



MANCHESTER WILDLIFE'S OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

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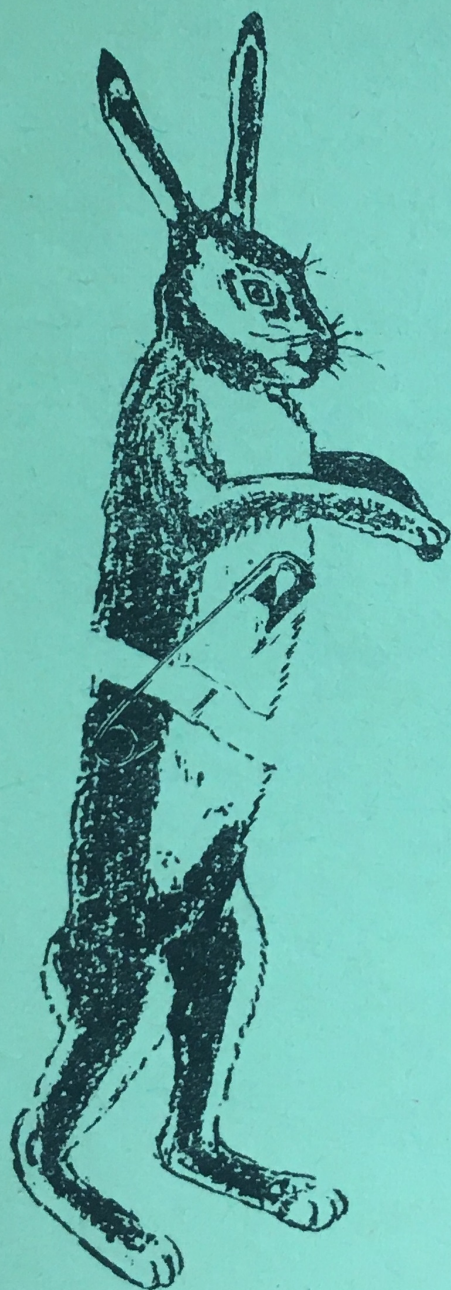
# MAGPIE

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Spring 95

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## Editorial

Apologies to Manchester's students

Editor's office - 437 7040

My first job is to apologise to the Manchester University Students' Union. In the winter Magpie, in the article on Local Agenda 21, I stated, "The MU Union catering has been privatised; now, instead of re-usable cutlery and crockery being provided they have gone disposable." My mistake was that this had not happened at the Union but at the University's own refectory (though re-usable cutlery is now an option). The Union's catering went from disposable to re-usable some five years ago; so the students are well ahead of their masters.

While we are on the subject of Local Agenda 21 (LA21) I think it is only fair to mention that there is more on this, and sustainable development (SD), later on. I hope you are not beginning to tire of the subject, because, as someone once said, "Sustainable development is for ever". Some ask, "What have LA21 and SD to do with wildlife"; others say that, "LA21 and SD are not just about wildlife and things 'green' but also about social and economic matters". I can appreciate the doubts of the former and the truth of the latter. Without SD the ensuing environmental degradation will put in jeopardy the future of our natural world and its bio-diversity, but we should not just look after things 'green' and neglect the social well being, health and economic status of the people; that would be no way to create a fair world in the 21st century. On the other hand, open spaces and the wildlife to be found there have great value to people and the quality of their lives. To quote from Manchester's draft Nature Conservation Strategy: "In many parts of the City, levels of mobility are limited for various reasons including physical disabilities and low income. There is a need for natural habitats close to where people live and work: indeed the development and creation of wildlife habitats in such areas represents an opportunity to remove one of the many deprivations associated with Inner City life, thereby contributing towards the City Council's anti-poverty and equal opportunities policies." This is just what many people in environmental groups have been saying for years; it's good to see it stated in a Council document. Let us hope they will live up to the words.

Please note that all cheques, for membership subscriptions etc., should be made payable to "Manchester Wildlife" and sent to the Hon. Treasurer, Ian Brown.

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## NEWS UPDATE

### Willing to Wound.... Voluntary Sector cuts latest

City-wide resistance to the 100% funding cuts to 3 key support agencies has held back the Council executioner's axe. But life on death row is scarcely any better as the Labour Group and members of the all-powerful Policy and Resources Committee haggle over the sentences. According to the latest VAM newsletter, Manchester's Volunteer Bureau, is to be the sacrificial lamb (just as we were planning a recruitment drive for our conservation projects), while VAM and MARC are to be killed off gradually. This is an appalling way to treat skilled and dedicated staff who have done so much to retrieve Manchester's shaky reputation and we will be just one among the hundreds of voluntary organisations struggling to make the world a better place, who will suffer as a result. We have been obliged to put important (award-winning) projects on hold as the services from MARC are crucial to their progress. This may be money that will never be spent on wildlife for people in Manchester. Cynical observers of the local scene have pointed out that the City Council will be only too glad to see a reduction in the activity and influence of the social and environmental "awkward squad." *Willing to wound, and yet afraid to strike - Alexander Pope 1688-1744*

## NOTICE BOARD

### .....Desperately Seeking Solutions

Your Wildlife team is running ever harder just to stay in the same place. We need more and regular help with routine tasks and with the matters which jump up and demand immediate or sustained action. But it's increasingly obvious (from the state of our houses) that this help has to have somewhere to go in order to be effective. This is usually called an office, or even a Resource Centre. But there is no way we could raise the money for the rent to start with; the cost of providing a telephone, word processor, printer and basic office furniture, plus the increased running expenses that would appear as soon as we started to deal with those tasks which simply get shelved (dumped in grocery boxes), would tax our resources to the limit. Yet we are often expected to "deliver" as if we had staff. If there is a public spirited capitalist out there who would like to help wildlife, then please get in touch. And our advice comes a lot cheaper than that from a consultant!

