

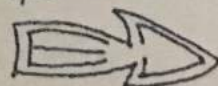


# THE MAGPIE

Number 20

Summer 1991

Environment Week  
Wind Power  
Butterflies  
Hay Meadows  
or Superstones?  
Vertical  
Horticulture  
Odds and Ends  
Spring Bank Holiday?  
and more  
inside



COMMON SPOTTED ORCHID



To gain inspiration for the contents of the editorial, I often find that a glance through the previous edition of "Magpie" is most rewarding and on this occasion I found that I need look no further than the article, "Light Fantastic". The passage which struck me was - "It is proposed to replace lighting at High St. Multi Storey Car Park with CF (compact fluorescent) lamps which should save £40,000 per annum in energy and give a 60% improvement in light output. This gives a good return on the estimated £70,000 investment, which might not be the case at other car parks." The investment, at High Street will be repaid in less than two years. In the domestic situation, with no new wiring or fittings, CF lamps take over two years to pay for themselves and there is no increase in light output. The City Engineer's report, from which the article was compiled, went on to say - "Initial assessments indicate that there would not be the same return on investment at the other multi-storey car parks." Therein lies the problem; it's not the Council's fault; they do not have money flowing down the Town Hall steps; they cannot be expected to afford major capital investment which will not pay for itself in the short term.

The point is that conversion to CF lamps represent an immediate saving in energy consumption and should be undertaken even if the return on investment is not achieved for 10 or 20 years. As local authorities cannot be expected to commit themselves to capital investments with such long term payback timescales, it should be the responsibility of central government to provide grants, or at least interest free loans, to enable such work to take place. Does the government have the commitment to implement such energy saving initiatives which are so necessary for the future good of our natural and global environment? Over to you, Mr. Heseltine!

**Is Light Wasted** — I am still not convinced that the average street lamp does not waste energy by radiating its light over too wide an arc. There are others who also hold this point of view. It would be a help to examine the reflectors in the lamps (if indeed they have reflectors). Studying street lights from the ground it would appear that light is radiated over at least 240 degrees. One would have thought that 120 degrees should be quite sufficient. I often cycle home along Bruntwood Lane which is well lit, on cloudy nights, by lights half a mile away. //

## The New Improved Manchester Wildlife

As most of our members will have noticed, an Extraordinary General Meeting was held on Friday the 12th of July to consider the proposition that the Manchester Wildlife Trust should de-register as a trust and become an Unincorporated Voluntary Association to be renamed **Manchester Wildlife**. The main reason for this was because of the requirements of the 1989 Companies Act which had put undue financial and administrative burdens on the Trust - if the legal obligations were to be met. Directors of the Trust felt that our member's subscriptions were better used for the benefit of urban wildlife rather than in meeting large accountancy and legal bills. At the EGM, those present and members who sent in proxy votes agreed that the change of name and status was appropriate. So we are now **Manchester Wildlife**. The aims and objectives of the new group will be much as they were previously and the accounts will be kept to the same high standard.

Please note that all cheques, for membership subscription etc., should be made payable to - **Manchester Wildlife**. //

### Manchester Wildlife Contacts

Anthony Phelps (Chairman & Secretary)  
Flat 7, 104 Clyde Road,  
West Didsbury,  
Manchester. M20 8WN

Unity Kelly (Treasurer),  
13 Ruskin Avenue,  
Rusholme,  
Manchester. M14 4DP  
Tel. (061) 226 4583

Ian Brown (Vice-chair & Editor),  
82 Crantock Drive,  
Heald Green, Cheadle,  
Cheshire. SK8 3HA  
Tel. (061) 437 7040

**Did You Know?** — Siemens are the world's leading supplier of nuclear power plants. (Guardian 18/6/90) They have their headquarters in Manchester - a nuclear free city! //



# Environment Week in and about Manchester

by Unity Kelly

Do you "go green" for a week and then revert to "normal" for the other fifty one? No of course not. Do you think it helps to concentrate so many environmental activities into one week? And did you spot the "time warp" in the opening sentence of the comprehensive leaflet put together by the Greater Manchester Environmental Network, which asked, "What will you be doing for Environment Week 1990?" Happily, the amazing variety of events, across the County, all took place in 1991. Manchester Wildlife hopes that all our readers took part in at least one of them. We certainly enjoyed putting together our contribution - Ian was even contacted by the Daily Mirror. What a shame that the Manchester Evening News, our only county-wide daily paper, only reported on two environmental matters during the week; with Councillor Arnold Spencer dancing round a maypole in Albert Square and a feature about otters, informative but of little publicity value to all the excellent and innovative activities aimed at making Mancunians more active in caring for their local environment and heritage. Better coverage in 1992 please, M.E.N.

