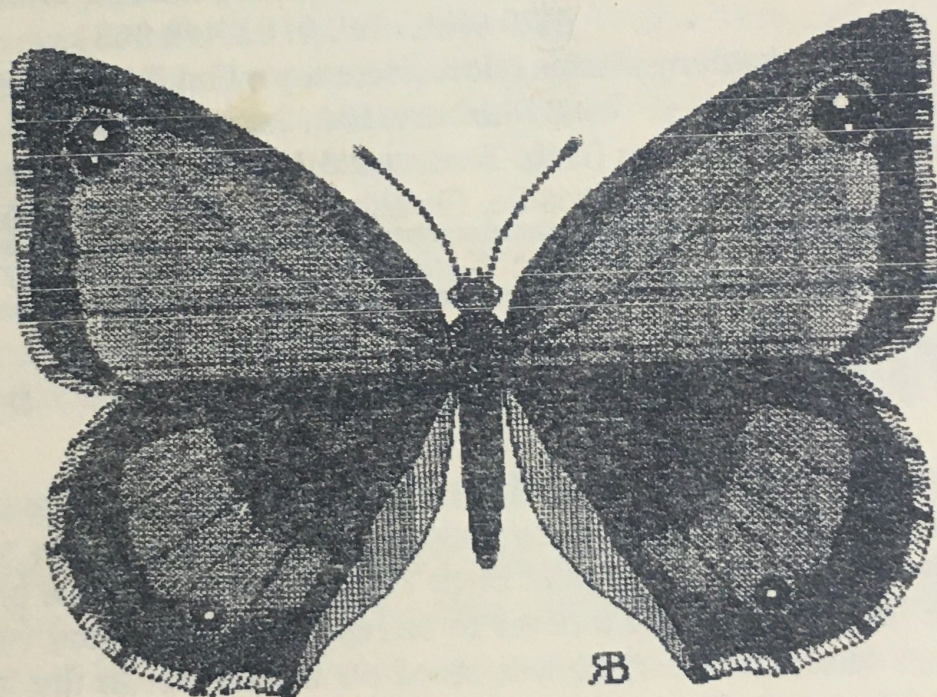
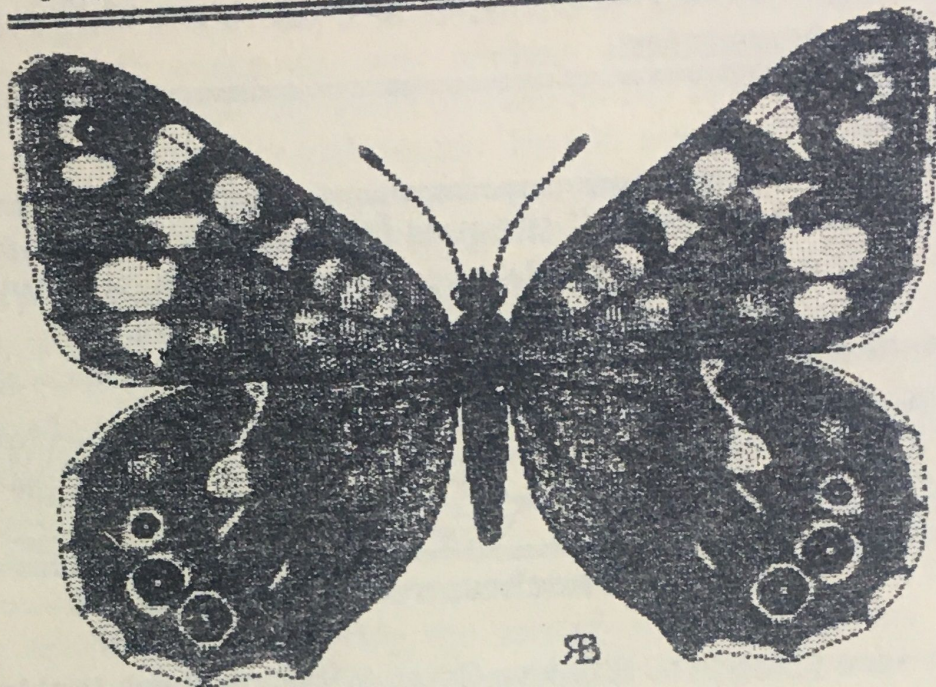


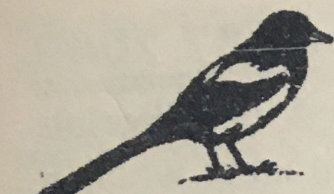
*"The excellent newsletter of Manchester Wildlife."
John Vidal, Environment Correspondent, The Guardian.*

Number 40 Summer 1997



50p

*Standing up for Wildlife
in Greater Manchester*



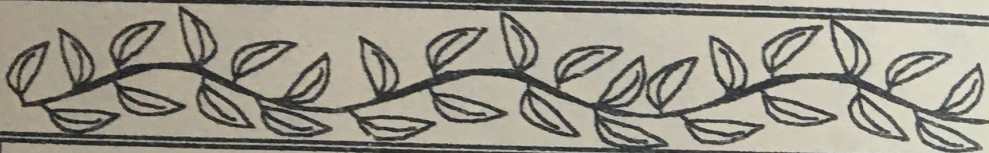
Manchester Magpie

Editorial

Editor's Office 0161-437 7040

I don't know about you, but I've just about had enough of editorials for the time being. So, while I set Tim Lepidus to thinking what, if anything, March Hare will be getting up to in this issue, let's get on with the newsletter.

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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What's in a Name

by Ann O'Nimity

Some of you may have noticed that we occasionally (incessantly - Ed.) use unusual names for the authors of our articles. This started 10 years ago in **Magpie** issue number 4 with the unoriginal Buck Thorn for a short piece on Tree Plant '86 and Uncle Idiot who penned a never to be repeated Agony Aunt column in answer to a reader's letter. Uncle Idiot was based on a character in the "Grumbleweeds" (the who? - Ed.), a Radio 4 comedy show.

In the summer of 1988, Tim Lepidus presented the first March Hare cartoon. Tim Lepidus is an anagram of the scientific name for the Mountain, or Varying Hare, *Lepus timidus*, minus one US and the contents of the cartoons are the product of the collective minds (such as they are) of your committee, or anyone else who happens to turn up at **MW** meetings. The cartoon, Brown Bear,

was the product of the fertile mind of Söcratüs Sür (an anagram of *Ursus arctos*) who only appeared once to comment on the proposed Apse Valley Expressway.

It was not until 1990 that the idea caught on for the authors of articles; mainly because it was noticed that too many pieces were being penned by the same people but also we thought it a little humorous. Basil Fawcett penned the article, "High Speed Drains", which was a little critical of the National Rivers Authority and, "Murky Water", which was very scathing about large companies who pollute our rivers. Basil Fawcett was based on Basil Fawltly as we thought the character was typical of some people in high places. He still writes articles on our water based environment which are usually penned by Anthony Phelps.