## WHAT ABOUT THE REST OF GREATER MANCHESTER?

In the 10 years of our existence, we have been most active in Manchester, Stockport, Trafford, Salford and Tameside, in declining order. Bolton, Bury, Wigan have their active wildlife defenders and of Oldham and Rochdale we know not a lot. The need for active and visible urban wildlife groups in every urban local authority has never been greater; neither have the opportunities. Isn't it about time Manchester Wildlife became a Co-operative Federation of borough-wide groups, linked by a common identity and framework, but each running their own show with help from a central office or resource centre? It would only take four or five people in each area to make a start with help from us.



## Shell Better Britain: - hell on earth for the Ogoni.

by Unity Kelly

### KEN SARO-WIWA must not die!

The Nigerian military rulers (and Commonwealth member) have put this leading opponent of Shell Oil, one of Nigeria's most popular writers, on trial for his life. (BBC 1, 27/3/95). His "crime" is that of being seen and heard to expose the 30 years of environmental and social devastation brought about by Shell Oil's exploitation of Ogoniland. When Ken Saro-Wiwa's voice and influence threatened to upset Shell's power-base in Nigeria, and their vast profits (unhindered by pollution controls or mitigation), the military suppressed the people's peaceful protest with enthusiastic brutality. Some of you will have seen Channel 4's "The Drilling Fields". Horrific but compulsive viewing.

Meanwhile, back home, Shell is a household name in the field of company concern for the domestic environment, through the Shell Better Britain Campaign. We maintain that good works at home cannot be enjoyed with a clear conscience when such a terrible price is being paid elsewhere. We are calling upon everyone who has ever benefited from a Shell Better Britain grant (and this must amount to thousands of motivated and articulate people), to write to the Chief Executive of Shell Oil, on behalf of Ken Saro-Wiwa and in support of environmental restitution for the Ogoni. Shell have far more influence than any diplomatic mission. They will not willingly forgo their immense profit (US\$30billion) but neither will the company relish loss of customer confidence in their environmental street cred. Please send copies of your letter to the Nigerian Ambassador, your MP and the Sec. of State for the Commonwealth.

**The Polluter must Pay - not Ken Saro-Wiwa.**

## HERE AND THERE

### ENCY Winces

The ENCY 95 Campaign Office Manager was cut to the quick by Ms. Laureola's impertinence in suggesting that this promotional campaign, however worthy, presented some shortcomings in the "packaging" department. Recent environmental gatherings support this view, along with other more serious misgivings. In the immortal words of Prof. Marshall McLuan, "the medium is the message", and as such, the publicity is fair game. ENCY 95 is only publicity, unlike ECY 1970. It is also paid for by we the tax-payers. It is a depressing sign of the times that a member of a quango can be thus provoked by a homemade 'zine, when we only got two lines of response from English Nature's Gr. Manchester Officer in reply to our round-robin asking for interest and moral support for the Wildlife Discovery Walks project and Launch - and that was several weeks after the event.

### GET-AWAY TIME

There's still time to sign up for the Grey Hill work camp. See Magpie No. 33 and contact Unity.

## PEOPLE MATTER

Now a regular slot. Contributions and suggestions welcome.

As we approach our tenth anniversary, MW would like to send a giant VOTE OF THANKS to Chris Gordon at the Wildlife Trusts National Office. Chris became the Urban Wildlife Officer just three years ago. He services and knits together the Urban Wildlife Partnership, (our national network) and edits the UW Newsletter. He is our greatest asset in the sometimes tenuous link between this small organisation and the ramifications of RSNL headquarters. As a non-Trust, we could not receive this invaluable support without the UWP and Chris. The Urban Wildlife Partnership recently achieved Charitable status as a sub-set of RSNL and have a tasteful new brochure setting out all the benefits of membership (and one of Ian's photographs). Any group involved in the urban environment in any way can apply for membership and receive "service with a smile". Call Chris on 01522 544400.

### COMING SOON

The first regional gathering of Urban Wildlife Groups in the North West, organised by Chris Gordon.

## HERE AND THERE

Better Red than Dead?

### Will Red Moss go to Waste?

Red Moss is one of the few remaining tracts of lowland raised mire or peat bog (a gross over-simplification of its ecological value and interest) left in Greater Manchester. It has been degraded by land fill and drainage, but far smaller sites have been protected and lowland peat bogs are to be rehabilitated by English Nature with European funding. Alas for Red Moss, it was bought by Bolton Council with an eye to the main chance, as landfill makes money. Red Moss is to become Greater Manchester's supertip - a monstrous mountain of our rubbish. EN have designated it an SSSI but the Bolton UDP Inspector was not impressed. But Red Moss still contains many secrets; new invertebrate records for the county are being collected all the time. But time is running out for the Moss unless Bolton can be shown the error of their ways by the public.

