



CARDIFF NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

Founded 1867

NEWSLETTER No. 130

January 2024

Charity No. 1092496

LIST OF OFFICERS 2023/2024

President

Mike Dean

Secretary

Position vacant

029 20756869

secretary@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Treasurer

Rhian Kendall

treasurer@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Membership Secretary

Elizabeth Morgan

membership@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Indoor Meetings Secretary

Hilary Wicks

029 20257012

indoor@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Field Meetings Coordinator

Position vacant

Newsletter Editor

Stephen Nottingham

stephen@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Also on Council

Mary Salter, Gill Barter, Stephen Howe, Patrizia Donovan

<http://www.cardiffnaturalists.org.uk>

www.facebook.com/groups/CardiffNaturalists

<http://cardiffnaturalists.blogspot.com>

Cover photo: Barn Owl, by Linda Morris.

Photo of Mike Dean (page 3) by Elaine Harper.

President's Report

Mike Dean



At the AGM on 20th November 2023, I was asked to take on the role of President of the Society, and while I was very honoured to be asked I felt somewhat inadequate as I am not a naturalist and do not have the detailed knowledge that some of the other members of the Society have. However, it was pointed out that I had in effect been *de facto* undertaking the role for the last few years. Therefore, I decided to accept the nomination.

Accepting the role did instigate me to thinking about my interest in nature and the changes that have occurred during my lifetime.

I was brought up in Mold, living on the outskirts of the town with open fields behind the house. As teenagers, we would go off for the day across the fields with a couple of meat paste sandwiches and the instruction: "Be back for tea and stick together." We saw and heard nature, but we took it all for granted.

The local stream had Sticklebacks and Minnows in profusion together with the aquatic insects that formed part of the food chain. The arrival of the Cuckoo in late Spring was nothing worth getting excited about but just part of the annual cycle of events. Birds were singing everywhere and possibly the only time I remember getting excited was when we heard occasionally the Yellow Hammers with their song of "A little bit of bread and no cheeees".

In August we would have excursions up the local mountain, Moel Famau, to pick Wimberies (*Vaccinium myrtillus*) with a degree of resentment, I must admit but at least we could enjoy the numerous Skylarks while we were picking the fruit.

On dark evenings, walking down the lane into town, with our torch, no streetlight to illuminate the way, we would often hear the Tawny Owls in the trees nearby but I never remember seeing or hearing a Barn Owl. An added advantage of the lack of street lighting was that on a clear moonless night, the Milky Way would be visible in all its glory.

Since those days there has been tremendous progress in lifestyles, technology, and farming but it has come at a price and, while we will never want to or be able to push the clock back to those days, we must hang on to the remnants that remain and push back to increase many of our threatened species.

During my time as President, I will do my best to ensure the survival of Cardiff Naturalists' Society and the completion of the Morrey Salmon Project, so that this work is preserved and available for all to see.

Mike Dean



As Mike Dean has been elected to President of the Cardiff Naturalists' Society there is a vacancy for Society Secretary that we need to fill. Mike is happy to explain the tasks involved, which he has done for many years on behalf of the Society, to anyone who is interested. Even if you are not currently a member you can help the group and all those interested in the environment, as we are offering a year's free membership to get you going.

If you are able to help, please send an email to Mike at: secretary@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk



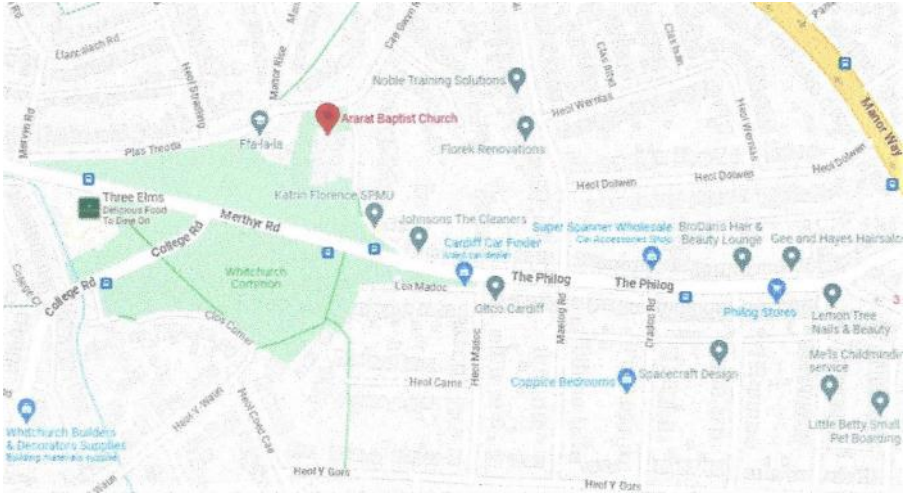
The Society would also welcome more people to join Council. Could you help with this, or might you be able to take on a role such as the organisation of outdoor meetings?

If you can lend a hand in any way, please get in touch with our President, Mike Dean at: secretary@cardiffnaturalists.org.uk

Wishing you all a Happy New Year

Indoor Meeting venue

Cardiff Naturalists' Society have a new venue for their indoor meetings: Ararat Community Centre, next to the Ararat Baptist Church. Meetings here start at 7 pm. The address: Plas Treoda, Whitchurch, Cardiff CF14 1PT.



Outdoor Meetings

Sunday 7 January 2024

Cardiff New Year Birdwatch, with Linda and Rob Nottage

The annual Birdwatch heads for Llanishen & Lisvane Reservoirs. Starting at 10am, with a possible extension in the afternoon to Forest Farm Country Park, Whitchurch. Meet at the Reservoir car park (90 min free, pay excess on departure). This a joint meeting with the Cardiff Group, Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales.

We will take the perimeter path around Llanishen Reservoir (the paths around Lisvane Reservoir, an SSSI, are closed in winter to reduce disturbance to wintering wildfowl). The reservoirs have not been open for public access for a number of years, and have recently been restored. The new Visitor Centre has a café.

Indoor Meetings

All indoor meetings are at the Ararat Community Centre, Whitchurch, starting at 7 pm and finishing by 8.30 pm.

Monday 22 January 2024

Winter birding in the Sonoran Desert, Arizona, with Cindy Howells

The Sonoran Desert surrounds the city of Tucson, in southern Arizona. Characterised by tall Saguaro cacti, the desert's unique flora and fauna are more similar to nearby Mexico than elsewhere in the United States. In particular, the bird population includes species found nowhere else in the US. This talk will explore the areas varied habitats, with a focus on the birds seen on annual February trips over the past few decades.

Monday 26 February 2024

Members' Evening

A series of short talks by Cardiff Naturalists' Society members, on a diverse range of topics.

Monday 25 March 2024

Speaker TBC

Monday 22 April 2024

Speaker TBC

Look out for all the latest information and additions to the indoor and outdoor meeting programmes in the next newsletter, in emails to members, on social media, or on our website/blog: [***http://cardiffnaturalists.blogspot.co.uk/p/programme.html***](http://cardiffnaturalists.blogspot.co.uk/p/programme.html)

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Deadline for submissions for next newsletter:

Monday 27 May 2024

The 2023 End-of-Year Morrey Salmon Project Update

Andy Kendall

As members and readers of this newsletter will be aware, but as useful background for anyone new to this topic, the Morrey Salmon project is based on a desire to deal with this important collection of wildlife photographs. It started all the way back in the 1980s when Steve Howe and I first discussed them at work. Formal discussions started in 2018, and through 2019 we finally made headway in getting the National Museum of Wales interested and finally the superb collection of glass negative slides was passed over to the Museum in 2020.

After a COVID delay, we were able in early 2023 to start on cleaning / processing and digitising the slides.