Then came Merton Niven (an anagram of Environment) who usually writes the good news stories. The bad news stories are usually written by Des Poiler. Des first appeared in an unpublished "humorous" playlet called "Mersey Valley plc" which was penned at the time when Trafford Council were considering pulling out of the joint management of the Mersey Valley. He was the Devastation Officer of the plc. Other characters were; large shareholders, Fats Wallet and O. Beseman; small shareholders, Tiny Rowlands and Minnie Scule, and Mike A. Fortune, Financial Director of the plc.

Mal Practice was invented by John Turner but the editor insisted that it be changed to Malcolm Practice as, considering the sort of articles he writes, the original was considered too obvious. Daphne Laureola, H. Issing (an article on Grass Snakes), Dawn Crews, Minnie Bustrip, Bufo Low Bob, Fellina Tree and Witha Smallpea are other aliases which have made an appearance. You may have guessed that at least two of us who have a hand in compiling the **Magpie** are fans of the Radio 4 programme, "I'm Sorry I haven't a Clue", so this practice will probably continue, unabated.

The editor has decided that, in this issue, all the authors use aliases for their articles so you can have fun working out who wrote what. Some contributors wish to conceal their true identity. In these cases, like all good journalists, we will reserve the right to protect their anonymity.

Second Runway Walks

A series of walks are planned in the countryside which will be destroyed by the second runway, at Manchester Airport. If you would like to see what you might be missing contact FoE ☎ 0161-834 8221 to find out details of these rambles in the beautiful Cheshire countryside - don't miss it, next year may be too late!

Hot Air

by Des Poiler

The following article appeared in "Plane Talk", internal newsletter of Manchester Airport, and is reprinted here with their permission.

Call for withdrawal

Manchester Airport has welcomed the decision of Manchester City Council's Environmental Policy Committee to seek the withdrawal of Manchester's draft Local Agenda 21 statement.

The Committee was highly critical of the document because it contains omissions, unsubstantiated statements, misinterpretations and idealistic phrases.

Manchester Airport Chair, Councillor Graham Stringer commented: "The draft statement is fundamentally flawed, based upon inaccurate and incomplete information, and takes a biased and naive view of the Airport."

Councillor Stringer continued: "Local Agenda 21 was set up to take forward the debate about sustainable development in a constructive way which balances the complex issues around jobs, transport and the economy. Manchester's document does a real disservice to this critical debate. Cheshire's Local Agenda 21 is successful precisely because it involved every section of the community.

"By contrast, Manchester's Local Agenda 21 process has been taken over by a self serving and unrepresentative minority consisting of self selected citizen groups, environmental lobbyists and academics which results in an unbalanced document. Quite simply it is a waste of public money, a missed opportunity for widening the debate and genuine partnership."

Manchester's Agenda 21 makes little reference to the considerable social and economic benefits which accrue to the City from having a major world airport and the important role which aviation will play in the global economy of the 21st century.

The document specifically calls upon the Airport to redouble its efforts to minimise its local environment impacts and yet in this statement takes no account of the considerable efforts already being made and bases this call upon statistical reasoning.

No consideration is given to the fact that if local constraints are imposed at Manchester then the demand for travel would still be there and could be met at other airports. The global effect would be the same or even worse, but the social and economic benefits would be lost from the region.

Councillor Stringer concluded: "I very much hope that the Forum will respond positively to the City Council's request and will take the opportunity to make a serious and balanced contribution to sustainability."

Who is this poltroon? I wonder if academics and environmental lobbyists have the same high opinion of Mr. Stringer as he has of them? Quite frankly I feel insulted, as I imagine will other hard-working volunteers in Manchester. Many have given much of their valuable time on Local Agenda 21, without thought of reward or advancement. Unlike Mr. Stringer, us volunteers do not have enough spare time to read Cheshire's Local Agenda 21, but one has to ask what they said which was complimentary enough to Manchester Airport to gain his approval. Cheshire may have involved every section of the community. If we have failed to do that in Manchester, well, believe me, we have tried. As convenor of an action group I know how difficult it is to involve people. An extensive contact list fails to attract great numbers to meetings. Maybe not enough people in Manchester care; I hope not because it's their future we're trying to improve, but we have to make the best of what we've got. Mr. Stringer seems to have a thing about those who are "unrepresentative". He has made much of the fact that the protesters at the airport have not been elected by anyone to carry out their protest. Since when was it necessary to be elected before you are allowed express an opinion? Being elected doesn't make you right and in the case of the second runway, the protesters are right and Mr. Stringer is wrong. In any event, if a goldfish stood for Labour in Blackley, it would get elected!

So the draft statement, "contains omissions, unsubstantiated statements, misinterpretations and idealistic phrases." This is almost bound to be the case. We are in uncharted territory here. Though something can't contain omissions, omissions there are bound to be. It is not possible to substantiate all statements. If there misinterpretations please let us know what they are, Mr. Stringer; you too can be part of the consultation process. Idealistic phrases; well of course, Local Agenda 21 is an idealistic concept.

When Mr. Stringer talks about, "the important role which aviation will play in the global economy of the 21st century", it convinces me that he does not understand the meaning of sustainable development. Certainly Local Agenda 21 should be addressing the issues of jobs, the economy and transport, but not more transport, especially if that involves destruction of the environment on a massive scale.

Other Airport representatives make rather rash statements. An action group is appealing to the European Commission, alleging that financial aid to the airport has been used as a subsidy to reduce charges and attract airlines from other airports. (Metro News - 20.6.97) Manchester Airport deny the claim. A spokesman said: "It is yet another last ditch unsustainable attempt to prevent us building the second runway and a waste of taxpayers' money." Well I'm sorry, Mr. Spokesman, but it's the second runway which is unsustainable and a waste of taxpayers' money. The eco-protesters have also been accused of wasting taxpayers' money, by costing millions to evict. In economics, the rule is that for every loss there is a gain (and

vice-versa). Most politicians and many economists don't seem to realise this. The evictions created much work for many people; security guards for example. This will have saved on social security payments, put new money into the local economy and the exchequer. It's only right that the Airport should pay to create employment; will the second runway provide as many jobs?

No Runway 2 Airport Facts

- The MCCI reported (Feb. 97) that the planned second runway would create 5,000 jobs in the North West. The Airport still claim 50,000 new jobs.
- No matter what the number of jobs created, if Liverpool Airport was utilised more fully the jobs would still be created in our region - the North West.
- Liverpool Airport - very under utilised - why not use existing runway facilities in the North West instead of building new runways?
- CAA 1992/3 figures - 80% of airport passengers are holidaymakers. Holiday traffic creates minimum number of jobs and money is taken out of the country to be spent abroad.
- Gatwick Airport - ONE runway - handles 25 million passengers per year. Manchester handles 12 million passengers but claims to need 2 runways.
- Gatwick has been prevented from building a second runway for 40 years from 1979. Stanstead denied a second runway. Heathrow denied a third.
- The proposed second runway will only increase the capacity of Manchester by 30% because of the configuration - planes will have to cross the existing runway to get to the new one - very operationally inefficient.
- Local people know - for much of the day there are no traffic movements at MIA
- The development will naturally require additional car parking, buildings, road networks, etc. the plans of which have not yet been announced.
- Higher emissions of global warming gasses and other pollutants.
- Infilling the Bollin Valley to build the runway will mean destruction of land in the Peak District National Park for stone and aggregate.
- A recent leaked CAA report stated that MIA's existing runway "is not close to capacity" and that air traffic movements during 1996/7 down by **minus 3.5%**.
- The development will destroy **43 PONDS, 15km of HEDGEROW, 7 ha of MATURE WOODLAND and OVER 1,000 ACRES of GREEN BELT.**

Q: Why are Manchester City Councillors so kind to animals?