MW(T) launched its own programme by taking up an invitation to bring a display to the Fair in the Square on Sunday the 12th of May. It was obvious that a great deal of preparation and hard work had gone into this event - by Manchester City Council Public Relations Dept. and Direct Works, and although a little chilly, it did not rain. What a pity the stall holders seemed to outnumber visitors. Although those who found their way to Albert Square clearly enjoyed themselves and were certainly interested in our revamped exhibition, it was never really busy. Perhaps Manchester City Centre on a Sunday is just not the place where people go. The Arndale on a Saturday afternoon is where to reach the kind of people who wouldn't normally go near a "green event".

## Official Opening of Swallow Nesting House

The evening of the 15th of May was very cold and grey, but despite this, a good crowd, of mostly local people, turned out to view the recently completed "Swallow House" at Hazelhurst Farm, Worsley. Peter Nears, from Peel Holdings, arrived there to find

some 20 people eagerly awaiting a guided tour and he explained the genesis of the scheme; a plea from local householders who found that the demolition of farm out-buildings would deprive "their" swallows & martins of a much used nesting place. This call for help was picked up by Ian Brown who liaised with Peel Holdings and between them, came up with the idea of reconstructing a small barn, in the quietest corner of the site, with ensuite facilities to tempt the choosiest hirondine. Peter told us how his company had taken expert advice and with the support of Salford's Planning Officer, Roger Jolley, spent about £10000 building this barn using reclaimed materials, suitably "rusticated", to attract the regulars and also provide for a possible return of bats and barn owls, which had bred nearby in recent years. Anthony then spotted a single swallow using the roof entrance - it almost raised a cheer. Recent reports confirm that the barn is now well occupied by swallows. Everyone has gained from this exercise and MW has now created a significant pocket of interest in, and goodwill towards, the work of the Group, in Salford.

## Butterfly Survey Launch

by the 19th of May, the sun had returned and brought out many Orange-tips, Wall Browns, other seasonal butterflies and about 15 people for the launch of the MW Butterfly Survey at Priory Gardens, Sale. This is an attractive and less well known area of the Mersey Valley. So much so, that the ever helpful Ann Shelley from the Warden Service (Visitor Information) got lost looking for the butterfly hunters! And hunting is just what we did, tirelessly searching out the tiny eggs of the Orange-tip on the abundant Lady's Smock. Led and encouraged by the entomological "guru" of the Mersey Valley, Peter Hardy, we meandered like slow motion butterflies, through sheltered meadows and grassy embankments. We did our best to absorb and interpret the subtleties of what it is that make particular micro-habitats attractive to butterflies, as larvae and adults. There were plenty of pauses for photography and egg searches. The Butterfly Survey is our most ambitious long term project to date. Though the weather has been so unseasonal, it's not too late to start recording on your chosen patch. Even more important to record sightings of butterflies (2nd broods) in the late summer and autumn as a base line for 1992.

And what of next year? On the 18th of May I attended the A.G.M.



of the Fairbrother Group Urban Wildlife Partnership - our own national pressure group - in Bradford. The meeting had a modest attendance (sounds familiar?) and our counterparts in Bradford & Sheffield remarked that their week had been so crammed with events that many did not attract the audience they deserved. Would an Environment Month be better (but not if the events are quadrupled)? The whole point of environmental action, in any sphere, is that it should be sustainable. We could scarcely manage the next pub meeting!

## Danish Energy Initiatives

### AERO WINDMILL PARK

by Jon Proctor

In September, last year, I went to Odense in Denmark with the Manchester Environmental Group on an exchange visit to study Danish Energy Initiatives.

We visited the island of Aero, which is situated off the south coast of Svendborg, Funen. Aero has a population of 9,000 and an area of 88 square kilometres, which is mostly small arable farms. The windmill park is situated on the south coast, on productive farmland, facing a regular westerly wind. It was opened in 1985, when it was the largest in Denmark. There are eleven wind turbines, each with a capacity of 55 kilowatts, which are connected into the main island electricity network.

