fund were a £10,000 contribution to the Duke of Burgundy Project and a £10,000 contribution to Head Office which attracted Match Pot funds of a further £90,000.

Investments were valued at £143,864 on 31 March 2012, representing an unrealised gain of £13,761. £5,000 of investments were sold in the year to fund the £10,000 contribution to Head Office from the Major Projects Fund. The profit on the sale was £908.

No significant changes to ongoing income and expenditure levels are expected in 2012/2013. Long term planning of income, expenditure and cash flow is now being undertaken to ensure the continued viability of the Branch.

It was proposed that the accounts be formally accepted, and this was carried unanimously.

Proposed: Brian Fletcher. Seconded: Colin Matthews.

5. Reports for Conservation, Information, Records and Reserves Sub-Committees.

a. Conservation sub-committee.

Andy Barker (Chairman of the Conservation sub-committee) described four of the key activities of the sub-committee during the past year:

- A winter Brown Hairstreak egg search was carried out in the Selbourne / Noar Hill area to assess the extent of Brown Hairstreak breeding areas. In 2012 many more eggs were found in more hedgerows than a similar survey in the winter of 2009. The surveys demonstrate the importance of maintaining hedgerows of varying condition within the landscape. A further survey will be carried out in 2014.
- At a Branch transect recorders conference held in March it was noted that Silver-studded Blue, Grayling, Glanville Fritillary and Brown Hairstreak were all under-represented in current transects. Since then new transects have been set up in the New Forest and in Shipton Bellinger.
- The Dukes on the Edge project area aims to make recommendations for habitat management for the Duke of Burgundy. The areas of focus for the project are Hampshire (Butser Hill and Oxenbourne Down) and West Sussex.
- Marsh Fritillary numbers in northeast Hampshire have plummeted since the mid 1980s / early 1990s, ultimately resulting in the extinction of this species in this area. In collaboration with Hampshire Wildlife Trust and the Defence Estates habitat condition assessments have been carried out on an area of MoD land, Foxlease Meadows, on the north side of the M3 (just before junction 4a). This involved identifying the location of high densities of Devil's-bit Scabious, the larval food plant of the Marsh Fritillary. The habitat is looking promising and consideration is being given to using this as a reintroduction site for the species.

b. Information sub-committee

Roger Buchanan (Chairman of the Information sub-committee) presented the report.

The first grants from the June Bailey Education fund will be made this year.

The number of households on the database is 1210, 1095 of which are active. 819 are single, 258 are joint and 18 are family memberships. 78 memberships were not renewed.

There are two newsletters produced each year. There was a plea for more people to submit articles for these. Feedback on the newsletters is encouraged so that the Branch can ensure it is producing something that interests and stimulates the membership.

The website continues to be developed and has a dedicated members' section. Feedback is always welcome regarding the website and its future development. There is an option to opt out of receiving paper copies of newsletters and the annual report and members are encouraged to opt out in order to reduce printing and postage costs. Members were asked to note that the webmaster is not responsible for the quality of information provided to him, particularly with regard to sightings, so is not able to respond to queries in relation to this data.

The Branch now has its own logo. Thanks were expressed to Robin Turner for his work on the logo and to Richard Lewington for permission to use his artwork.

Jenny Mallett, Linda Barker and Alison Harper were thanked for all their support with the organisation of events. The Butterflies and Buddleja event was held again at Longstock in torrential rain and attracted few visitors. The Branch would like to have a presence at more events, such as the New Forest Show, but needs more volunteers in order to do this properly. Attendees were asked to express interest in volunteering to assist with events by signing the form that was circulated at the AGM. A new events coordinator is needed for the coming year as Jenny Mallett is standing down from the role.

Alison Harper was thanked for her work in organising outings and walks. She is standing down and it is understood that Dan Powell may be taking over the role.

The Branch is keen to get schools more involved in its activities. It is intended to mailshot central Hampshire schools with a view to encouraging school children to attend walks.

The information sub-committee has a couple of vacancies. Anyone interested in joining should speak to Roger Buchanan.

c. Records sub-committee

Tim Norriss (Chair of the Records Sub-committee) presented the report.

There were 71,209 butterfly records and 119,611 moth records in 2011. The Branch now holds 578,127 butterfly records and 1,613,899 moth records. These records contribute to BC's Butterflies in the New Millennium, UK Butterfly Monitoring Scheme, Wider Countryside Butterfly Survey, Big Butterfly Count and BC's Moths Count. The records are also made available to the Hampshire Biodiversity Information Centre and the Isle of Wight Local Records Centre.

Butterfly record coverage in Hampshire and Isle of Wight in 2011 was 961 2-km squares (around 83% coverage).

Recorders of micro moths were urged to use a combination of photos and descriptions in order to ensure accurate recording.