A: Because they love White Elephants!

I predict that the second runway will be as big a White Elephant as Terminal Two. It cannot be otherwise as travel, especially air transport, is an unsustainable development. If Manchester Airport succeeds in its aspirations then Local Agenda 21 will have failed and we will all be the poorer.

So why are Manchester Airport so insistent on continuing with the second runway and destroying all that beautiful countryside. I think that they're on an ego trip and want to build the second biggest airport in the UK. It's a kind of madness really! If there is a great demand for increased air travel, and it is considered wise to cater for it, then the extra business should be diverted to other regional airports where there is spare capacity. Having seen an aerial photo-montage of the second runway brought it home to me just how horrendous the development will be. It must be stopped somehow. The eco-protesters have done their bit. Now we are being encouraged to write to John Prescott to express our disapproval. With the new Government's commitment to reduce the output of global warming gasses it is particularly appropriate to call a halt to the unfettered expansion of air travel. Why not put pen to paper and do your bit to help keep our environment healthy

Meanwhile, Manchester Airport now seems to be getting all the "good" publicity. How kind of them to move the newts, and all that ancient woodland out of the way of their own destruction. On moving ancient woodland: the way to do it is to chop the trees down and move the stumps, together with some ground flora, to an alien place. Presumably, crossing of the fingers plays a major part in the process. We have it on good authority (from one who knows but will not be named here) that transplanting ancient woodland does not work. The best you can expect is new woodland. The worst? We shall see.

DO YOU NOTICE WILDLIFE? AND/OR ARE YOU AFRAID OF NATURE?

I have been concerned for a long time that "I am different". Obviously, I'm an individual, but firstly I seem to notice things that other people don't notice, and secondly, I seem unafraid of things that other people seem to shy away from. These things to which I have referred are nature and wildlife. For example, I found myself crossing the tram lines on my way into work the other week to look at a patch of "waste" ground which has just been colonised by Weld. I believe it is the only patch of this plant in the centre of Manchester. It is on a patch of land which once held a building, now demolished, and the land infilled with soil. I imagine the seeds came with the soil, but that doesn't devalue the outcrop of this particular plant.

This morning there was a pair of Pied Wagtails on the patch of lawn beside Rosenfields just behind The Co-operative Bank. I was probably the only person to notice them. This happens to me constantly - I hear something (that's how most of my sightings are triggered), and then I find the bird. Yesterday I was out for a walk, and heard this call that was familiar to me, and I searched it out, and was thrilled to see two fledged Sparrowhawks calling to each other. Whilst I was trying to gain a position to view them, a family passed me by, and whether they heard them or not (it certainly isn't a quiet call!), they didn't seem at all bothered to want

to know what was making the noise. I know people would say that they don't have time to keep stopping to find and observe things like this, as they are in a hurry to get to work, or to get back from lunch, or some other vitally important appointment, but to me, these things enrich my life, and I always try to make time to search them out.

On my second point, about being unafraid of nature. It is now part of me that I won't intentionally harm any living thing. I help flies out of my room now, knowing that they'll probably provide a nice meal for one of the many Swifts that are constantly feeding overhead. The same goes if any beetles happen to find their way inside. I know these are only little things, but they are important to me, and I would wish other people to learn to be tolerant of things that, despite our (and the chemical industry's) intentions, continue to share our world and our houses. I'm proud of the spiders that share my room, as they help to keep down any insects (and I'm sure any fleas that my cat brings in) so they don't "take over". I know that I've still a little way to go, as I still find myself shuddering if a "large" spider needs to be helped out of my sink, but I'm sure that will pass with time. I know that they can't harm me, so it is illogical.

This illogicality is something that makes me wonder why we as humans have become so afraid of wildlife. Our ancestors certainly weren't, and there are peoples in the world who still manage to live in harmony with nature. I'm sure that many people feel they are different, and not simply another species, and that they have the right to clear anything "non-human" from their homes and gardens. The fact that very few of these creatures can or will actually harm us doesn't seem important. In an ideal world, none of these animals would ever become a pest, because something else will always increase and make sure that the balance is maintained. It is only by our "controls", and our methods of cultivation that species become "pests".

What I am trying to say is try to make a resolution to be more tolerant. For example, try companion planting to help reduce the need for spraying your crops. Use an organic system in your garden/allotment (vegan organic if possible) to encourage nature to help keep "pest" species under control. This will not only save you money, creating safer, tastier food, but also reduce the unhealthy profits of the chemical industries. One question I hear quite often (lastly on a repeat of a Jasper Carrott sketch) is "What use are Wasps?". I now know that they are one the best pollinators that nature provides, despite what the bee keepers will tell you. That is just one example of how our unnatural fear and illogicality can cause us to attempt to exterminate this creature without which we would have far less fruit that we do now. So, think about the effects of your actions.

Merton Niven

For more information on vegan organic techniques, contact: David Graham, Vohan News International, "Anandavan", 58 High Lane, Chorlton, Manchester M21 9DZ 0161-860 4869 [Individual membership is only £5 or a donation].

Losses of Small Patches of Open Space in Manchester

by Malcolm Practice

Rob and I had a Manchester Wildlife stall at the "Streets Ahead" festival on Sunday 25th May 1997. At this, we were asked for assistance by people fighting separate campaigns to save small patches of open space from development. There were several similarities between some of these campaigns: firstly, the land, and secondly, that this land was being sold for housing, despite not being zoned for housing in the Unitary Development Plan (UDP).

Holly Royde Conference Centre, Withington

This is one of the last remaining open spaces in Withington, and despite living only about 5 minutes walk away from it for the last 17 years, I didn't know it was there. The land comprises a lovely Victorian building, which was the first residential college in the country, and about 4 acres of land which is laid out as formal gardens with about 150 trees, including a wonderful mature avenue of Limes, and a mature orchard. Basically, the University are selling this land for housing. There is a growing local campaign about this. The land, as I said, isn't zoned for housing in the UDP, and if the application gets granted, not only will the land be lost forever, but the building could also be demolished. The campaign is looking for the land to be kept as open space, and the building to be found another use. Several councillors are backing the campaigners, and even Keith Bradley MP was seen recently wearing a campaign badge.

We were in a local Didsbury park on a wet Saturday encouraging people to write letters of objection about this campaign, and from responses, at least 20 people will be doing just that.

Fallowfield Railway Sidings

The future of this patch of land has been raised again by a couple of shop keepers seeming to be fighting over who will be the first to build on it. Tesco's started the fight, and it looks like Sainsbury's want to finish it. Just what we need, another Sainsbury's! Rob has been to a few meetings, and was surprised to hear from the smiling lady in the Sainsbury's caravan that people were pleased to hear that they wanted to build a shop in Fallowfield, as it would "save them a trip to Stretford to get their shopping". If that's the case, I'm surprised Fallowfield isn't full of starving non-car owning people! I really can't understand people who "need" a Sainsbury's to shop in. I seem to manage perfectly well shopping locally. With their bad environmental activities (eg Bruntwood Hay Meadows), I couldn't bear to cross the threshold of one of their shops ever again!

