

Butterfly Conservation
Hampshire and Isle of Wight Branch

2011 Annual General Meeting



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Hants and Isle of Wight Branch – 2011 Annual General Meeting

Saturday 22nd October 2011

1. Apologies for Absence.

Apologies were received from Caroline Dudley, Peter Hunt, Phil Budd, Sue and Barry Clark, Janet and Ken Jones and Ian Pratt.

2. Minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting.

The minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting were unanimously confirmed as an accurate record.

Proposed: Andy Barker. Seconded: Roger Buchanan.

3. Matters arising from the Minutes.

There were no matters arising.

4. Presentation of Accounts.

Arthur Greenwood (Treasurer) presented the accounts for 2010 – 2011. Summary sheets were available at the meeting. The accounts had been independently audited by BC Head Office.

Total Income was £70,324. This is £22,175 higher than 2009/2010. This was partly due to a generous legacy received from June Bailey, in whose name the “June Bailey Education fund” has been established. Total Income exceeded expenditure by £16,883. Income from Subscription, Grants and Dividends and Interest was consistent with 2009/10.

Total Expenditure was £53,441 (excluding Restricted Funds), including £5,000 transferred to the Education Fund. After this, expenditure is £913 above 2009/2010. The cost of managing the reserves was 4% higher than 2010/11. Other costs were fairly consistent year on year.

Designated Fund Balances are: Major Projects (£50,000), Reserves Management (£32,000) and Education Fund (11,410). Expenditure against the Major Projects Fund for contribution to the cost of the HQ Regional Officer was £10,000. Investments were valued at £145,882 on 31 March 2011, representing an unrealised gain of £11,687. Investments remained untouched for the year 2010/2011.

No significant changes to ongoing income and expenditure levels are expected in 2010/2011. Although Branch balances are healthy grant income and Higher Level Stewardship are under increasing pressure and it is necessary to plan for the medium term to ensure adequate funding is available for managing the reserves. A review of future income and expenditure through to 2015/16 is currently being prepared.

Tessa Newell stood down as Branch Treasurer during 2011 and was thanked by all for her hard work and contribution to the branch. Temporarily Arthur Greenwood has taken on the role of Branch Treasurer while a new permanent Branch Treasurer is being sought.

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

Proposed: Lynn Fomison. Seconded: Brian Fletcher.

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

a. Conservation sub-committee.

Andy Barker (Chairman of the Conservation sub-committee) listed the members of the sub-committee. The sub-committee would welcome additional members who have knowledge of moths in particular. He thanked Cressida Wheelwright who has stood down after many years of service for her valuable contribution as both secretary to the sub-committee and for coordinating the Butterflies in the Wider Countryside scheme.

The sub-committee has been involved in the following activities:

- Establishing more blackthorn hedges in the Selborne area to benefit the Brown Hairstreak. An egg count is planned for the winter and more details will follow in the branch newsletter and on the branch website.
- Providing funding for habitat management for the Duke of Burgundy at a site near Stockbridge Down.
- Developing a Branch strategy in line with Butterfly Conservation's 2020 Vision.
- Making contributions as a part of various consultation processes for several heathland sites and for the Isle of Wight sea defence strategy.
- Running Reddish Buff moth training days on the Isle of Wight.

In response to a question about the detrimental impact of high wheat prices on set-aside areas and field margins Andy Barker shared the concerns but stressed the importance of encouraging landowners to take a medium to long term view of management. He suggested that a bigger problem would be a reduction in Higher Level Stewardship scheme funding.

b. Information sub-committee

Roger Buchanan thanked Brian Fletcher, the previous sub-committee chairman, for his contribution. Alison Harper is standing down from the field trip coordination role this year and was thanked for her support.

Membership numbers have increased by 49 households and 140 new members. 81 memberships were not renewed.

The successful Butterflies and Buddleja event was held again at Longstock. The sub-committee needs to decide if the event should run next year. However, organising the event is highly labour intensive. Additional help is always appreciated at this and other events.

