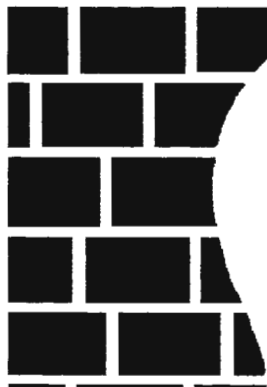


WYCOMBE WILDLIFE



NEWS

no. 15

URBAN WILDLIFE

GROUP

SEPTEMBER 1994

The Countryside Centre, Bassetsbury Manor, Bassetsbury Lane, High Wycombe, HP11 1QX

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WyUWG's Sheepridge Educational Reserve - Opened

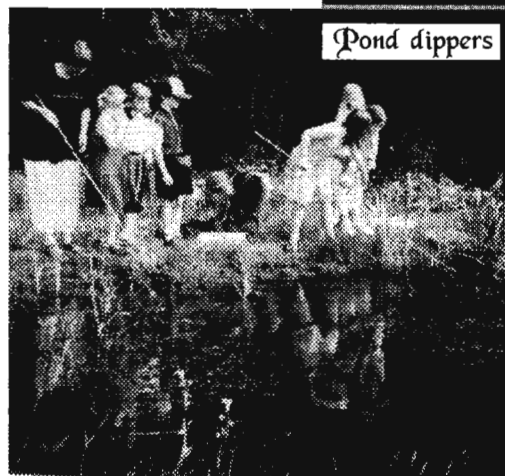
Denys Ovenden, illustrator of the popular Collins Field Guides was principal guest at the official launch of the WyUWG Educational Reserve at Sheepridge, Little Marlow, on Saturday 18th. June 1994.

The reserve has been created on land owned by Little Marlow Parish Council and developed with the aid of a generous grant of £1000 from the Bass Wildlife Action Fund.

Denys Ovenden Declares Sheepridge Reserve Open



Pond dippers



After cutting the tape, Denys joined a conducted tour of the Reserve, and chatted with parents and children from the Marlow C of E School, as well as members of WyUWG and other visitors.

Dragon-fly making, pond dipping & a talk by bee keeper, Harry Hitchman, concluded a most pleasant & successful afternoon. The refreshments supplied by Elaine Tague were very welcome in such warm weather. Pat Morris.

This issue generously sponsored by : **THE DOCUMENT COMPANY**
RANK XEROX



Wycombe Urban Wildlife Group is a voluntary organization the **OBJECT** of which is to further the ecology and knowledge of the urban and fringe areas of High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire; to conserve, protect, restore and create wildlife habitats; to encourage colonization and survival of all plant and animal life in such areas and to promote the education of the public in matters pertaining to urban wildlife and its conservation.

Within Wycombe District the Group aims to:

- Survey and map wildlife habitats.
 - Protect important wildlife sites.
 - Study wildlife sites and their associated wildlife.
 - Manage wildlife sites and associated flora and fauna.
 - Stimulate public interest in wildlife & its conservation
 - Encourage wildlife gardening.
 - Co-operate with other groups with similar aims.
 - Promote the objectives of the Group.
 - Encourage active participation in conservation of all persons and groups and provide appropriate training to that end.
- (A detailed copy of the aims is available on request)

Wycombe Wildlife News is published 3 times a year to promote the Group's activities and inform members & the public of its progress.

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Produced by Maurice Young.
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Frances Wilding & Maurice.
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& Ann Priest.

First Five Years Celebrated

On Monday 18th. April, the AGM was held at Bassetsbury Manor.

Following the AGM a very well attended 5th birthday party of the Group got underway. Members were welcomed to the party by Councillor Pam Priestley who follows all WyUWG activities closely.

The guest speaker for the evening was John Wyatt, writer and lecturer in Adult Education and former Chairman of Bucks Bird club, who entertained us with his bird call tapes and accompanying slides. He also recalled several amusing tales of when he worked as a keeper with the birds at London Zoo.