This land at the moment is a wildlife corridor, and is gradually being covered by a succession of species of plants and trees, and provides a passageway for animals, butterflies and birds to travel through the urban areas to other open

spaces. This application will sever this link. This idea of keeping open wildlife corridors is mentioned in the UDP as being something we should strive for, rather than destroy unnecessarily.

Land in Chorlton

There are two campaigns at the moment in Chorlton: one is an area of playing fields between Longford Road and Ryebank Road, which is owned by the Metropolitan University, and is to be sold for housing, despite not being zoned for housing in the UDP. Familiar story?

Well, this one has a twist in the tail, as the campaign is very strong (as usual, Ian sent in an official objection on behalf of Manchester Wildlife), and there was a Public Inquiry recently. At this, the Senior Planning Officer, Simon Castle was giving evidence against the application (Trafford Metropolitan Borough Council have also turned it down). No, I did say "against". I have a copy of the summary of his evidence, and it is most interesting to read, as he pulls out all the stops, using planning conditions and guidance notes that we all thought the council had (conveniently) forgotten! Now that we have this evidence in black and white, maybe we'll be able to "embarrass" (impossible?) the council into remembering a few of these conditions when dealing with other planning applications.

The other "patch" of land is actually two separate areas; one is an area including two ponds, and the other is a piece of recreation ground. Both of these were owned by a school, with the PTA providing funding to create the ponds. However, like with the Universities, they obviously needed money at one time, and decided to "sell the silver". The council purchased the land, and have sold it to a person or persons unknown. There was an appeal in the local press trying to discover who the owner(s) is, so the use of this land can be safeguarded. The local people don't want to lose this safe area for their children to play on, and want to keep them open, and improve them for recreational purposes.

What all of these have in common is that they are open space, used and loved by the local population. Open space is important for people, and everybody should have access, within walking distance of their homes. Without this access, all people have is concrete and buildings. People need open space for their own recreation, and health. Without this, people lose their only links with nature, and should they have any interest in wildlife and nature, they find themselves in the position of having to travel to find it.

We have to be alert to all these pressures on what remains of our open spaces, and act quickly to show developers and our "leaders" that we will not stand by and let them destroy them for short term gain. If you hear of such things happening near you, write to the planning department, your MP, your councillors and your local press, and encourage your neighbours to do the same. With this sort of pressure, the Planning Officer and the Council will have to think very carefully before going against the wishes of the people.

Bolton Greenwood Group

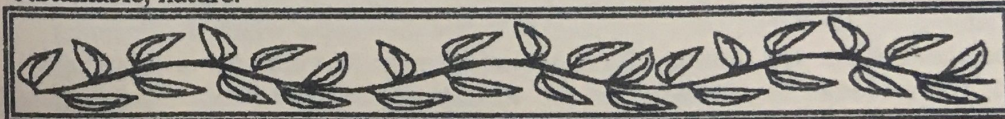
by Art Craft

The Craft Centre in Moses Gate Country Park, Bolton, now has a group to run it. The Bolton Greenwood Group has been formed as a co-operative effort involving the Bolton Conservation Volunteers, the

Bolton Wildlife Project and Manchester Wildlife with much valued help from Bolton Council and the Croal/Irwell Valley Wardens. Work is well under way on the Craft Centre, which is located in the works compound at Rock Hall. Task days have been held to complete construction of pole-lathes and other equipment. We have a lock-up container in which to store our bits and pieces and this has been fitted out with shelves to keep the tools in order. The Wardens have constructed a shelter, so that we can work out in most weather, and they have provided a charcoal kiln so that we can make charcoal out of local wood. The next task day will be devoted to finishing off the craft equipment and make a start on the blacksmith's forge, so we will soon be ready to open. Apart from pole-lathe turning, blacksmithing and charcoal burning, other crafts which we will be able to undertake are: making rakes, tent pegs, hurdles and furniture. More will be added as time progresses. If you would like to help in the setting up process, or become involved in the work of the Centre, contact Ian Brown ☎ 0161-437 7040 (a lift from the south Manchester area might be possible), or Group Co-ordinator, Mike Fisher ☎ 01204 574457.

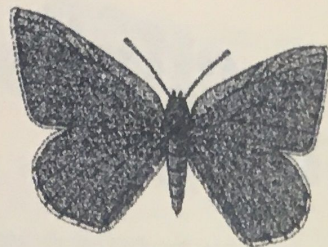
Progress has been a little delayed, but this is no serious matter because the reason for the delay is that the Greenwood Group was given a commission to do work at Ye Old Man and Scythe on Churchgate in Bolton. This was to make furniture for the pub yard. Over a period of three weeks, members of the Group, led by Ian Brown, made six, three-legged tables using Elm log ends, for the tops. Sweet Chestnut was used for the legs. Eighteen stools were made in the same style (but smaller). The work was carried out in the pub yard, entirely by hand, the legs being shaped using a draw-knife on a shaving horse. The landlord, John Jewitt, was pleased with the result and the unusual furniture as attracted much local interest. John paid for the materials and made a generous donation, to the Greenwood group, which will go towards buying more tools and equipment.

So now it's back to prepare for the opening of the Craft Centre. When this happens we'll be using local materials to make useful, and beautiful, hand-crafted goods for local consumption. We will also be able to train local people in the skills involved in traditional crafts, creating employment of an enjoyable, and sustainable, nature.



Blue Flash

by Lou McBenom



On a beautiful sunny day in late May I boarded a train for wonderful Wigan. A brief visit to the excellent market hall for a late breakfast left me suitably refreshed for the expedition ahead. Leaving the town by way of the Leeds/Liverpool Canal, I made my way to an area known as the Wigan Flashes. This is an ex-industrial site composed mainly of subsidence lakes and slag heaps. This may not sound like the most promising location for a walk on such a pleasant day but there are surprises ahead. The first sight might deter many from carrying on; a rough entrance by an electricity sub-station with much evidence of fly-tipping, but a little way along the broad track one turns to cross a broad ditch into a small woodland. And what do we find, growing in the grass of a small open glade? Marsh Orchids galore and on most of the grassed areas this beautiful plant seems to find the conditions very much to its liking.

But I had come looking for butterflies and had seen very few, so far. Turning right to walk through the woodland strip which has grown up on the old dismantled railway line I saw a couple of Speckled Woods. Going into the meadow, to the north of Pearson's Flash, there was very little about; a little early in the year to see many meadow butterflies, so I set off down the canal. A little strange to be walking along a canal which is on a narrow strip between two lakes. I was heading for a low hill which is obviously a landscaped slag heap. To the east is another similar heap receiving the same attention. During the spring and summer this area is a riot of wild flowers, the sheer quantity almost matched by the variety. The hand of man has obviously done much work here; a lot of trees have been planted. However, I suspect that Nature has played a major role in making this beautiful countryside out of what must, at one time, have been a sorry sight. Quite a transformation!