The process we have agreed with the museum is as follows:

1. The negatives are cleaned with water/alcohol on the glass slide and with a soft brush on the side that has the photographic coating.
2. Any information that is available from the slide (such as a scratched in date) or containing envelope or box is transcribed onto a new acid free folding envelope.
3. The envelopes are given a unique accession number of the format NMW.Z.2020.023.nnnn where the first sections describe that it's owned by the National Museum, Zoology department, formally added to the collections in 2020 and collection number 23. The last part is unique to the object.
4. We then photograph them at a medium resolution using a light box and camera and these digital images are then converted to positive images to make it easier to identify or confirm things as needed.

5. The data we have about the slide is entered into a spreadsheet that will ultimately form the basis of the museum's database entry about the object.

Still to happen are:

6. The museum will formally scan them at high resolution.

7. They will put them into their online system, so that everyone can see them worldwide and Morrey Salmon can hopefully get the recognition that he deserves.

The cleaning team doing the first 3 steps are charging ahead with something like 1 800 of the 3 600 glass negatives and slides already processed.

Photographing is running behind that at 1 363 photographed and 1 093 tuned into positive images (I'm doing more over the holiday period when I'm not with family and when it's raining outside which seems to be all too often at the moment!).

Rob Nottage is doing the bulk of the data work at the moment and he's already up to slide 833.

So, what's to follow?

We obviously still have a lot of work on this first pass though, and then we want to help Rob and the museum by working out which negatives were used in the various publications that Morrey Salmon submitted pictures for and finding any other extra information.

We are going to need help in looking at various places and publications and we are already getting some of this through the posts that we have made on social media and things in previous newsletters, for example this from Howell Harris:

"Went to the Pembrokeshire County Archives yesterday — some super pics Morrey Salmon took of the International Ornithological Congress visit to Skokholm, Skomer, & Grassholm in July 1934..."

The prints were made by Salmon himself in 1984 for David Saunders, warden of Skomer, who was writing a story for the local press about the 50th anniversary of the IOC visit. Used them again for another article to mark the 80th.

There are some refs to Salmon in the Lockley diaries, but not very specific. He bought Lockley his first camera and showed him how to use it. Salmon was there for summer holidays through the 1930s".

If anyone is going down to the Archives (Haverfordwest), more information on what they have and what was published would be gratefully received.

We're expecting that a lot more interesting information can be found as we go along and there are still opportunities to help with the project if you are interested, please contact Mike Dean.

In the meantime, here are a few interesting recent pictures that we have processed (pp 11-15), some with unknown dates which is going to make finding the correct data for them a lot harder.

An earlier update with more information is to be found in Newsletter 128: <https://cardiffnaturalists.org.uk/pdf/newsletters/cnsnewsletter128.pdf>

More about Colonel Harry Morrey Salmon (photo below) can be found at: <https://cardiffnaturalists.org.uk/htmlfiles/150th-05.htm>





Gannets on Grassholm. Date unknown.



Camp 15th May 1912. Kenfig Dunes. H. Morrey Salmon on left.



Swift flying to nest with cheeks full of insects, taken with flash in collaboration with Arthur Brook and used in the book 'Footprints On the Sands of Time—The Life of Colonel Harry Morrey Salmon', written by his sons, Norman and Hugh Salmon.



Bearded Tit. Date unknown



Male Turtle Dove. 15th July 1923.



Curlew night roost. Date unknown.

Brian Kerley, weatherman

We were saddened to hear of the passing of Brian Kerley, a retired meteorologist who produced annual weather reports from North Cardiff for this newsletter for over 10 years under the byline “A Friend of the Society”. He died suddenly on 10th July 2023 after been taken ill while working on his allotment.