Friends of the Earth HQ and local groups have teamed up with the Lancashire Wildlife Trust to run an intensive campaign over the next four weeks in Horwich and Bolton.

6th April: Bog Man Stunt - Bolton Town Centre

1st May: Public Meeting in Horwich

More serious lobbying and research will take place behind the scenes. If you can help: contact FoE or LWT. Come on the MW guided walk on **National Bog Day**, 23rd July.



## VIEWS

Hurrah for John Robb!

What the hell is going on at All Saints, Manchester? For years this was one tiny green enclave in Manchester's unrelenting concrete sprawl, an occasional quiet spot of old trees and grass on the edge of a city centre that is notoriously bleak on the old nature front (can it really be true that Graham Stringer, the city fuhrer, won't allow tree planting because it makes the centre look untidy, preferring to dot the city spaces with large concrete blobs and laughable clock towers?).

The last three months have been a disaster: some morons have decided that it would improve the spot by chopping most of the trees down and replacing them with small sticks, bulldozing the grass and replacing it with pointless gravel paths, and taking out an iron fence and replacing it with another. The whole place looks like a bleak, muddy shit-heap; more like Sarajevo than Manchester.

Who's responsible for this pathetic piece of planning? And why do we have to suffer this useless, hare-brained scheming?

John Robb, Hulme.

(Reprinted from City Life - And you thought we had a slight tendency to be critical! I'm not sure I like the "hare-brained" bit; insults of that sort are not fair to hares - Tim Lepidus.)

John Robb: Manchester style guru, musician and man of letters.  
Nuff respect to City Life and The Citizen, (who always reads his Maggie).

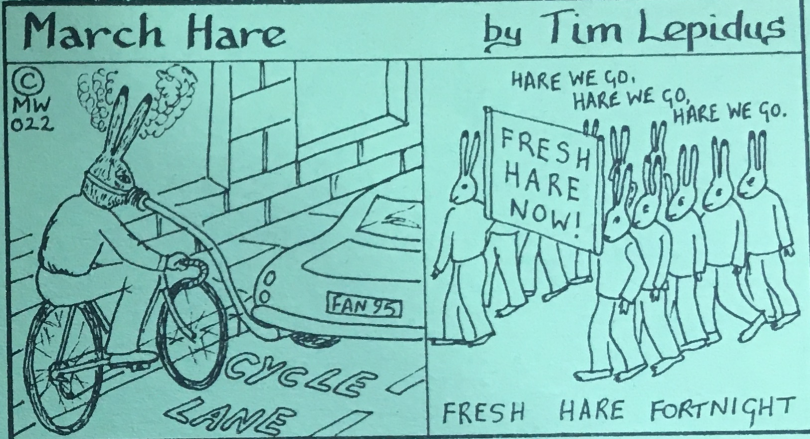
## NOTICE BOARD

"Stand by your Broom"

Recycling in Rusholme means cash for Manchester Wildlife. Bottle and paper banks are to be installed on the car park of the Aldi store, just off the Wilmslow Road, in the not too distant future. The deal is that MW helpers will promote its use by putting up posters and keep the site tidy, in return for a share of the income. We'll let you know about the practicalities as soon as we can. The Council Green Team have been on the case for months so we hope that the sound of breaking glass will soon be in the bins and not the gutter. After you've brushed up, you could pop up the banking and look for the butterflies on the buddleias and marvel at the speed with which nature has transformed the clearance site next door. It can't last, can it?

Earth First! and Friends present: **FRESH AIR FORTNIGHT: the campaign for FRESH AIR NOW!**

from 21st April to 4th May, demonstrating that even local elections can be fun with FAN! So don't FAF about! For events, updates and job opportunities: call 274 4665.



## NOTICE BOARD

**Parks for the People MANIFESTO Launch and Gathering on Saturday, 8th April, 2 till 4 pm in Manchester Town Hall.**

Parks and Open Spaces are in the news - not always for the best of reasons. There will be some very interesting speakers and lots of networking. MW has endorsed the Manifesto. The Heaton Park Inquiry looms. Wassailing took place in Platt Fields for the first time in history (?). A huge chunk of open land along the Nico Brook in Gorton now has a planning application on it. Much will be made of the Philip's Park 150th anniversary but who will be defending the "lesser" parks. As other spaces for wildlife are built over, even that attractive triangle between Piccadilly and UMIST, parks will be almost the only refuge for nature in the city. Our UWP has plans for a national park project which ties in with the new People's Manifesto. It seems a far cry from the prescriptions of Manchester's Urban Design Code, a.k.a. maximum control and minimum greenspace.

Look out for a piece by David Lord in The Indie to coincide with the Event on the 8th April.