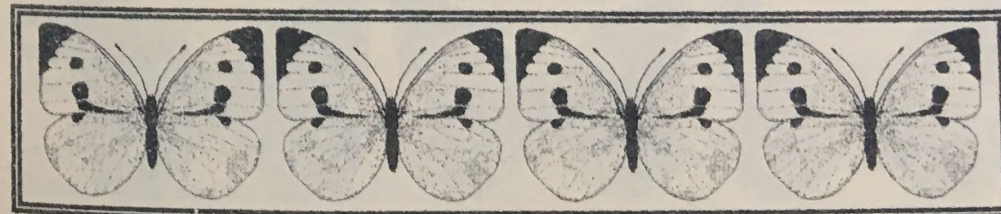
I reached the hill and as I was wondering, "will I see many butterflies today", there was a sudden flash of blue. Quite dazzling; a Common Blue and the first of many. I counted 70 on my tour round this pile of our discarded industrial heritage. Only three of these were female so there would have been many more. I would never have expected to find such a great number of this beautiful butterfly in Wigan; it may be "Common", and where conditions are right it thrives, but there are so few suitable sites. Here the poor soil is ideal to create the habitat which the Common Blue likes but the tree planting will need management to ensure it does not take over the meadows so necessary for the survival of the Blue Flash. Quite an eventful trip but two other incidents occurred which really made my day. I heard a

Cuckoo calling, not a common urban experience, and as I was standing on the foot bridge, over the canal, smoking a contemplative cigarette in preparation for the journey back, a Tern flew past within a yard of my head. Most unexpected, but life's more interesting moments are.

We are planning a walk on Wigan Flashes to see the second Brood of the Common Blue (see events list). If you wish to go on your own, here are the directions:

Take the train from Manchester Piccadilly, platform 14. Three minutes past the hour to Wigan North Western (Barrow or Windermere train) or 21 minutes past the hour to Wigan Wallgate (Southport train). Four minutes later at Oxford Road. Leaving Wigan Wallgate, cross the road and turn right, passing Wigan North Western station and heading for the Heritage Centre (Wigan Pier). Opposite the Heritage Centre there is a Pelican crossing. Cross here, into the centre, bear left and take the right canal tow path which goes down and under the road you have just crossed. Walk along the canal side to the next road. Turn right, then left at the traffic lights (signed for Girobank) along the most deserted road in the British Isles. Over the canal to the electricity sub-station. Turn right, past the sub-station, onto a wide track. Pass under the power lines, turn left and cross the bridge over the ditch (disused canal?). Through the wood, follow the main track out the other side. Pass under the power lines again and turn right into the woodland strip along the dismantled railway line. There are two paths into the meadow on the left. The second is rather steep. Continue along the railway line, going west, until you reach the canal. Turn left and head for the hill. Wander round here at will then return by crossing the southern footbridge and walking in a northerly direction along the western tow path of the canal. And so taking the road to Wigan Pier. The Flashes cover a large area and it is easy to become disorientated, especially in the woods. If you find this a problem, head west till you reach the canal (you will need a sunny day or a compass; hopefully you will have the former!) The church with a tower topped by a spike (or finial) at each corner makes a good landmark.

I hope you have a pleasant walk but if you prefer the company of a large crowd of like minded fellows (When did we have a large crowd at one of our events? - Ed), join in on our organised walk.



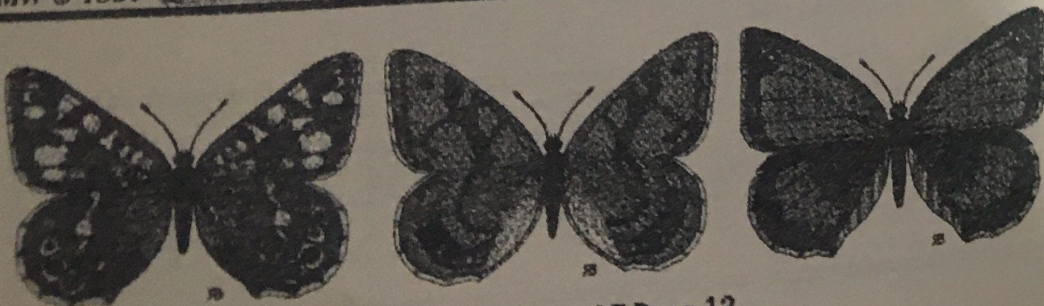
A Moving Story

by Mary Pickford

In the spring "Magpie" we told you about the transplanting of ancient woodland, and other things, at the site of the proposed second runway. We also mentioned that some "conservationists" were worried that the activities of the eco-protesters might put the transplanting plans in jeopardy. The problem is that if the transplants don't work, the airport will use the excuse that the damage caused by the eco-protesters was the reason for failure. The "conservationists" know that transplanting of ancient woodland (and probably meadow land) will not be successful and wanted to have the best chance of being able to prove it so that such mitigation measures could not, in future, be used as a reason for allowing destructive developments, like the second runway, to be approved. It is sad that this sort of conflict should arise because, whenever such horrendous environmental destruction is proposed, protesters are bound to show their objections. We know that most protesters will take the utmost care to cause minimal damage, but some damage will occur. Maybe there is no easy solution to this problem.

March Hare

by Tim Lepidus



Magpie Summer 97 Page 13

Floods!

by Basil Fawcett

Much in the news recently have been the horrendous floods in East Europe. There is a great probability that climate changes, brought about by global warming, are the cause of these disasters. It is now agreed, by scientists and politicians, that excess output of CO₂ and other gasses are the main contributors to global warming. We need a certain amount of CO₂, as do trees and other plants, and we need trees to give us oxygen so that we can breathe and live, but a little bit too much CO₂ and we're in trouble. And who is responsible for this little bit too much; well amongst others, Manchester Airport, who want to more than double a passenger throughput which has increased five-fold in the last 30 years. So Manchester Airport is responsible for the flooding in East Europe! As said earlier in this issue, in economics for every gain there is a loss. Will the Airport compensate the East Europeans, for the flooding they have suffered, out of the vast profits they are going to make from increased global warming? Makes you think, doesn't it!

by Ivor Lott

Enough!

Never ENOUGH (a critical look at consumerism, poverty and the planet) is a publication by the **Anticonsumerism Campaign** which is well worth a read. It basically deals with over-consumption in the developed world and the adverse effect which that has on people in poorer countries. The U.S.A. has only 6% of the world's population yet consumes 30% of its resources. The poorest fifth of the world's population receives 1.4% of total world income. All serious stuff but there is humour in the pages with plenty of cartoons and many credited quotes to back up the points made. "In 1993, for every £1 given in aid, rich nations took back £3 in debt repayments" (World Development Movement). "The world's highest standard of living - there's no way like the American way" (advert). "...for more than five years I maintained myself thus solely by the labour of my hands and found that by working about six weeks in a year, I could meet all the expenses of living" (Henry David Thoreau). "...there is an enormous mass of labour which is just merely wasted; many thousands of men and women making nothing with terrible and inhuman toil which deadens the soul..." (William Morris). On adverts: "BLAH™ wipes out the germs you can see and the ones you can't... the ones lurking on every work surface, waiting to put you and your family in hospital." - Our bodies are chock full of germs already... ask any biologist. So just give things a wipe every now and then, try not to eat out of the dustbin, and you'll be OK... honest. Then you'll have more time to put your feet up. Do you want to live simply - to tread more lightly on the Earth - then pick up a copy of this booklet - £1.50 from the One World Centre, Friends Meeting House basement, Cross Street, Manchester.