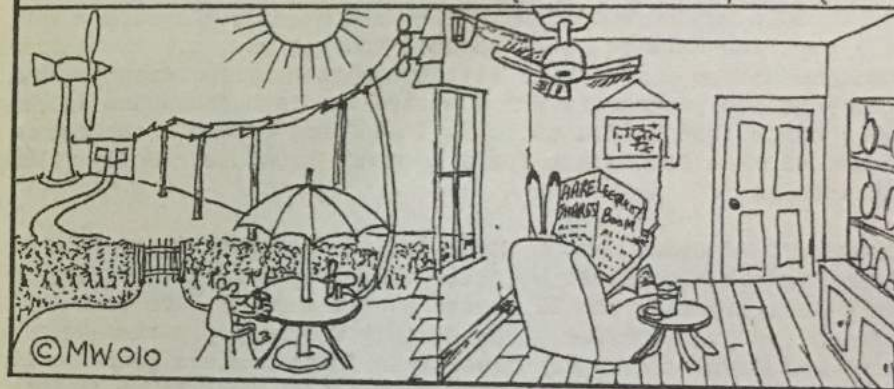
The project was initiated by a small group of people from a variety of backgrounds who, after a public meeting on the possibilities of renewable energy, set up the Aero Wind Energy Co-operative in 1983. Local residents could be shareholders by buying the number of kilowatt hours (kWh) equivalent to their own consumption. The total cost was 6.3 million Danish Kr. (£630,000), two thirds coming from private investors. The remainder was provided by the Danish Government and the EEC. The Park was mostly constructed by local businesses and the eleven 55Kw turbines are controlled by a central computer which monitors power and output. Steering is automatic and there is a smaller 11Kw generator which is used for wind speeds down to 3.9m/sec. The main 55Kw generators have maximum production at 12.5m/sec and are automatically protected from overloading. The Park produces over 1,500,000kWh annually (about 5% of the total consumption of the island) and a typical family uses 4-6,000kWh per year, or 15-20,000kWh if electricity is used for heating.

In 1988, Denmark had a total of 2,500 wind generators but it is doubtful that wind power could ever provide a substantial proportion of our present energy requirement. The windmill park at Aero has however proved that wind power can be an attractive commercial proposition in satisfying local energy requirements.

Aero island is not a prime site in Denmark for wind power production as it is protected from the North Sea by the Mainland of Jutland. Even on Jutland the wind speeds are less than those achieved on the Atlantic coasts of Scotland, Wales, Cornwall & Ireland. Within the European Community, Great Britain has the greatest potential for utilising wind energy. (So where can we have a windmill park to meet local needs. - Ed.)

## March Hare

by Jim Lepidus



South Manchester Watch Group & Parrs Wood Rural Studies Centre.

The Multi-Experience Eco-Day for children, hosted by the new South Manchester Watch Group at Parrs Wood Rural Studies Centre on the 18th of May was a tremendous success. Many thanks to all MW members who helped or brought along their offspring. MW send their good wishes to the new Warden, Mrs. Mary Sales (biologist and former science teacher) who comes to Parrs Wood RSC from Harringey. We also send greetings to Jo Fraser who has become the Assistant Education Officer. Some MW members will know Jo from the Trafford Ecology Park and the great 1990 Newt Rescue./

Did You Know? — The NCC has designated over 5000 Sites of Special Scientific Interest; 200 were damaged in one year. //



## Butterflies of Abney Hall

by Ian Brown



Being isolated, by the M63 Motorway, from the main part of the Mersey Valley, one is apt to forget that Abney Hall Park is part of the Mersey Valley Area and in the Green Belt. The park is an attractive area and has a good variety of wildlife habitats; the two marsh areas to the east are separated by a meadow which, though abundant in grasses, is not particularly noted for its variety of wild herbs. There are two ponds, though one is to the north of a steep bank and overshadowed by mature trees. Of the two lakes, the new lake, to the south, has recent tree planting alongside while the other, at the north of the park is set in more mature woodland. Trees abound, but they are mostly in a parkland setting, surrounded by mown grass, or in narrow woodland strips which leave little opportunity for creating the clearings so necessary for a varied woodland fauna and flora; ivy abounds, but little of it is in a sunny enough situation to be useful as a food plant for a second brood of Holly Blue Butterflies.

However, I decided that I would include the park on my list of sites for the Manchester Wildlife Butterfly Survey. Starting in early April, during the 12 visits so far made, I have found 13 species of butterflies though only Orange Tip, Green-veined White and Meadow Brown are present in large numbers and Small Skipper is fairly plentiful. My greatest thrill was in late April when I saw a Holly Blue; a first record for the Mersey Valley and my first in Greater Manchester. A second high point was a sighting of a single Common Blue on the 10th of July. They may be called "common" but I have only seen two this year, the other being on Bruntwood Hay Meadow, in Cheadle. Another singleton was a Small Copper which was well spotted by young Manchester Wildlife Member, David Jackson, during our Butterfly Safari on the 3rd of August.