John kindly donated 2 bird call tapes to the raffle that was held in the interval. Other welcome donations to the raffle included a basket of marzipan fruits from Frances Wilding

and a painting by Lorna Cassidy.

Pat Morris baked a birthday cake for the occasion which was decorated with the WyUWG logo. After Councillor Pam Priestley blew the candles out, the cake was cut and served with refreshments.

Plants and wildflower seeds were on sale along with bird and bat boxes, Pat having reminded us earlier of the forthcoming wildlife garden competition.

John then resumed his talk and, I am certain, that by the end of the evening, we all felt far more confident that we could recognise bird calls more clearly.

A vote of thanks was given by Angus Idle and a most enjoyable evening was had by all. Just under £60 was raised at the AGM.

Wendy Thomas.

Wildlife Surveys

WyUWG carried out two Biological Surveys during the summer 1994 season.

The first survey was at Grange Farm (SU 882 958) on 21/05/94.

Plant species - 140
Bird species - 11 inc. cuckoo
Butterflies - nil, (heavy rain!)

The second survey was at Lodge Hill, Saunderton (SP 785 005) on 26/06/94.

Chalk downland species in flower
- 28 inc. wild candytuft
Bird species - 7 inc. 2 corn buntings
Butterflies - 7 inc. common blue

The data for Lodge Hill have been sent to English Nature and data from both surveys will be entered in the Recorder data base on our First Data computer at the Countryside Centre.

Garden Surveys

Pat Morris' garden: 26 species of bird inc. siskin & goldcrest 15 species of butterfly, and 12 Silver Y moths on the buddleia (in the even-



Goldcrest

Irenke's garden: 20 bird species inc. Rook (April)

Why don't you start keeping records in YOUR garden and send them in.

Wildlife Marathon 1994: Chairborough Road - 60 plant species recorded; Cock Lane - 10 butterfly species recorded; Sands Bank - 80 macro moths, 16 micro moths, 3 lace wing spp. & 12 glow worms, the moths included: beautiful carpet, maple prominent, white satin, black neck, & small purple barred.

⇒ The next survey will be at Park Farm, West Wycombe on 11/09/94 ⇐

Views expressed in the newsletter are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Group. For the purposes of management of the Group membership information is held on computer. Any members who object to their membership details being held in this way should notify the Secretary.



Passing it on -

In a recent issue of Urban Wildlife News (vol 11, no 1, Feb 94) which the Group receives from English Nature there was an interesting article on the construction of a hibernaculum for newts which is worth summarising here for the benefit of those of you who have newts, or other amphibians, in your ponds and would like to enhance their chances of surviving the rigours of winter.

All our native amphibians like to hide away in cracks and crevices and it was noted that newts seem to do well where there is water with moist stony rubble close by. Newport UWG therefore constructed a new 'hibernaculum' by digging a pit alongside a pond on one of their sites which they filled with large stones, leaf litter and chunks of old wood. They capped it with soil but made sure there were a few openings leading into the buried rubble. Overflow from the pond ensured the hibernaculum was damp but it was stressed

that the underlying soil must be free draining so water does not accumulate - rotting leaf litter would use all the oxygen in the water and the newts would drown. If your garden is on clay it was suggested that the rubble be piled up in a mound by the pond and then covered with soil - and, perhaps, turned into a rockery?