There are 2 area groups, South East and Isle of Wight. The South East group has initiated discussions to get the Bedenham grasslands at Defence Munitions Gosport included in the Portsmouth Harbour SSSI. The Isle of Wight group has run 13 walks between April and August including 2 as part of the Wight walking festival. The group plans to write some web pages for the website this winter on butterfly watching on the island and to continue the walks programme in 2012.

The website and newsletter have a new format. Feedback is requested. There are now just two newsletters per annum. The aim is for members to access these via the website to save the high printing and postage costs. The website would benefit from more contributions from members. Thanks went to Robin Turner for his work on the website and to Julia Bloss for her work on newsletter editing. Concerns were raised over problems with accessing the members' area of website. There had been teething

problems but these should now be resolved. Any members encountering problems should send an email to the webmaster.

A publicity officer is needed. Members were requested to contact Roger if they have an interest in taking on this role.

In the coming year the sub-committee will be deciding on appropriate educational causes to receive £300 grants from the June Bailey fund.

c. Records sub-committee

Tim Norriss described the roles of the sub-committee members. Linda Barker is the branch butterfly recorder till the end of December when Paul Brocks will take over. Linda was thanked for her sterling work and contribution to the Branch.

There were 58,882 butterfly records and 126,442 moth records in 2010. The Branch now holds 510,086 butterfly records and 1,509,566 moth records. These records contribute to BC's Butterflies in the New Millennium, BC's Moths Count, Millennium Atlas of Butterflies in Britain in Ireland, Provisional Atlas of the UK's Larger Moths (published 2010).

Recorders were encouraged to consider the use Mapmate to enter butterfly recordings (£25 to purchase which provides one year free support – if additional support is needed the Branch will pay). A transect recorders meeting is planned for 2012. More details will follow.

The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Butterfly and Moth Report 2010 took an editorial team of 6, 26 writers, 32 photographers and a database team of 8. Thanks were extended to all involved in preparing this comprehensive document.

d. Reserves sub-committee

Jenny Mallet reported that the weather had a significant impact on the reserves. The grazing period at all 3 reserves was shortened due to significant snowfall. A very warm April meant excellent numbers of Orange-tip and Green Hairstreak. Then a wet summer followed. Overall it was an average year for butterflies but Dingy Skipper had its best year ever on Magdalen Hill Down (MHD) Original Reserve and Dingy Skipper and Grizzled Skipper did well on Yew Hill. Chalkhill Blue numbers were down at MHD but up at Yew Hill.

At MHD Patrick Fleet and Colin Beyer have done a stalwart job keeping the sward heights down. However the MHD turf heights (measured by Andy Barker) show increasing sward height. Also a botanical survey report on MHD Extension (produced by Penny Jeffreys) finds increasing density of grasses. We need to graze harder.

There have been many work parties, particularly at MHD, and also a large number of guided walks on all the reserves. We have new information boards at MHD and Yew Hill and Bentley Station Meadow will get one in the new year.

This year has seen the retirement of our Reserves Officer, Lynn Fomison, after 14 years with the Branch. The Branch owes her a huge debt of gratitude for the way in which all the reserves have developed and thrived under her leadership. We welcome our new reserves officer, Jayne Chapman, who took up the post on 1 October.

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

Proposed: Brian Fletcher. Seconded: Mervin Grist.

6. Chairman's Report.

Peter Eeles thanked everyone for their support in his first year as chairman. He was particularly grateful to Roger Buchanan and the chairs and members of the sub-committees and to all that contribute their time and records.

Cressida Wheelwright was thanked for her contribution as Branch secretary. Penny Jeffreys has taken on this role.

Final thanks was given to everyone for their continuing support when the society faces major funding challenges. As an example, a major challenge facing BC is the 85% cut in the species recovery grant from Natural England.

7. Election of Committee Members.

There were two members standing down from the Main Committee: Tessa Newell and Cressida Wheelwright. Those standing down but seeking re-election were Arthur Greenwood, Jenny Mallett, Mike Wall, Peter Eeles and Roger Buchanan. It was agreed to vote on their re-election en-bloc. Their re-election was accepted by a majority.

Proposed: Dave Green. Seconded: Paul Brock.

8. Health and Safety Matters.

Jayne Chapman had no issues to report.

9. Any Other Business.

There was none.

The meeting closed at 14.43 hours.