Magpie Summer 97 Page 14

Useless Democratic Process

by Malcolm Practice

This phrase was coined by Anthony Phelps as an alternative to the Unitary Development Plan or UDP. At the time he told me it was easy to tell, from the expression on his face, that it was a sense of frustration which had inspired this

invention. The story goes, thus:

You remember the bit about the public inquiry into a proposed housing development at Longford Park (see "Losses of Small Patches of Open Space in Manchester" - Page 9), well the Senior Planning Officer, Simon Castle, used this reasoning in defence of the Council's refusal of the application: "...that the site was not designated for housing in the UDP." All well and good you might think, but, at the recent public meeting concerning the proposed housing development at Holly Royde House, Anthony reminded Councillor Andrew Fender (Chair of Manchester City's Environmental Planning Committee) of the words of Simon Castle. The reply was that this was not necessarily the case and in any event the proposed housing at Longford Park was on playing fields (the main objections at Holly Royde are on open space and wildlife grounds).

Well, pardon me Councillor Fender but, not zoned for housing is not zoned for housing, never mind what the present value of the land is, and we can live without sport but not without wildlife. Ian Brown attended the public inquiry into the Manchester UDP, and I remember him telling me about the wonderful maps, all in colour, which were in the UDP document. There was one map for each area and they showed what kind of development went where. The Council also stated that they had made adequate provision for housing, within the plan. Maybe Ian was a little naive in thinking that if an area of land was not designated for housing then it could not be so developed. It seems that this is not the case and that the Council will only use the policies of the UDP when it suits them. The whole point of the UDP (or so we were told) is that we would know where we stood and be aware of exactly what kind of development was allowed and where it would be. It now turns out that time spent at the UDP inquiry was time wasted, not only for the above reason but if the Council wish to see land developed, in a way not allowed in the plan, then all they have to do is to announce a change of land use.

So that's all right then, and the Manchester Unitary Development Plan really is a Useless Democratic Process. Next time we have a Manchester Plan (it should be in 2002) can we get one thing straight, here and now: Whatever is in that Plan should be strictly adhered to and deviations, to suit developers and politicians should be barred. Can you think of any other Useless Democratic Processes? Apart from Parliament that is!

In Brief

Recycling Recycling Officers

Mike Shearing, Manchester City's Waste Minimisation Officer, has departed for pastures new. (A reminder there of Pickering Pastures which is a meadow on a land fill site.) Apparently he left more out of frustration than for any other reason. We gather that, though Mike tried very hard to get things moving on the recycling front, Manchester did not give waste minimisation a high enough priority so not a lot got done. We wish Mike well in his new post, somewhere down south, and hope that his efforts are appreciated more than they were up north.

In contrast, Stockport has the best record in the region for recycling and now they have gone one step further; compost bins. Manchester has already done this but Stockport took the unusual approach of having a bin collection day when residents could call at the depot, near Cheadle, and pick up a compost bin for the princely sum of £7. Many turned up to avail themselves of this bargain and the occasion was very well organised by the Council, and Blackwells who provided the bins. There will be a lot of composting in Stockport saving on land fill and the use of moss peat (we hope!). Stockport also has a complete recycling centre at the nearby Adswood depot. Apparently you can take almost anything.

Did you know? - The words, internet, Email and website are not in the dictionary of this computer!

Pests

by Phil O'Soffer

Pests were mentioned earlier and it set me to thinking "what is a pest?". According to my dictionary it is a "troublesome or destructive person, animal or thing". Those things, or animals, which we consider to be troublesome are not really a major problem. If a species increases to a stage where it could be troublesome, this does not last long in a truly natural state as the species will decline when the environment is unable to support it. A balance is always maintained as all wild creatures must live in harmony with others and within the limits of their habitat.

There is only one creature, or animal, which attempts to live beyond the limits of the environment. That is the human species. A really troublesome problem we can be, with no thought for tomorrow, exploiting the planet well beyond its ability to support us. Should it not be the human species that is considered a pest! And what personicide will the chemical companies come up with to deal with this problem? Of course, some people are a bigger problem than others but I will leave it with you to speculate on who they might be.

However, as for Wasps, I'm with Jasper Carrott; what use are they, nasty little things which go about stinging people!

A friend in need is a pest - Francis Albert Sinatra

Butterflies

by Piers White



Taking part in a butterfly survey is very educational. It is not necessary to have a scientific knowledge of the subject to gain satisfaction from it and to always be learning something new. It is becoming obvious that there are some species now to be seen in Greater Manchester which were not about 10 or so years ago. Even the

Small Skipper was rarely seen but now it is present on almost all meadow areas. It appears to be more common than the Large Skipper though this could be accounted for by the fact that it can be a problem to distinguish between them. The Holly Blue was first seen in the Mersey Valley, at Abney Hall Park, in 1991. For a couple of years it was seen almost everywhere. It then seemed to decline but it's back again this year.

I always considered the Speckled Wood to be a southern species and the first I saw in this area was in 1991 in Sunbank Wood (Bollin Valley). Since then it can be found almost anywhere where the habitat is remotely suitable, even gardens and small woods. The Comma is another species which seems to have moved north. The first one I saw in my garden was in 1985, though it was seen earlier, in Manchester. Previously, the nearest I had seen one was in Hereford. It is possible the Gatekeeper is a different case. We have no records of this species before 1991 but it now appears in good numbers in the Bollin Valley and on Wigan Flashes. It seems that this butterfly can be found in areas adjacent to the wider countryside but has yet to be found on sites within urban areas. So what's happening? Manchester is on the northern edge of the traditional range of most of these species. If the climate is getting warmer then it is logical that this range should increase in a northerly direction. Is this a good thing? It may be very gratifying to see these "new" butterflies but, if the downside is global warming, it would be too high a price to pay.

So what species will be next to take up residence in Greater Manchester, the Marbled White? We shall see!

Wild Raspberry Jam

by Ruby Picksbury

Do you have a patch of wild raspberries near you? If so, you will probably keep it a closely guarded secret. One problem is that the fruit only lasts for a very brief period; you only have to blink and they've gone over. And the strange thing is that this source of food seems to be overlooked by wildlife. There is usually more fruit than one can manage in one go but it is a shame to let it go to waste.