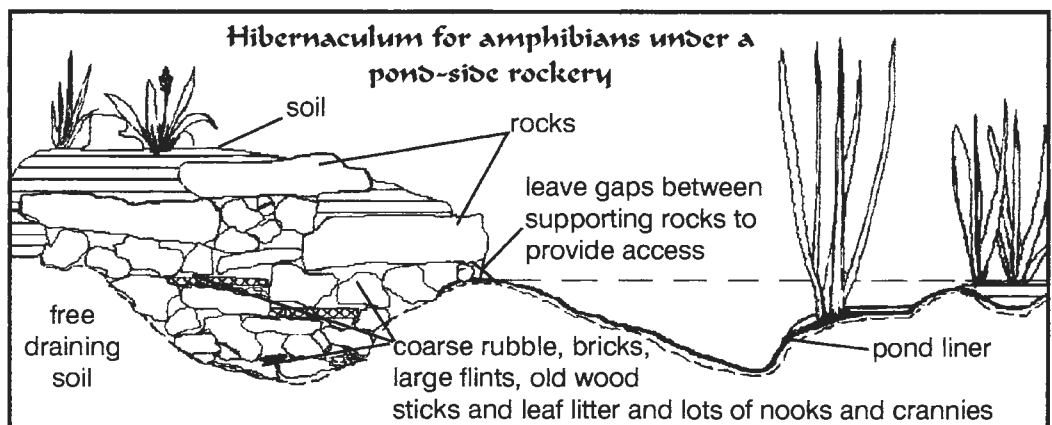
This what we did at West Wycombe Garden Centre. We created "mini caves" under the rockery in our wildlife garden by supporting paving slabs on bricks and piled the earth dug out from the pond on top of them. Entrance to the "caves" was provided by plastic drainpipes leading from them to openings between the rocks on the rockery. However, I can now see that this may allow predators in. The advantage of using rubble is that it creates a variety of spaces, large and small into which the newts can creep

out of the reach of non-hibernators looking for a quick snack. Our pile of large flints alongside the pond at Sheepridge seemed most suitable, so with the addition of some leaf litter and a few bits of wood and capping with soil it became a 'hibernaculum' for the opening of the reserve.

It was suggested in the article that wood and leaf litter be mixed in with the rubble as newts are often found in association with these materials - they hold water so must help maintain the humidity in the rubble, and reduce the risk of dehydration for the animals.

When discussing the hibernaculum

A good idea from
Newport
Urban Wildlife
Group



with Denys Ovenden before the opening of Sheepridge he commented that he had found lots of toads under an old railway sleeper once. So, if we can get one the hibernacula accommodation at Sheepridge will be extended. Maurice.

I found the much photographed toad present at the opening of Sheepridge when I was reconstructing the hibernaculum. So even in its unfinished state it was appreciated by the local amphibians - as is the log I drilled out and put in the "foundations" of a bee and wasp wall for 'show' at the opening of the reserve - I left it there and it is now occupied by leaf-cutting bees! A bee and wasp wall? - another idea gleaned from EN's Urban Wildlife News that will be the subject of the next "Passing it on" and a future project! (Copies of EN's Urban Wildlife News may be seen at the Countryside Centre)

A pile of stones
- occupied,
a small drilled out log
- occupied
(in under a month)

Act now -
make you garden
wildlife friendly
while there is still
enough wildlife
around
to benefit from and
reward your efforts



Welcoming

WILDLIFE * **TO THEIR GARDENS**

*
and VISITORS



One of the unexpected "delights" of wildlife gardening discovered by visitors to Roger's garden

Wycombe's **wildlife gardens**

open to the public.

As part of WyUWG's Wildlife Gardening Promotion Package, several gardens were opened to the public this summer.

The two winners of the 1993 Wildlife Garden Competition went to extraordinary lengths to ensure their gardens were perfect on **THE DAY**.

Irenke York removed 4 1/2 tons of soil to make a new pond while Angela Colmer slaved all the previous day in pouring rain, removing blemished leaves - she also baked some delicious cakes.

A satisfactory flow of visitors came to each garden, including Council Bob Barber, Chairman of Wycombe District Council, who visited Irenke's. Roger Wilding was astonished at the arrival of 20 students from Sue Goss' Adult Education classes. We were not sure if it was "the half the flora of the British Isles" growing there, or Roger's elderflower champagne, but Sue said later: "They have not stopped talking about it". ☺ ☺ ☺ ☺

Several gardens had arts & craft on sale, besides native plants, and Michael York dispensed advice on wildlife photography, as well as tea and strawberry scones. Altogether over £50 was raised for WyUWG. If you missed these delightful gardens this year, make sure to come next time. You will be certain of a fascinating & mouth-watering afternoon.