Other butterflies sighted in the park have been Peacock, Small Tortoiseshell, Small White, Large Skipper, Large White and Wall Brown, though only in singletons or small numbers. One problem may be the shortage of nectar plants, especially in the late summer. More meadow management, with hay cutting, could improve

the situation. The picnic area, near the main entrance, would particularly benefit from having unmowed margins round its woodland edge as this is a damp meadow where Lady's Smock grows prior to the first grass cutting.

Finding butterflies is easy enough, but to obtain positive evidence of breeding is more difficult. Meadow Browns must breed at Abney Hall because of their great numbers in mid-July but only Orange Tip can be confirmed, as many eggs were found on Lady's Smock in late April.

I have much enjoyed the three mile cycle ride to Abney Hall and surveying the butterflies there, despite flooded footwear on the marsh areas where the insects bite like serpents, and I can highly recommend butterfly surveying to our members and I hope you will take part next year and go hunting in your local area. Phone me on 437 7040 to find out how.

Other flying creatures which make Abney Hall a place worth visiting are bats. The most southerly seat on the east side of the new lake is an excellent position to take at dusk. To look out over the water and watch the bats wheeling and fluttering, as they search for food, is most restful. But don't forget to leave a space for me. //

If those who are participating in our Butterfly Survey would sent their in their results, as soon as the season is over, it would be greatly appreciated. //

### Wildlife Advisory Group Approved

During 1990 Bury Metropolitan Borough Council's Planning Committee proposed that the Director of Planning convene a Wildlife Advisory Group (WAG). This is seen as a forum of wildlife groups - who can look at wildlife and planning issues in co-operation with officers in the Planning Department. We congratulate Dave Bentley, of the Bury Wildlife and Countryside Action Group, and others, for their hard work in bringing this about. If all goes well, the WAG should ensure that wildlife finds its deserved place in Bury and is protected from adverse development. Manchester City could also benefit from a WAG, but to set one up takes time and energy and time seems to be at a premium just now. Maybe the Environmental Forum, which has its first meeting in September, will address some of the problems./



The battle to save the meadows is not yet over. Sainsbury's and the John Lewis Partnership have submitted a new application for a much larger (350,000 sq.ft.) store. We have objected strongly to this, sending a letter to Stockport's Planners saying that there should be an environmental impact assessment and the application should go to a public inquiry. Copies of the letter have gone to councillors who we feel could refuse this much enlarged development without fear of financial penalties, should it be taken to appeal.

At the Village Hotel in Cheadle on the 5th of August, Sainsbury and John Lewis held a presentation of their development which was (in my opinion) the most arrogant I have ever attended, by any developer. Their attitude seemed, to me, to be - so you're losing a hay meadow, tough, we want to build a superstore - but do we need one? We were given a lecture about the trees which would be saved, and those to be planted but, in the setting of a huge concrete car park, trees would have little wildlife value, except possibly as the finest state of the art starling roost in South Manchester. We were only given 5 days notice of the presentation and some councillors only had one working day of notice!

So what next? We will be intensifying our boycott campaign to ensure that it receives national publicity. You can help too by writing to Lord Sainsbury & Peter Lewis (Chairman, John Lewis), telling them what you think of their plans and joining in our boycott, for market forces can dictate trends. Write to Stephen Day, or your own M.P., asking them to persuade the Secretary of State to call in the application for a public inquiry. Write to the Chair of Stockport's Planning Committee asking him to refuse planning permission. Together we can beat this destruction of what is a nationally rare wildlife habitat, but whatever the outcome we must be sure that those commercial interests who would destroy our environment, for the sake of more excessive profits, are aware that there are many who will protest strongly against them. This will be an effective deterrent to ensure that others, with similar plans, will think again. We may not win the battle but we must win the war!