I am as free as nature first made man, Ere the base laws of servitude began,  
When wild in the woods the noble savage ran.  
John Dryden



## Local Agenda 21

Ian Brown

To start where I left off last time, with floods. The day following printing the winter Magpie I was in the local newsagents and my eye was caught by the leading article in the European. I brushed away the moths from my wallet and invested 75 pence (Italy L3,500) so that I might read further. The headline ran - THE FLOOD....THE DROUGHT - by Isobel Conway.

"As northern Europe's worst floods this century subsided, southern Europe was suffering one of its worst droughts.

Climate experts blame the greenhouse effect for the extremes of weather hitting the continent - and warn that the same could happen next winter.

'It is just simple physics that under greenhouse conditions, rainfall increases,' said Professor Pir Velling, director of the institute for environmental studies at the Free University of Amsterdam. 'The air is carrying more water due to evaporation over warmer seas. Northern Europe is getting far more rain in winter while southern Europe is getting less,' he said.

Southern Spain, southern Portugal, Bulgaria and Cyprus are experiencing one of their driest winters in a century, after last week's floods in the north.

Meteorologists are blaming the adverse conditions on global warming linked to rising sea temperatures, a build-up of carbon dioxide and other gases plus the way European countries manage their flood plains, farming and urban planning."

There was more inside but I think that gives you the general idea.

So what's happening locally? On the 25th of March, a Local Agenda 21 Seminar, organised by North West Focus, attracted over 120 people who have a concern for the environment. There were speakers on several aspects of LA21: we were given a fresh definition of sustainable development - "Sustainability is making full use of our infinite human resources to make the most of our finite material resources." There were workshops in the afternoon; the main problem being that there was not enough time to deal properly with the many interesting subjects such as, sustainable transport, implementing environmental education and strategies for making Manchester Sustainable. We all went home with some good ideas and the event was an excellent chance to do some networking.

A month earlier Unity and I attended another seminar, in Leeds, which was organised by the RSNC. This was to discuss LA21 as it applied to Wildlife Trusts and Urban Wildlife Groups. While the main concerns of such organisations are biodiversity and ensuring that areas of wildlife interest are properly protected, we must also remember that, in our conservation work, such as woodland management, we can do much to encourage sustainable activities like woodland crafts.

Well, there's been plenty of talk but what about some action? This is the next step. In Manchester, we're slowly sorting things out; seven working groups have been formed and will be meeting soon. Main tasks are to decide practical measures for sustainable development, and:

### INDICATORS

There must be ways to calculate the effectiveness of any measures which are taken. Indicators appear to be the best way to do this. I gave a couple of examples in Magpie 33. Maybe you can think of some more which would be appropriate to measure how successful we are in our efforts to increase people's ability to enjoy wildlife in the city. This is where you can help: you could count the number of frogs in your local ponds; it's a little late for counting, this year, but you can find out which ponds attract frogs and go back next year to count them. On transport, which causes problems for wildlife; can you reduce the time it takes you to get to work (to the shops, etc.); measure how long it takes now, then do the same again a year later. There are several ways you can improve the situation: move nearer to work, work nearer to home, cycle or use public transport, thereby easing congestion. Buying a faster car doesn't count. Let us have the results of your findings on both these indicators.

### SUSTAINABILITY

We are still looking for examples of sustainable development which have taken place recently, in Manchester. Maybe there aren't any but contact us if you know differently. We would also be interested to know what you think could be done to make Manchester more sustainable or environmentally friendly. How about wind turbines on tall, modern buildings, to supplement power during the day and run security lighting, etc. at night. You can help to reduce power consumption by the simple measure of fitting compact fluorescent lights at home or in the office, and also improve the situation with efficient reflectors.

There are many steps which could be taken to achieve the goal of a better environment in Manchester but there is one thing which would make a tremendous difference. If the City Council were to fully fund the Parrs Wood Centre for Rural Education then we would be really getting somewhere. Wildlife areas in schools (as suggested in the Nature Conservation Strategy) and environmental education in the curriculum are very laudable aims but, though children must attend the classes they don't have to pay attention. (As the old saying goes: "You can take a horse to water but you can't make it scuba-dive.") And while our children should be educated on such matters, for the future, it's the adults we need to get at. This is where Parrs Wood CRE comes in; environmental education for people who are of an age, and in a position, to influence the future of our planet and, as they do not attend under compulsion, are eager to learn. If the Council will not fund such an establishment, what faith can we have in their claims to be concerned about the environment?

### REALLY LOCAL

Unfortunately, not everyone can be on the Local Agenda 21 Forum, that would make the process a little difficult to manage. Surely the next



step must be local forums which can link in with the main forum. Can Civic Societies and other local community groups take on this role? Would you like to take part in this way? It is at the local level that much of the action on sustainability must take place. If we can make improvements within small communities, it will enhance their quality of life and also benefit the whole city. It is often said that we must ask people what they want. What we need is more important; if we were all to get what we want then that would not be very sustainable. The most important thing is: you can make a difference, you can do something about it.

The Manchester Sustainability Group are publishing a newsletter which will explain what Local Agenda 21 is about. This will be mailed to all Citizens in Manchester. Look out for it; if our articles, and other media coverage (the Reith Lectures by Sir Richard Rogers were most interesting) have not kept you fully informed, then this forthcoming publication should bring you up to date.