So why not make jam; it's so easy. Pick as much fruit as you can. This may take some time as the berries are so small. Weigh the fruit (don't wash it as some juice will be lost and you're going to boil it anyway) and put it in a saucepan with a little water; not too much as the raspberries already contain a high percentage. Simmer gently for about half an hour, stirring the while, till the mixture becomes liquidised. Add sugar to one-and-a-half times the weight of the fruit and keep simmering until the sugar is dissolved. Then, still stirring, increase the heat and bring to a full rolling boil - one that bubbles vigorously, rises in the pan and cannot be stirred down. As soon as this stage is reached, start timing. Boil for four minutes only. Remove from the heat. Pot and cover in the usual way. All that remains is to enjoy the jam for your breakfast. One point to note is that, as the fruit will contain a small proportion of greenfly (a good source of protein), this recipe is probably not suitable for vegetarians.

You're too late, this year, as the raspberries are now well over but, next year, be prepared!

Emerge

East Manchester Environment & Resource Group Emerge

Manchester City Council may not be an outstanding success in the field of recycling but there is a group, in East Manchester, who are putting recycling on the map. This is Emerge and they are providing a household collection service which will include: Clothes/textiles - Shoes - Aluminium cans (the Council extract steel) - Foil - Paper - Newspaper, Magazines, envelopes - Plastic bottles - Glass (any colour) - Card/board packaging - Light bulbs - Cooking or other oil. Quite a comprehensive list; we believe that they will even take such items as furniture (which will be refurbished). For full details please contact: Emerge. c/o 12 Little Lever Street, M1 1HR. ☎ 0161-907 3123. Email: Cae @ xtml. u-net.com - We are not sure of their range of operation but they may be prepared to travel for valuable items, furniture etc., so call them to find out.

It's great to know that someone is doing something to solve the problems of the mountains of rubbish which are usually thrown away into land fill sites. Emerge provide separate boxes for each type of "waste". They say it is a pilot scheme; we hope it becomes permanent and wish them luck.

In Brief

Put That Light Out - Local Campaigner, Yasmen Zalzal, from Withington has complained that the security lighting at nearby housing association homes is depriving her garden plants of their regular eight hours sleep. She says that the lights should be modified so that they only come on when there is movement. Sounds daft? Well no - Manchester University lecturer Giles Johnson, who is studying the effects of lights on plants, says that all-day brightness could cause difficulties for flowers. "Light help flowers to grow so in a sense, if they're getting too much light, they may flower at the wrong time of year. Flowers grow, depending on the time of year and as the day gets longer, they respond to that. If they are getting too much light it could effect their development," he said.

Manchester Metro News - 18th July 1997

Snails - Ten years, or so, ago, one hardly ever saw a snail in Manchester. The soil does not contain much, if any, calcium which is necessary for the development of the snail's shells. We have many reports of snails reaching plague proportions. The only reason we can think of, for this phenomenon, is concrete in gardens and other places, which is now breaking down into its chemical constituents. Also, it is thought that snails can rasp out the calcium from fresh concrete. The use of limestone chippings for paths in river valleys and country parks will also contribute to the "problem". For problem it can be. It wouldn't be so bad if the snails would be content to lunch on that patch of Ground Elder or Nettles but they don't. Put out some expensive plant which you hope will flourish and - woof! - it's gone. This can annoy some gardeners. If you have noticed snails increasing their number or have a better explanation for the numerical expansion of this delightful creature (surely more attractive than slugs) please let us know.

Roads - There is some good news, some not so good news and some bad news. The Government has announced the road programme for the ensuing year. They have cancelled the Salisbury by-pass (the good news) which would have damaged a wetland meadow of international importance. The road over Pevensey Levels, a Ramsar site, has been postponed (the not so good news). This is a wetland area important as a home of the Great Raft Spider, there are only two in the country, and two thirds of the British species of wetland flora. The North Midlands (M6) relief road is to go ahead (privately funded!). This will damage two SSSIs, several SBIs and Otter breeding sites. This is not a full list of the roads which are on the agenda. The Government made a promise to put the environment at the forefront when road schemes were being considered. Should not this apply in every case. If you know of a road scheme, which will be especially damaging to the environment, and wildlife, why not write to John Prescott and let him know of your concerns. You never know, it could make a difference.

Store Wars

by Jed Eye

Mentioned earlier was the proposed superstore development at the Fallowfield sidings. This is an interesting and rather intriguing story. First, Tesco put in an application. This, we are told, was approved. Then, enter Sainsburys with their bid. This was also recently approved. So what's going on. There would not appear to be enough room for two stores - we've seen the Sainsburys' plan and it covers all the site without leaving breathing space for any landscaping, never mind wildlife. We are told that Tesco owns a small part of the site and the main area, the goods yard (owned by Railtrack) will presumably be purchased by Sainsburys. We only objected to the Sainsburys' application as we assumed that Tesco must have pulled out. Our objection was not against the development as a whole, we had been into all that at the UDP public inquiry, but on the grounds of over-development; the car park would destroy the "important wildlife corridor of the disused railway line" (Nature Conservation Strategy) and leave the recreational route, and "linear open space" (UDP Policy WB10), snaking through the car park.

Actually, we do object to the development in its entirety as it will destroy a truly wonderful urban wildlife site. Tesco's would probably agree with us on this point. This is where the intrigue comes in. We have been told that a certain Dr. Ray Gemmell was spotted on the site, undertaking a botanical survey. Some will remember Dr. Gemmell who was the senior ecologist with the GM Countryside Unit but left to start his own consultancy. This means he will do ecological surveys for anyone who will pay him enough. And who was paying on this Occasion? Tesco! He found about 130 species of plants and was interested to hear that our butterfly survey had revealed about 14 species.

The mystery deepened when we found out, at the Environmental Planning Committee meeting, that a petition against Sainsburys' development had been presented to the Council. And who do you think had commissioned the petition? You've guessed; Tesco! The Sainsburys' application has yet to be approved by the Secretary of State (because of its size), so are Tesco trying to queer Sainsburys' pitch? We know that the two companies are deadly enemies. It really cheered me up when Sainsburys were knocked off the spot of top Grocer (for quantity not quality), except for the fact that Tesco are now No.1.

So who will win at Fallowfield? We rather wish they would go away. They've both done enough environmental destruction to last anyone a lifetime. Is it not possible that some of our valuable urban open spaces could be left alone and free from development. Dream on!

Interested in office work for MW - Our office in the One World Centre is up and running. If you would like to help in this aspect of our work please contact Ian Brown ☎ 0161-437 7040 to find out more.

DEMONSTRATING WOODLAND CRAFTS

BY BODGER BROWN

MANY OF YOU WILL BE AWARE OF MY INTEREST IN WOODLAND CRAFTS. IT ALL STARTED WHEN I WAS DOING VOLUNTARY WORK WITH THE BTCV. ON WOODLAND MANAGEMENT TASKS I WAS

AWARE OF THE AMOUNT OF WOOD WASTED ON ENORMOUS HABITAT PILES. ON A WOODLAND MANAGEMENT COURSE IN THE ASHDOWN FOREST (AGAIN WITH THE BTCV) I WAS INTRODUCED TO BODGING, AND WAS HOOKED. WHEN MANCHESTER WILDLIFE STARTED MANAGING WOODS WE DECIDED THAT WE WOULD PUT THE RESULTING COPPICED WOOD TO THE BEST POSSIBLE USE. SO I WENT ON A COUPLE OF CRAFT TRAINING COURSES, ONE IN GENERAL BODGING AND THE SECOND ON CHAIR MAKING, AND I WAS UP AND AWAY. AS SOON AS I HAD BUILT MY POLE-LATHE I FOUND THAT I WAS IN DEMAND FOR GIVING DEMONSTRATIONS.