I have been told that some of those present, at our Bruntwood Hay Meadow walk, shed tears at the thought that it could soon be no longer. If the meadows are lost I am sure we will all shed tears for once lost they will be gone for ever. //

#### Addresses to which to send your comments and protests.

Mr. Peter Lewis, Chairman,  
John Lewis Partnership,  
171 Victoria Street,  
London. SW1E 5NN

Councillor Mike Wilson, Chair,  
Development Services Committee,  
Town Hall,  
Stockport. SK1 3XE

Stephen Day M.P. (or your own M.P.), Lord Sainsbury, Chairman,  
House of Commons, Stamford House,  
London. SW1A 1AA Stamford Street,  
(or get home address from library) London. SE1 9LL

"When you have cut down the last tree and polluted the last river you will know you cannot eat money." Chief Seattle (1855)

We have a new slogan for Sainsbury's - from Anthony Phelps  
Good food costs **THE EARTH** at Sainsbury's

#### MARKET RESEARCH

by John Turner

Interviewer: "Good morning madam. May I ask you why you shop at Sainsbury's?"

Interviewee: "I don't really know. It's good food isn't it? It says so on the bag."

Interviewer: "Does that mean other shops sell inferior food?"

Interviewee: "Oh! I don't know, I've never thought about it."

Interviewer: "Did you know that every time you shop at Sainsbury's you are assisting Lord Sainsbury to live a life of luxury?"

Interviewee: "Is that important?"

Interviewer: "Do you know that Sainsbury's want to destroy a hay meadow with yet another superstore?"

Interviewee: "Does that concern me?"

Interviewer: "Thank you madam, and your name is?"

Interviewee: "Gullible, Mrs. Ivy Gullible."

A Final Thought - "The Orientals try to get a hint of eternity by saying that when the Himalayas have been ground to powder by allowing a gauze veil to float against them once in a thousand years, eternity will only just have begun." - John Burrows. (from "The End of Nature" by Bill McKibben) Bruntwood Meadows could last for eternity. As superstores rely on the "car borne" shopper it is unlikely they will last much beyond the start of the next century. Even so, they might outlast hay meadows! //



## Hay Meadow or Superstore?

by Ian Brown

Regular readers of "Magpie" will be familiar with the details and implications of Sainsbury's plans to build a superstore on Bruntwood Hay Meadow in Cheadle but I think that newcomers deserve a little background information in order to put them in the picture. So if those who may think this "old stuff", will allow their attention to wander for a while - why not put on the kettle and have a nice cup of tea, or take the dog for a walk - and I will briefly outline the story so far.

In 1987, a public inquiry was held to decide if a superstore development should be allowed on the above mentioned area of meadowland. Manchester Wildlife was the only environmental organisation to bring the natural history value of the area to the attention of the inquiry. In 1989, despite our efforts, the Secretary of State for the Environment decided that the development, a 250,000 sq. ft. store with 2000 car parking spaces, should be allowed to go ahead. In September 1989 the Greater Manchester Countryside Unit designated the meadows as a Site of Biological Importance; thus confirming our judgement. Since then it has become increasingly apparent that wildflower rich "unimproved" meadowland is now a very rare habitat in Britain. The Royal Society for Nature Conservation (RSNC) is currently conducting a "Vanishing Meadows" Campaign to highlight the previous and continuing loss of meadows in an attempt to prevent further losses. According to the Nature Conservancy Council (now English Nature), between 1939 and 1984, 95% of wildflower meadows were lost and, outside nature reserves and SSSIs, those that remain are vanishing at a rate of 10% each year. If this continues, the only meadows to survive into the next century will be in nature reserves. (Only nine years to go!) We have found "Ancient" Ridge and Furrow on the hay meadow; I should have noticed this before as on one field, Ox-eye Daisy grows in rows (on the ridges) with lines of Lady's Smock in the furrows. This means that the meadows have historical interest in addition to their natural history importance.

The RSNC have our wholehearted support in their campaign and we will do all that is within our power to stop the destruction of the hay meadow at Bruntwood. We held a "picket" outside Sainsbury's Stockport store (fully reported in the spring "Magpie")

to inform their customers and other members of the public about the situation. There have been several articles and features in the local press which have highlighted the fact that we are advocating that there should be a boycott of all Sainsbury stores in order to protest at the impending loss of the hay meadow.

### "Last Chance to See? - Bruntwood Hay Meadow"



PHOTO - DEREK SEDDON - CHEADLE VILLAGE CONCERN

### DAVE BISHOP (3RD RT.) WAXES LYRICAL ON THE VIRTUES OF HAY MEADOWS

We extended an invitation, to anyone who wished to see the hay meadows at their best, to join us on the 30th of June at Bruntwood Park. About 60 people took up the invitation, including Cheadle M.P. Stephen Day and local Councillor, Peter Burns. And what a day it was; the sun shone and there were butterflies a plenty, including a Common Blue at the end of the day. The wild flowers were blooming; Ragged Robin, Hay Rattle, Ox-eye Daisy, Lady's Mantle and many others, all looking superb. Dave Bishop put his botanical knowledge to good use and fascinated us with his enthusiasm on the subject of hay meadows and their great value to wildlife. Most of those on the walk were stunned to think that anyone could be so insensitive as to even dream of destroying such a beautiful part of our countryside by covering it with concrete.