What are other Gr. Manchester district doing on LA21? More next time.

## Wildlife Gardening

by Lesley Bernadis

If you are still considering taking the plunge and converting your conventional lawned/flagged garden to a wildlife wilderness, but you are unsure what you could do or how far you could make changes.....

First - Make it Easier to Change

Changes are always difficult, so make it easier by preventing yourself from maintaining some of your current practices. Stop using all herbicides, pesticides, fungicides, etc.

Check your local library shelves and catalogue for books on organic and wildlife gardening. (Recommended - "Garden Wildlife" by Jennifer Owen - Chatto & Windus.)

Start a compost heap - always a good move! They are not easy to handle if you're not used to them but at least you are trying.

(Editor's note: You can put all organic domestic and garden waste on a compost heap. In this way you can make a contribution to Local Agenda 21 by recycling waste and reducing landfill - Try reading "The Incredible Heap" by Chris Catton and James Gray - Pelham Books - ISBN 0 7207 1467 2)

Second - Go With the Flow

If part of your garden is waterlogged, make a feature of this area: either install a lined pond (you could use a pre-formed one to sink a little lower than ground level), or dig deep, to get well below the water table, and line with gravel so that if the pond does dry out it won't look like a muddy hole.

## Third - If Animal Pests are a Problem

Worried about slugs? Try to reduce their food supply by planting inedible woody shrubs, bushes, etc. and forget about a tasty herbaceous border of annuals. Perennials are generally safe from slugs, except when they are first planted, and biennials appear to be quite resistant. Rake up any dead leaves - slugs also feed on rotting vegetation. Aim to leave the soil uncovered as slugs breed under rotting vegetation, damp rocks, etc. Natural predators are believed to include hedgehogs and woodlice. (Editor's note - the latest, from the Natural History programme (Radio 4 - 2/4/95) is that, even in the conventional garden, leaves and other vegetation should be left on the ground to encourage plant decaying fungi. These tend to prevent harmful fungi [bootlace] from becoming established. The rationale for this is that nobody sweeps up the leaves in woodland(7 and the harmful fungi are not a problem. That leaves [pun] you with the slugs!)

If you suffer from (harmful) insects, many have natural controls/predators, such as ladybirds to control greenfly. The Soil Association is a good source of detailed information. Other controls which are more immediate require more stomach - e.g. human urine sprayed on (or rather under) greenfly is very effective, but its collection and use is not everybody's cup of tea! (Darjeeling is far nicer - Ed.)

Some plants are naturally repellent to insects and/or animals - for example: rue, camphor plant, greater celandine and even wormwood. Try to identify the plants in your garden, which do not attract insects then aim to interplant these among your favourite blooms which pests attack.

## ATTRACTING WILDLIFE

**PLANTS** - If a new plant arrives in your garden, don't weed it out until you have identified it and are sure you don't want it - anything which adapts well to your garden can be considered a bonus, even if you didn't plant it personally.

**Grasses** - an often under-rated item. Try to identify different native varieties, and bring some seeds home with you for throwing into your garden corners.

**A Wild Corner** - aim to create at least one area in your garden which is undisturbed, probably a shady and damp spot which could support fungi, rotting wood, and generally be a genuinely wild area for both plants and animals.

More next time when we move on to the animal world. If you can't wait till then we have an excellent Wildlife Gardening leaflet, published by the Wildlife Trusts (double A4 folded). These have proved very popular. Send in your order to the Editor enclosing 3 second class stamps to cover cost and postage.



## Global Forum '94

### A Historical Report by Paula Thompson

Global Forum '94 has been plagued by bad management and lack of financial support. As the event approaches it is still trying to recoup the £3.5 million it has already spent. Meanwhile despite the problems of the 'core conference' on cities, local charity groups have rallied round to fund their own environmental festival which is proving to be well worth watching.....

### Global Fiasco - what went wrong

Global Forum '94 promised to be the biggest world environmental event since the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. We were told that 10,000 delegates from 50 cities around the world and 200,000 members of the public would come to Manchester for this environmental extravaganza. We were promised cultural events, public environmental meetings, a market and of course the tree of life - a bronze model towering over Manchester to remind us of our commitment to environmental change.

The latter day Global Forum '94 starts in three weeks - a shadow of its former self - with a maximum of around 600 delegates from 50 cities attending. It won't be held on the original four acre site in Castlefield, but in the Free Trade Hall. And it won't be an extravaganza - just a plain old environmental conference.

But what makes Global Forum '94 different from other environmental get-togethers is its cost. Because unlike other small scale events, the bill is a staggering £3.5 million so far. In the heat of the final few weeks, Global Forum are still trying to raise finance to see them through to the end - but the question on everybody's lips: "Why has Global Forum '94 cost so much money?"

Councillor Arnold Spencer, Deputy Chairman of the Board of Global Forum Directors explains "The initial budget for Global Forum was wrong, we hired a lot of people for a festival that never took place. The cost of inviting delegates, interpreting facilities, room hire, etc.; it just adds up". As Global Forum looks likely to surpass the excessive £3.5 million mark in the next few weeks it's hard to believe it's added up to this".