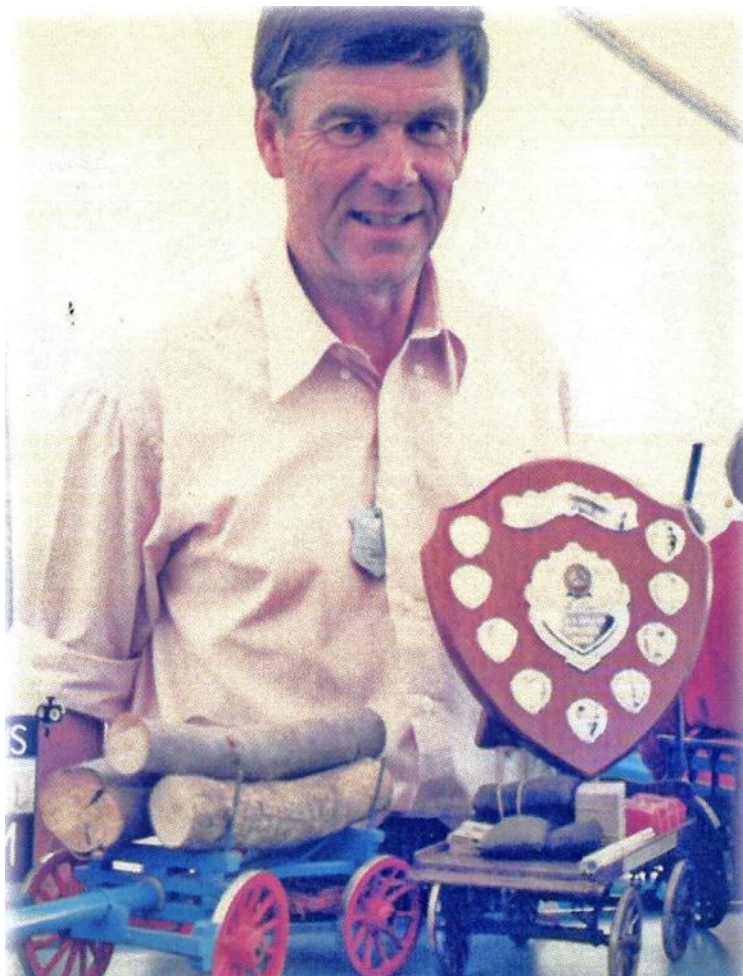
As a young meteorologist, over 50 years ago, Brian was involved in pioneering research carried out by the Met Research Flight at Farnborough. He spent many hours at high altitudes in unpressurised research aircraft, making detailed measurements of the structure of Jetstreams.

In his previous contributions to this newsletter (e.g. January 2022 and 2023), Brian explained how Jetstreams were first discovered, how they are formed, and how they influence the weather around the globe. Although Jetstreams occur at high altitudes (30,000 to 45,000 feet) they play a profound role in determining the weather.

Brian described how global temperature rise, particularly in the Polar Regions, is causing Jetstreams to become more variable in their position and movement. He described this tendency as ‘Jetstream delinquency’, and noted, for example, how an erratic southward shift in the North Atlantic Jetstream led to the cold weather experienced in North Cardiff in early December 2022. In contrast, with the Jetstream remaining well to the north in summer 2021, the Met Office issued an Amber Warning as temperatures exceeding 30°C in North Cardiff every day from 17-22 July.

In the January 2022 newsletter, Brian explained the important difference between CLIMATE and WEATHER. He concluded by noting that the combination of warmer air holding more water vapour and ‘wobbling’ Jetstreams is leading to more unusual and extreme weather in places that have been relatively immune to such events in the past: “if Global Warming continues there is little doubt that we can expect more frequent and more extreme weather events in the UK and across the globe”, he warned.

His contributions to the Cardiff Naturalists' Society newsletter will be missed. Condolences are given to his wife Liz.





*Cwm George and Casehill Wood (Woodland Trust), Dinas Powys.
Photos by Stephen Nottingham.*

Waxwings

In late December 2023, the Society heard reports of waxwings (*Bombycilla garrulus*) in South Wales, in Rogerstone, Newport. Flocks were also sighted in North Wales and across England.

The last irruption of non-native Bohemian Waxwing was in 2017, as reported in the May 2017 issue of this newsletter (page 26), when flocks were seen feeding on berries of hawthorn and rowan in Cardiff and Barry. The note was accompanied by the photo below taken by Linda Morris in 2017 in Barry.





Orange Waxcap, Llanishen & Lisvane.