Following my contact with Don Trower at Fords, about their artificial Kingfisher Nesting Bank (see spring Magpie), I had an offer to tour the site whenever I wished. Whilst visiting my parents in March, I decided to take up the offer and phoned Don to book a family tour for the morning of Monday the 25th.

Arriving at 10.20 am, on a windy but sunny day, we were met by Don who showed us round the site. We had the advantage of his knowledge and obvious love for it. To illustrate his "sit and listen" tour (Don's description), he had numerous before and after photographs. He had previously written about the types of Estate Maintenance work carried out - in "both pretty pretty & wild areas" within the 200 acres of green area on the 600/700 acres of the site. It did not take me long to realise that most of the areas were fairly small and "pretty pretty", and that the planting was mainly of non-native species.

There are about 14 people working for Don, and he "answers" to Managers and a General Manager - all of whom come from the ordinary workforce of Fords. I believe that none had any special knowledge or "calling" when they started; it was, as Don put it, just a job. However, I could not help being "infected" by Don's obvious enthusiasm and love for his work, and the fights that he described whenever a patch of land becomes "vacant".

What I found a little difficult to understand was that, despite advice from the London Wildlife Trust (I presume in the initial stages, though this was not mentioned), there is a lot more scope for native planting everywhere. However, probably for convenience, they bring in a nursery for advice on a particular area, and are then provided with plants (hence the lack of native species). One other thing which I thought hard to justify, on purely conservation terms, was the purchase of two Black Swans; this backfired somewhat when one of these (ungrateful) creatures decided to leave for new lodgings!

I also learned that there is a rare Saltwort on the site, which had probably been imported on one of Ford's lorries from Spain. There is a sizeable wild area, which is protected, and Don and his team only visit it once a year. They have breeding foxes there, and some of them have even been photographed feeding from the hand.

Despite a few negative feelings above, I have to admit that Don has to contend with some quite appalling problems; like railway lines embedded in concrete! These problems have been overcome, and Don admitted that whilst at first, most of the areas were "pretty pretty", in an attempt to gain acceptance from the Management, there is now strong backing from both the Management and the workforce, all of whom seemed to know Don, which has created a willingness to "muck in" and help him when necessary.

On a sad note, it looks like the proposed A13 road (Rainham Marshes) will be built right over the site (including the Kingfisher Bank!). Don and his Manager seem resigned to this; they say they will just have to build a new nesting bank elsewhere (where have I heard this before?). //

## Vertical Horticulture

by Jeffery G. Leach

Space in our city is limited; our planners seem determined to concrete over as much land as possible to the south of the city (how did our forefathers manage to build such splendid buildings before inventing town and country planning). The end result being a sufficiency of walls and buildings. These could be improved; judicious planting of wall climbing creepers, evergreen Ivy, Virginia Creeper, Russian Vine, to name but three.

Ivy would provide nesting sites for small birds, encourage Butterflies, insulate the building and defeat the spray gun artist. Many world famous buildings are Ivy covered, and some new council houses, on Ladybarn Lane, are so enhanced. The rash of purpose made crinkly tin buildings on low brick walls would be greatly improved. //

## TRAFFORD COUNCIL TO WITHDRAW FROM MERSEY VALLEY JOINT WORKING

We have just heard that this problem has reared its ugly head again. Some will remember that Trafford wished to remove their area of the Mersey Valley from the control of the Warden Service and "manage" it themselves. We contend that the Valley should be managed, as a whole, by those who have the necessary knowledge and skills to promote and enhance the natural history interest of the area. Also Countryside Commission funding could be lost and the Warden Service could go. Want to protest! Phone Ann Buckingham (Friends of the MV), 881 1418, for details. //



ODDS AND ENDS

Wildflower Celebration - A most enjoyable day was had by those who came to Painswick Park to see the result of our Wildflower Transplant. The plants had been moved from the part of a Grade A Site of Biological Importance (SBI), which is to be used for the access road to the new airport terminal, and they seemed to be thriving. Dave Bishop led a guided tour which proved most popular and informative. SBI Destroyed - Unfortunately, the remainder of the SBI has been ploughed, presumably by the landowner Ringway International Developments. This has resulted in the loss of most of the wildflowers, including the rare Marsh Fragrant Orchid, a plant we were unable to save, at the transplant, as it was on private land. We are angry at this unnecessary and wanton destruction, but thankful the transplant saved something from the wreckage and would like to thank those who took part. The wildflowers which include Ox-eye Daisy, Sneezewort, Yellowwort, Northern Marsh Orchid and Meadowsweet; some uncommon and all beautiful, should now be safe, as Painswick Park is in the Green Belt. (Watch out for the second runway! -Ed.)