Global Forum's main sponsor is Manchester Airport, pitching in £500,000 and lending Airport boss Sir Gil Thompson as Global Forum's third chief executive. Manchester City Council contributed around £500,000 and the European Community Chipped in around £1.6 million leaving an apparent hole in the Global Forum Budget of £900,000 and rising. (And it's all our money - Ed.)

Local charity groups are grieved by the amount of money spent on Global Forum. According to Unity Kelly of Manchester Wildlife, £3.5 million given to local charities would have done more good than several Global Forums. There should be an independent audit to find out where the money's gone". Paul Sanguinazzi of Manchester F.o.E. adds: "The money could have been better spent on improving energy efficiency and reducing traffic congestion in the city".

What went wrong runs from the obvious to the unfortunate. For example, back at the start, when dates were set, Global Forum bosses failed to notice that the event coincided with Wimbledon and the World Cup. And was Global Forum's Patron, the Duke of Westminster, a wise choice in view of his poor reputation with Environmentalists?

Global Forum's timing was unfortunate in other ways as well. It fell in the wake of the failed Olympic bid and raising cash at the end of a bitter recession wasn't easy for organisers. It should also be questioned whether the world was ready for another Rio only two years after the first. Unity Kelly adds: "Global Forum hadn't got a product that anyone wanted. It was just a set of grandiose ideas way beyond reality conceived from a union of investors, the council and those jumping on the environmental bandwagon".

But the root of Global Forum's problems must lie in its pervasive management difficulties. The original chief executive Dave Spooner was ousted early on and replaced by ex-Rio organiser Chip Lindner. For a while, Lindner seemed to be in control - but in reality he was having problems convincing the people of Manchester to pay to come to Global Forum.

In November 1993 things took a turn for the worst when Lindner upset local Trade Unionists by sacking five staff. Meanwhile, Global Forum hit financial difficulties - the original budget of around £3 million escalated to £8 million with no sign of any further sponsorship.

Lindner's demise was underway and he resigned in February 1994 due to disagreements with the board. In the same week 30 staff were made redundant and all events were dropped except the core conference. Chip Lindner went public saying: "The event is destined to fail - the level of political, public and financial support is much less than expected". After a public relations disaster of this scale, enthusiasm for the event was hard to muster.

Since then, Global Forum has limped along, confusing local environmental groups, changing the costs and the basis for admission to the event, whilst trying to persuade international delegates that it's still worth their while attending.

At the end of the day we have an environmental conference for 600 delegates at a price of at least £6,000 per head. But what's in it for Manchester? Arnold Spencer adds "The impact of Global Forum on the general population of Manchester will be very small indeed but for Manchester as a city of international standing it will do a great deal". Really?

The above is the first episode of an article commissioned by the Manchester Evening News, but never published. In the next Magpie we will be bringing you the second episode - What Went Right.



## NOTICE BOARD

### Manchester's Nature Conservation Strategy

Don't forget to read MCC's Nature Conservation Strategy at the library or get a copy from the Planning Dept. Make sure your comments, however brief or non-technical, are received by 30th April. Send us a copy if you can please.

If you live elsewhere, could you find out what guide-lines are in place in your local authority for nature conservation and open spaces?

### The Laing 4

The first people in the country to be charged under the Criminal Justice Act are on trial on Tuesday the 11th of April. They climbed a crane on a building site on Oxford Road in protest of Laing's possible involvement in the construction of the M65 near Blackburn. They need your support outside Manchester Magistrates' Court. Please bring a drum or a whistle, and a sense of humour

Crown Square - 11th/12th April from 9.30am Until Justice is Done

### Butterfly Survey

Our Butterfly Survey continues in 1995. Please try to take part. This is easy to do and a pleasant way to spend those lazy, hazy days of summer. Find an open space, near to where you live, and find out what butterflies you can find. Go as many times as you can and put the results down on the form provided with this Magpie. If you have any problems, phone Ian Brown on 437 7040. For those less mobile, reports from your garden will be welcome.

East Cheshire Butterfly Conservation have an especially good programme of Field Trips this coming season. Offers of lifts would be much appreciated. For more information, phone Unity Kelly on 226 4583.

How do you like the new Magpie so far. This is the first time that we have used desk top publishing. Is the type too small? Would less words per page help? Let us know what you think.

Whether or not we will be able to continue publishing a high tech. newsletter depends on the situation at MARC where we do our printing. Funding has been reduced to 60%, this year and 25% next year with no grant thereafter. The City Council say they have not reduced funding to the voluntary sector. In fact they have increased it to keep pace with inflation. The trouble is they have moved it about. They seem quite willing to tolerate groups who receive grants, over which they presumably have some control, but the hundreds of unfunded voluntary groups will be left without the support services they really need.

## WHERE IS ALL THIS WILDLIFE IN MANCHESTER?

by Anthony Phelps

Believe it or not, this question was asked of me at a 'strange' event MW attended some years ago at UMIST. It so surprised me that I'm not certain whether it was actually answered. The actual response is, just open your eyes - it's all around you.