THESE HAVE BEEN MOST ENJOYABLE AND HELD IN A VARIETY OF LOCATIONS - WOODLANDS, PARKS, RIVER VALLEYS, AT A HORSE TRIALS AND EVEN ON THE TOP OF A HILL, NEAR BLACKBURN, WITH HARDLY A TREE IN SIGHT. QUITE A DECENT FEE CAN BE COMMANDED FOR THESE DEMONSTRATIONS. THESE FEES GO TO THE FUNDS OF MANCHESTER WILDLIFE AS DO THE SALES OF THE FEW CRAFT ITEMS WHICH I SELL (ROLLING PINS GO VERY WELL IN BURNLEY). THIS HELPS TO KEEP US IN FUNDS.

HOWEVER, DEMONSTRATIONS ARE HARD WORK AND TAKE UP A LOT OF TIME (A DAY'S PREPARATION IS NEEDED FOR BOTH ONE AND TWO DAY EVENTS). ALSO, SOME CAR TRAVEL IS NECESSARY. I REALISE THAT THIS IS NOT A SUSTAINABLE ACTIVITY OF THE SORT LOCAL AGENDA 21 ALLOWS. THIS IS ONE REASON WHY I HAVE BEEN KEEN TO SEE CRAFT CENTRES IN THE MANCHESTER AREA. RIVER VALLEYS AND COUNTRY PARKS MAKE GOOD LOCATIONS FOR THIS ACTIVITY, AND IT WOULD BE AN IDEAL SITUATION FOR PEOPLE TO BE ABLE TO SEE CRAFTS UNDERTAKEN AS A NORMAL EVERY DAY ACTIVITY, RATHER THAN AS A SIDE SHOW AT A FAIR. ADDED ADVANTAGES ARE THAT THE RAW MATERIAL IS CLOSE AT HAND AND THERE WOULD BE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PEOPLE TO TAKE UP A CRAFT, EITHER AS A HOBBY OR FOR A LIVING. ALSO, THOSE GOING TO THE CRAFT CENTRES WOULD NOT NEED TO TRAVEL BY CAR BUT COULD USE PUBLIC TRANSPORT.

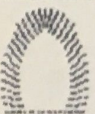
THERE WILL STILL BE SOME DEMONSTRATIONS BUT I WILL HAVE TO CUT DOWN ON THIS TYPE OF ACTIVITY, ESPECIALLY IF I AM TO HAVE THE TIME TO DEVOTE TO THE RUNNING OF THE BOLTON CRAFT CENTRE. IT IS HELPFUL TO HAVE AN ASSISTANT WHEN AT A CRAFT DEMONSTRATION, THE COMPANY IS APPRECIATED AND IT'S A GOOD IDEA TO HAVE SOMEONE TO WATCH THE STALL WHEN I NEED TO BE ABSENT. IF ANY MANCHESTER WILDLIFE MEMBERS WOULD LIKE TO ASSIST AT ONE OF THESE EVENTS, LET ME KNOW (TEL: 0161-437 7040) AND I WILL TRY TO FIT YOU IN. SOME FORTHCOMING DATES ARE ON THE EVENTS LIST.

ANOTHER ADVANTAGE TO TAKING UP WOODLAND CRAFTS IS THAT IT ENABLES ONE TO MAKE RATHER SPECIAL CHRISTMAS PRESENTS WHICH IS FAR MORE SATISFYING THAN BUYING FROM THE SHOPS. SO WHY DON'T YOU HAVE A GO!

Short Back and Sides - We have reports in of wild grassy areas being cut at inappropriate times. A bank in Chorlton was mowed in early July destroying a colony of Small Tortoiseshell butterflies. We are not yet sure of Manchester City Council's policy on this matter (they are probably not sure, either!) but we are to make inquiries. There are many areas where it is not necessary to cut grass on a regular basis so why should wildlife not be given a chance.



Tail-piece



That's all folks. The end of another Magpie. Next time we should be back to normal; less of these silly names. But it's up to you. If we had contributions from a greater variety of our members (and others) we would not find the need to invent aliases to cover up the fact that there are only a few of us writing articles for these pages. Have you had a day out, this summer, with a wildlife experience you would wish to share with others. Let us know and you may see it published in these illustrious pages, so enriching all our lives.

That's all Folks - That's all Folks - That's all Folks - That's all Folks - That's all Folks

Useful Contacts

RSNC, Urban Wildlife Partnership.	Chris Gordon, 01522 544400
English Nature.....	NW Regional Office, Bernard Flemming, 01942 830342
Cheshire Wildlife Trust.....	North Group, Trafford, Liz Blackman, 0161-962 6748
	Wilmslow Group, Tony Browne, 0161-436 1761
	Bolton Wildlife Project, Mick Weston, 01204 361847
Lancashire Wildlife Trust.....	
Medlock & Tame Valley.	Mildred Burlinson, 0161-330 2721
Conservation Association.....	Salford & Trafford, Val Sutton, 0161-872 7640 (day)
BTCV.....	Sale & Altrincham, Shelagh Aston, 0161-860 6910
	Bolton, Rick Parker, 01942 817302
British Trust for Ornithology.....	Greater Manchester Recorder, Judith Smith, 01942 712615
Red Rose Forest Team.....	Jonathan Woods, 0161-872 1660
RSPB.....	
	Bolton Group, Tony Johnson, 01204 468850
	Stockport Group, Tony O'Neill, 0161-962 2449
	Manchester Group, Simeon Rydz, 0161-434 2720
Bat Groups.....	South Lancashire, Angela Graham, 0161-797 4745
	Cheshire, Mike Freeman, 01606 41581
Butterflies/Moths.....	Barry Shaw, 0161-491 0753
Mammals/Insects.....	Bolton Museum, Steve Garland, 01204 522311
Amphibians/Ponds.....	Dave Bentley, 0161-724 8602
Mersey Valley Wardens.....	Sale, 0161-905 1100. Chorlton, 0161-881 5639
Groal/Irwell Valley Wardens.....	Nicky Greek, 01204 571561
Stockport Countryside	
Ranger Service.....	0161-477 5637
Trafford Council.....	Roz Park, 0161-912 4174
Manchester Sustainability Group...	Adrian Pearce, 0161-234 4594
Manchester Partnership 21.....	Nick Carr-Brown, 0161-272 7771 (Ex Local Agenda 21)
Manchester FoE.....	0161-834 8221
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Visions Community Design.....	Judith Mottram, 0161-834 6309
Parrs Wood Centre for	
Rural Education.....	Jo Frazer, 0161-445 4566

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Stop Press - 29th July 1997. Manchester Local Agenda 21 has been wound up and the funds transferred to the new organisation, Manchester Partnership 21.

*******Printed at MARC on Recycled Paper*******
MARC (Manchester Area Resource Centre) - The place for Community Printing and computer work. ☎ 0161-839 0839. 28-30 Edge Street, Manchester M4 1HN