The deadlines for submitting 2012 records are: 2nd November 2012 for butterflies and 1st January 2013 for moths.

Recorders were encouraged to submit their records electronically. It was noted that Mapmate does not work on MAC PCs without buying an extra piece of software. Head Office is the appropriate body to contact regarding any potential introduction of an app for smart phones for ease of on site recording.

The sub-committee is looking for someone to help with writing the moth newsletters. Anyone interested should contact Tim Norriss.

Thanks were expressed to all those involved in preparing the Hampshire and Isle of Wight Butterfly and Moth Report 2011, particularly the production editors, Dave Green and Mike Wall.

d. Reserves sub-committee

Penny Jeffreys presented the report on behalf of Jenny Mallet (Reserves sub-committee chairman) who had sent her apologies.

At Magdalen Hill Down butterfly numbers have been lower than 2011 although it was noted that Grizzled Skipper numbers were good and over 1000 Chalkhill Blues were counted on transect one afternoon. In addition to winter grazing by cattle, targeted sheep grazing, using electric fencing, has occurred over the summer months and been successful in reducing problem species such as clematis and wild parsnip. A late summer hay cut was required due to excessive grass growth in parts of the reserve. The reserve is now part of a Nature Improvement Area so qualifies for additional funding for management works.

Yew Hill butterfly numbers are 20% down on last year with a 32% reduction for blues, hairstreaks and coppers. An Adonis Blue was seen and it was an excellent year for Dingy Skipper and Dark Green Fritillary. The major conservation effort has been the repair of the hedge / fence on the northern boundary of Hilltop. Many thanks are due to volunteers and especially to Sparsholt students who together have contributed hundreds of hours of effort at no cost to the Branch.

A new management plan has been prepared for Bentley Station Meadow, confirming that significant work is needed to reinstate the site as a meadow. A new 10 year Higher Level Stewardship agreement has now commenced for the site providing funding of £1,800 pa and one off capital funding of more than £11,000 to clear the site of scrub / trees.

A new reserve has been acquired by the Branch on a 10 year lease from the Church Commissioners. This is known as the Old Allotments field and lies immediately to the west of Magdalen Hill Down. It is a 9 acre site, currently used as grazing land. The lower part is remnant chalk grassland.

The year has seen strong links forged with external organisations, particularly the Hampshire Wildlife Trust who repaired broken fencing free of charge after a break-in at Magdalen Hill Down. Also the reserves officer has been working closely with Arqiva in the development of a new management plan for the Morn Hill site to the east of Magdalen Hill Down.

Patrick Fleet, the main contractor on the reserves, has resigned to focus on his gardening work. Thanks were extended to Patrick for his major contribution to the Branch over the last 20 years.

A reserves warden, Trevor Spinney, has been appointed for Yew Hill. Wardens are also required at Magdalen Hill Down and Bentley Station Meadow. Anyone interested should speak to the reserves officer.

Patrick Fleet and Dave Shute have retired from the sub-committee and Trevor Spinney and Colin Beyer have joined the sub-committee.

A large number of walks, visits, training days and work parties were held on the reserves. There are many new volunteers attending work parties, although more are always welcome.

The sub-committee reports were accepted by members en bloc unanimously.

Proposed: Mervyn Grist. Seconded: Peter Gardiner.

6. Chairman's Report.

The Chairman, Peter Eeles, expressed his immense gratitude for the generosity of June Bailey, enabling the Branch to set up an Education Fund.

The Chairman thanked Penny Jeffreys, Nick Radford and Jayne Chapman, all of whom took up their roles in the last 12 months, noting how quickly they had all got up to speed with Branch matters and the significant contribution they had made to the smooth running of the Branch. He also thanked Alison Harper and Patrick Fleet for all their hard work with the Branch over many years.

Additional thanks were extended to all members of sub-committees and Main Committee.

7. Election of Committee Members.

There were two members standing down from the Main Committee: Andrew Bolton and Gary Richardson. The Chairman thanked these members for their contribution to the work of the Committee.

The following members are standing down but seeking re-election: Dave Green and Robin Turner.

Penny Jeffreys (secretary) and Nick Radford (Treasurer) had been in attendance at Main Committee for the last year and now need formally to be elected onto the Committee.

Clive Wood also put himself forward for the Main Committee.

It was agreed to vote on the election and re-election of members en-bloc. This was passed unanimously.

Proposed: Andy Barker. Seconded: Tim Norriss.

8. Health and Safety Matters.

There were no health and safety issues to report. The meeting was advised that the Butterfly Conservation website has information on all relevant Health and Safety policies. If members need further information they should approach Jayne Chapman, the Branch Health and Safety Officer.

9. Any Other Business.

There was none.

The meeting closed at 14.34 hours.