For instance, I've had some superb Fox sightings recently. On Christmas morning, just before 8 am, as I started my walk along the River Mersey at Stanton Avenue, I noticed a raft of Mallard swimming toward me, which is unusual. I noticed what I thought was a dog amongst them. Glancing around for its owner, I found I was alone. I got my binoculars on the creature, and was delighted to see a dog fox swimming through the ducks. I watched him climb up the trapezoidal river bank and stand about 10 yards from me where he shook himself dry, watching me, and, without hurrying, or showing fear, climbed over the wall and continue his journey.

On Saturday the 28th of January, walking to Withington along Palatine Road, on a beautiful sunny afternoon, a fox leapt from near Christie Hospital, bolted across the road, missing the traffic more by luck than judgement, disappearing behind the flats opposite. What surprised me about this was that no-one else noticed it. People were standing opposite me at the bus stop, and the fox had crossed their gaze, but they'd not seen it. The following day, I was taking an early morning stroll down Burton Road and looked over the bridge onto the disused railway line, where I'd seen roosting Tawny Owls before and saw a fox come from a Central Road Garden. It searched along the track for several minutes before I lost sight of it.

I also seem to be lucky with City Centre sightings of Common Buzzard. My first was a few years ago when, again unnoticed by other people around me, I'd seen three buzzards flying along the River Irwell over the Ramada Hotel, calling to each other. This sighting was later 'confirmed' by Adam Davidson, who'd received sightings from too other sites. I saw them again over the far end of Clyde Road. My most recent Buzzard sighting was about 8.15 am on a Monday morning at the beginning of March, as I was walking from Piccadilly towards Victoria. I saw two birds near the Arndale tower and watched as they started circling over the tower. Just as they moved off, it belted down with hail, which spoilt the view!

I hope this gives you 'hope' - you never know what you're going to see, when or where. Don't think that because you live or work in the City, you can't see wildlife.



## Useful Contacts

Insects Peter Hardy - 969 4771 (evenings & weekends)  
Manchester Foxwatch - Hotline No. (061) 247 1599

Birds RSPB Stockport - Tony O'Neill - 962 2449  
RSPB Manchester - Simeon Rydz - 434 2720  
Bird of Prey Rescue - Brian Wilcocks - 945 3831

British Trust for Conservation Volunteers  
Sale & Altrincham - Shelagh Aston - 860 6910  
Salford & Trafford - Brian Taylor - 872 7640 (day)  
Stockport - Kim Porter - 0625 874729 (weekends & evenings)

Cheshire Wildlife Trust  
North Group (Trafford) - Liz Blackman (Chair) - 962 6748  
Stockport & Tameside - Rhian Law (Secretary) - 0663 745080  
Wilmslow Group - Tony Browne - 436 1761

Lancashire Wildlife Trust  
Bolton Wildlife Project - 0204 361847

Manchester Friends of the Earth - 6 Mount Street - 834 8221  
Manchester Earth First! - 274 4665  
Friends of the Mersey Valley - Ann Buckingham - 881 1814

Mersey Valley Wardens - Sale 905 1100 - Chorlton 881 5639

Manchester City Conservation Officers - 273 5843  
Elaine Norsworthy - Countryside Officer

Manchester Wildlife is a networking organisation - You are included on our contact list; are we included on yours? Other groups might like to come to a similar arrangement!

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Stockport. SK8 3HA Tel. 437 7040

The "Magpie" is the newsletter of Manchester Wildlife - the opinions expressed within its pages are not necessarily those of M.W. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information contained in Magpie is correct, we cannot be held responsible for any mistakes in the text. Likewise, anyone who undertakes any project based on the information in these pages does so at their own risk.





## EVENTS AND MEETINGS

Please try to take part in as many events as possible. It is best to phone the contact to make sure there are no alterations. For **WATCH** events please contact Sue Sharples - Tel. 445 5659.

**April 1995**

- Tuesday 11th **Social Meeting** - White Lion Hotel, Liverpool Rd., Castlefield (opp Air Museum) Time 7.30 pm. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040
- Saturday 29th **Members' Day/AGM** - See newsletter, details with Magpie.
- Tuesday 9th **Social Meeting** - White Lion Hotel, Liverpool Rd., Castlefield (opp Air Museum) Time 7.30 pm. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040
- Sunday 14th **Hough End Clough, Knotweed Bash/Tidy Up** - Meet Hough End Crescent (South end of Alexandra Road South), Mauldeth Road West. Time 11am. Wear old clothes & boots. Bring food/drink. Contact Ian 437 7040.

### BT Environment Week

- Saturday 20th **Castlefield Basin/Rochdale Canal Plant Up** - Details to be finalised. Contact Unity Kelly 226 4583.
- Sunday 21st
- Thursday 25th **General Meeting** - Time 7.30 pm. At the One World Centre, Friends Meeting House Basement, Central Street (off Mount Street) Contact Unity Kelly 226 4583.
- Saturday 27th **"Tame the Goyt on the Brinnington/Bredbury Rail Ranger"** - Meet 11am at Brinnington Station on the Marple Line. Buy a Rail Ranger Ticket from any station in Greater Manchester. Take the 10.38 Marple train from Piccadilly Station to arrive in Brinnington at 10.50. 437 7040.