*Crimson Waxcap.
Llanishen &
Lisvane.*



*Pink Ballerina Waxcap,
Dyffryn Gardens.*

*Photos by Phill
Blanning.*



*Shaggy Inkcap,
Longwood Drive.*

*White Saddle Fungi,
North Cardiff.*



*Common Bird's Nest Fungi,
Dyffryn Gardens.*

Photos by Phill Blanning.

External events

Our friends at the Cardiff Group of the Wildlife Trust of South and West Wales have a number of activities lined up for Spring 2024.

On Thursday 11 January (7.30pm) there is an online talk about the River Wye by James Hitchcock, the Chief Executive of the Radnorshire Wildlife Trust, about how they and their partners are working to address serious concerns about the health of the river.

Nature and History of Forest Farm is the title of the online presentation on Tuesday 5 March (7.30pm), led by Martin Chamberlain, the Chair of the Friends of Forest Farm.

The group are also organising conservation work parties in the Wild Gardens at Roath Park on Wednesday 17 January and 6 February (10.30am to 12.30pm)., where tasks include removing highly-invasive Himalayan balsam

For further information on how to get involved and links to online talks see:

www.wtswwcardiff.org.uk/programme.html

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Gill Barter also draws our attention to a couple of upcoming events: an open garden and an online talk.

As was the case last year, the first garden to open in the National Garden Scheme (NGS) programme will be Slade gardens, Southerndown, Vale of Glamorgan, on Sunday 11 February 2024 (1.30pm to 4pm). Among the attractions will be the flowering snowdrops.

Further information: findagarden.ngs.org.uk/garden/4563/Slade



Snowdrops at Slade gardens, NGS opening February 2023. Photo by Stephen Nottingham.

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On Tuesday 20 February 2024 (7pm) there will be an online talk entitled 'The 2023 International Climate Conference COP-28: Failures and Successes', organised by the Cardiff and District branch of the United Nations. The speakers will be Dr Jennifer Allan, who specialises in global environmental politics, particularly on climate change and hazardous chemicals and wastes, and Dr Haro Karkouran, an International Relations theorist whose latest book examines the climate crisis and the failure of UN-led climate solutions in light of long-standing international problems.

Location: *Zoom: 811 9586 2485 Password: 739740*



Fibrous Waxcap, Fly Agaric. Photos by Linda Morris.



Shaggy Inkcap, Honey Waxcap, Meadow Waxcap. Photos by Linda Morris.

Online Survey

CARDIFF LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP

SCAN QR
CODE

Tell us what should be
done for nature in Cardiff.



CARDIFF LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP

Partneriaeth
Natur Lloer
Caerdydd



Cardiff
Local Nature
Partnership



Arweiniad gan
Llywodraeth Cymru
Funded by
Welsh Government

Cardiff Naturalists' Society were contacted by the Cardiff Local Nature Partnership about the Nature Plan for Cardiff. CNS members can have their say by completing an online survey (above), or by attending an in-person event at Sport Wales National Centre, Sophia Gardens, Cardiff (16 January 2024) or an online event (18 January 2024).

**CARDIFF
WORKSHOP**
16TH JANUARY 2024

**NATURE
PLAN**

Cardiff Community Workshop:
Sport Wales National Centre
18:00-20:30

SCAN QR CODE



CARDIFF LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP

Partnersiaeth
Natur a
Caerdydd

Cardiff
Local Nature
Partnership

Adennu ein
Gymdeithas Gyda
Naturdydd
Methl Gomerant

**ONLINE
EVENT**

18TH JANUARY 2024

**NATURE
PLAN**

Cardiff Community
Online Workshop
18:00-19:30

SCAN QR CODE



CARDIFF LOCAL NATURE PARTNERSHIP

Partnersiaeth
Natur a
Caerdydd

Cardiff
Local Nature
Partnership

Adennu ein
Gymdeithas Gyda
Naturdydd
Methl Gomerant



Trooping Funnel, photographed in North Cardiff by Phill Blanning.

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