Mirlees Housing - This proposed housing development, by Barratt and others, has been rejected after the public inquiry. We believe the main grounds were loss of open space and noise. Again, we thank John Turner for his work at the inquiry.

Community Forest for Stockport? - These forests are planned for various areas of the country. Greater Manchester might get one. This could be west of Wigan, which would be very pleasant but a little remote for those on the east side. Perhaps a few smaller forests would be best and as the west side of Stockport has few woodlands of any size, why not start there. Councillor Stenson, of Heald Green, has suggested that land north of Cheadle Royal Hospital would be suitable. We would endorse this but first we have got to make sure that the office development, proposed for the site, does not take place.

Brown Bread Blue Tits - Margaret Chorlton reports that because of a shortage of caterpillars, the Blue Tits in her garden have been reared almost entirely on brown bread. Despite her initial worries, they have thrived. Her wildflowers have flourished and attracted an exceptional number of bees which became so full of nectar that they were hardly able to fly.

Ecological Surveys - The fieldwork for the Phase II Survey of Manchester is now complete and the paperwork in well in hand. Phase I Surveys have been started for Stockport & Tameside. Let us hope these are fully incorporated into the District's UDPs.

Events and Meetings - You should have received an Events List in June. It has nearly run its course but here is an update:  
September: Tuesday 10th - Pub Meeting - Parrs Wood Hotel, Parrs Wood Road/School Lane, East Didsbury. Time 7.30pm. 437 7040.  
September: Thursday 25th - General Meeting - At the home of Iain Brown, 34 Humberstone Ave., Bentley House Estate, Jackson Crescent, Hulme, M15 5LD. (A-Z 105 E3/59 F1) Time 7.30pm. Ring bell for flat 34, await reply and door will be opened remotely.  
October: Sunday 6th - The Wellbeing Fair - Reynold Building, UMIST. 10 am to 6 pm. Manchester Wildlife will be on Stand 51.  
October: Tuesday 8th - Pub Meeting - As September 10th.  
October: Friday 11th - "Flowers and Saints of Macedonia". Slide Show by Dave Bishop. Parrs Wood RSC, East Didsbury. Time 7.30pm  
November: Tuesday 12th - Pub Meeting - As September 10th.  
November: Thursday 28th - General Meeting - Venue to be decided. As always, events could be organised at short notice. If you wish to keep up to date, why not come to our meetings or phone Ian Brown 437 7040 or Unity Kelly 226 4583.

Watch Group - CHANGE OF DATE - The September Watch Meeting will be on the 3rd Saturday (Sept. 21st) at Parrs Wood RSC. We apologise for any inconvenience. Subsequent meetings will revert to the 2nd Saturday of the month. A programme will be out shortly. The main project for the coming session will be the RSNC "River Watch". To find out more; come to the Watch meetings or contact Leslie Fletcher on 445 9605.

Protected by the Law - We have a report, from John Turner, of Grey Wagtails nesting in the courtyard of the Old Magistrates Court on Warren Street, Stockport. One chick was reared; a Ward of Court perhaps!

Are Bats Stupid? - Bats have been seen feeding on Bradshaw Hall Lane in Cheadle Hulme. Don't they know they are flying across the line of the proposed A34 by-pass! A bat was also seen in the editor's garden. Like the Sky Lark in Newton Heath, it was probably lost. The same goes for the Sparrowhawk seen there. //

Offices to Let - We wish to gather information on the vacant office space in Greater Manchester. If you see any offices for sale or to let please take a note of the square footage, name of the development and the address/location. Send the details to the Editor (address on Page Three).



# Spring Bank Holiday? by Anthony Phelps

Monday 6th May 1991 ... I started before the day, at 4.15 am, to do my "Dawn Chorus" at sites I had reconnoitred at 7 am on both Saturday and Sunday! (During the three days I saw a total of 44 bird species.) I spent a few hours listening to, and recording, the birdsong of summer visitors at Hardy Farm and Chorlton Ees, where one Whitethroat acted as musical accompaniment to my 6 am breakfast.