**June 1995**

### National Wildlife Week

- Sunday 11th **"Anyone for Orchids"** - Minibus Tour of Urban Orchid Sites - Booking Essential - Contact Unity Kelly 226 4583
- Tuesday 13th **Social Meeting** - White Lion Hotel, Liverpool Rd., Castlefield (opp Air Museum) Time 7.30 pm. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040
- Wednesday 14th **Dawn Cruise and Breakfast Afloat** - Cruise down the Bridgewater Canal 5.00 am Start - Booking Essential - Contact Unity Kelly 226 4583
- Sunday 18th **"Instant Wildflower Meadow"** - English Martyrs School, Manley Road, (west of Alexandra Road South). Time 12 noon Contact Ian 437 7040.

**July 1995**

- Tuesday 11th **Social Meeting** - White Lion Hotel, Liverpool Rd., Castlefield (opp Air Museum) Time 7.30 pm. Contact Ian Brown 437 7040
- Tuesday 18th **Strategic Planning Meeting** - 7.30 pm at the home of Unity Kelly, 13 Ruskin Avenue, Rusholme - Contact 226 4583
- Sunday 23rd **National Bog Day** - Visit to Red Moss, Horwich, Bolton - Details from Unity Kelly 226 4583
- Thursday 27th **General Meeting** - Time 7.30 pm. At the One World Centre, Friends Meeting House Basement, Central Street (off Mount Street) Contact Unity Kelly 226 4583.

**August 1995**





- Sunday 6th **Dragonfly Day** - Oversley Brick Works - Bollin Valley - Details from Ian Brown 437 7040
- Wednesday 9th **Blackley Meander** - Evening walk in Blackley Forest - Details from Unity Kelly 226 4583







# MANCHESTER WILDLIFE CALENDAR 1995/6

## FEBRUARY






-  14th: Valentine Day Social/Abbey Pond Anniversary
-  19th: Parrs Wood Centre for Rural Education task
-  25th: BTCV Woodland Action Week starts
-  26th: Painswick Park Pond task

## JULY



-  11th: Social Meeting
-  18th: Strategic Planning Meeting [3/95]
-  23rd: National Bog Day, Red Moss, near Bolton
-  27th: General Meeting

## MARCH






-  4/5th: Mersey Valley Woodland Management
- 5th: BTCV Woodland Action Week ends
- 11th: Training Day for (Wood Be) Bodgers
-  14th: Social Meeting
- 18th: Manchester Activists Training Day, Longsight Library
- 25th: North West Focus Local Agenda 21 One-Day Event
-  30th: General Meeting, One World Centre




## AUGUST

-  6th: "Dragonfly Day", Oversleyford Brick Works - Bollin Valley walk
-  9th: "Blackley Meander"
- 28th: Parrs Wood Family Fun Day

## APRIL




-  4th: Strategic Planning Meeting [2/95]
-  8th: Parks for the People - Manifesto Launch Manchester Town Hall
- 11th: Social Meeting
- 11th/12th: "M65 Four" Trial [Criminal Justice Act], Manchester Crown Court
- 15th: Poynton Folk Fair, Stall
- 21st - Fresh Air Fortnight, Manchester
- 4th May: "Pre-election Fun"
-  29th: Members' Day/AGM [including Environment Question Time]

## SEPTEMBER






-  10th: Hough End Clough Hay Cut, Chorlton
-  12th: Social Meeting
-  28th: General Meeting

## OCTOBER






-  6th: Mersey Basin Weekend starts - Watery task
- 9th: Mersey Basin Weekend ends
-  10th: Social Meeting
- 21st: "Apple Day" - Fruity event
-  24th: Strategic Planning Meeting [4/95]


## MAY

- 6th/7th: Streets Ahead Festival, Stall
-  9th: Social Meeting
-  14th: Hough End Clough, Knotweed Bash/Tidy Up
- 19th: BT Environment Week starts
-  20/21st: Castlefield Basin/Rochdale Canal Plant Up
-  25th: General Meeting
-  27th: "Tame the Goyt on the Brinnington/Bredbury Rail Ranger"
- 29th: BT Environment Week ends

## NOVEMBER




-  14th: Social Meeting
- 22nd: National Tree Week starts
-  30th: General Meeting
-  TBA: Woodland tasks

## DECEMBER

- 3rd: National Tree Week ends
-  12th: Christmas Social Meeting
- 31st: Accounting Period ends




## JUNE



- 10th: National Wildlife Week starts
-  11th: "Anyone for Orchids" - Minibus Tour of Urban Orchid Sites [booking essential]
-  13th: Social Meeting
- 14th: Dawn Cruise and Breakfast Afloat, 5.00 am start [booking essential]
- 18th: National Wildlife Week ends/ Watch Day, Jodrell Bank - "Only one Earth"
- 24th: "Our Lives, Our Health" event, Manchester Town Hall, Stall
-  TBA: English Martyrs School "Instant Wildlife Meadow"

## JANUARY 1996



-  9th: New Year Social Meeting
-  16th: Strategic Planning Meeting [1/96]
-  25th: General Meeting

For further details, contact: Ian Brown - 0161-437 7040, or Unity Kelly - 0161-226 4583 (plus answerphone)