At nine o'clock (after a rest at home) I was off to Parrs Wood, where Ian and I had spent 5 hours, on Sunday, helping out - including my earning myself a "Golden Mop" Award for cleaning out the kitchen! Ian and I manned the Manchester Wildlife stall and we promoted our Butterfly Survey (no Sainsburys, at the request of Parrs Wood) and gained two new memberships. During the day I replayed my "Dawn Chorus" recordings, upon which the RSPB stall helpers got out their "tick lists"! We met Anthony Doyle (a new member, from Didsbury) who asked us to call, in the evening, to see a wood, near his home. Then there was this chap who seemed to make a hobby of finding exotic snakes near Chorlton. "Black Garter" snakes and even a 13' "Boa Constrictor"! Apparently you put them in a sealed container and hand them into the police. (there's one at every event!)

I could have happily fallen asleep, standing up, except for the prospect of the woodland visit. Ian, Unity, and I had a "meeting" at the Old Cock Inn (where Unity really "unwound" ... zzz), and Ian and I left to go to Anthony Doyle's house; no we didn't leave Unity there, honest! After partaking of his hospitality (excellent Brandy ... mmm!) we went to explore an area, totally unknown to me for 11 years; a small wooded valley, to the rear of Ashfield Lodge on Palatine Road. The valley was covered with Bluebells, and many other plants including Pignut (except where the owners had "casually" tipped!). Anthony told us that there is an active and breeding fox population, and even bats.

This area must be protected from further tipping, and office/car park development. I had to pinch myself to believe that an area so beautiful existed within 20 minutes of my home, had remained hidden from me for such a long time and that I was still awake! And so to bed .... zzzz //

## USEFUL CONTACTS

- Bats CCT Bat Group - 0606 781868 (day)  
LTNC Bat Group - Steve Garland - 0204 22311 (day)
- Bees (Swarms, information etc.) Keith Taylor - 793 7335
- Insects Peter Hardy - 969 4771 (evenings & weekends)
- Birds RSPB-Stockport - Tony O'Neill - 962 2449  
RSPB-Manchester - Simeon Rydz - 434 2720

## British Trust for Conservation Volunteers

- Sale & Altrincham - Shelagh Aston - 275 3146 (day) 928 2223  
Salford & Trafford - Brian Taylor - 872 7640 (day)  
Stockport - Kim Porter 0625 874729 (evenings & weekends)

Bury Wildlife & Countryside A. G. - Dave Bentley - 724 8602

Cheshire Conservation Trust (Stockport and Tameside Group)  
Julia Mottishaw (Secretary) 494 7831

Friends of the Earth - Neil Lea - 789 8880

Friends of the Mersey Valley - Ann Buckingham - 881 1814

Mersey Valley Wardens - Sale 905 1100 - Chorlton 881 5639

This list will help you to contact the correct organisation. Conservation groups wishing to be included on future lists - please let us know and maybe, in return, we could be similarly featured in the publications of others.

Copyright Manchester Wildlife 82 Crantock Dr., Heald Green, Stockport. SK8 3HA Tel 437 7040

Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that information in the "Magpie" is correct, we cannot be held responsible for any mistakes in the text. Likewise, any person who undertakes any project based on information from this newsletter does so at their own risk.

The "Magpie" is the newsletter of Manchester Wildlife - the opinions expressed therein are not necessarily those of MW.



# APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

Name (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Postcode \_\_\_\_\_

Phone number \_\_\_\_\_

## Subscription rates

- ☐ Family membership ..... £6
- ☐ Individual membership ..... £4
- ☐ Reduced membership  
(Senior Citizen, Unwaged, Under 16) ..... £2
- ☐ Schools, Groups and Societies ..... £6
- ☐ Please send me details of Life Membership
- ☐ I enclose a donation of £ ..... which I understand  
will go towards the funding of local nature and  
conservation work.
- ☐ I am interested in sponsoring a Newsletter and/or  
leaflet. Please send me further details.
- ☐ I may be able to sponsor tools, trees or other materials  
in exchange for publicity and would like to discuss this.



Please send completed forms with cheques made  
payable to **Manchester Wildlife**  
to:

Unity Kelly  
13 Ruskin Avenue  
Rusholme  
Manchester  
M14 4DP

*Space here for Sponsor's  
Name + Logo + Phone No.*

*Inquiries to Editor - 061 437 7040*