Many thanks to all who volunteered (!?!) so willingly to open their gardens and make the scheme a success. Pat Morris.

So why not join the Growing WyUWG Wildlife Gardening Circle ? >>>>>

>> The second WyUWG Wildlife Gardening Competition results have been announced with three winning entries (see opposite page). We are planning to have another competition next year so now is the time for those who have not joined the growing numbers of WyUWG wildlife gardeners to start planning the conversion of their garden over winter.

There are no hard & fast rules covering wildlife gardening. The objective is to create an environment sympathetic to the needs of mammals & birds and attractive to beneficial insects at the same time as providing increased interest for the gardener. Few gardeners want an untidy wilderness and, indeed, such a garden usually attracts less wildlife than a garden that is managed.

An easy starting point is to cater for the needs of birds. Their needs are fairly straight forward and involve provision of water for drinking and bathing, a bird table - and other feeding devices, trees and shrubs to provide refuge when needed, nesting sites (supplemented with bird boxes if desired) and berried shrubs and seedheads to provide natural food.

Try to make room for a pond, even if it is only a small one. The effort involved in digging a pond is soon repaid by the interest it creates. Don't waste money on koi carp and expensive waterlilies. Buy inexpensive oxygenating plants and a few native plants or obtain some from a friend's garden and let nature provide the wildlife such as frogs, dragonflies, and pond skaters free of charge.

We all like to see butterflies in our gardens. The species and numbers likely to visit our gardens, however, are affected by the surrounding environment, but we can encourage butterflies to visit & even breed in our gardens if we provide for their needs - a constant supply of nectar producing flowers from Spring to Autumn and the appropriate larval foodplants are the secrets of butterfly gardening. Whilst there is more scope for attracting wildlife into a large garden, those with small gardens can always experiment with window boxes, tubs and containers.

If you would like more information on any aspect of wildlife gardening or have any particular plant requirements, please get in touch. Roger Wilding.





Visiting

WYCOMBE'S

WILDLIFE GARDENS

Wycombe Wildlife Garden
Competition - 1994



Winners

Two impressions are left after visiting the gardens entered: first, it was a privilege to share in the involvement and enjoyment that all the competitors found in their wildlife gardens; and second, how extremely individual each garden was. We had to stick strictly to our criteria; the gardener had to provide and maintain as great a variety of wildlife habitats as practicable which, because such gardens take time to establish, and larger gardens obviously have a wider range of possible habitats, we made 3 categories: a/. Best large, established wildlife garden; b/. Best small, established wildlife garden; c/. Best new wildlife garden.

We were also looking for gardens that had an attractive overall design, and that enticed the visitor to look further, to discover insects, amphibians, bird-life, wild-flowers and so on in all their amazing variety. Such a garden will keep you involved for a life-time!

Several gardens we visited belonged to retired people, who were getting great enjoyment from their increased opportunity to observe wildlife. We saw some excellent practical ideas. Mr. Almond's wonderful bird-table, for instance, made from an over-grown crab apple cut hard back which provided a beautiful surround of blossom in the Spring and small apples in the Autumn, with sweet peas and nasturtiums climbing up the trunk and a circular flower bed below. The large platform has a good sized dish slotted in to it for the birds to bathe and drink. Other good ideas included ways of conserving rainwater such as a small pond filled directly from the run-off from a greenhouse and arrangements to collect water not only from the house roof, but also from sheds and garages. In the extremely hot weather experienced during our judging, this seemed especially important, as nitrate free water is the best for topping up ponds. The hot weather made the wet areas

and shady parts with mosses, ivy and ferns very appealing. The last 2 wet years have made us forget the importance of conserving rainwater - don't let your wildlife suffer from a future hose-pipe ban!

Four children, Vanessa, Gillian, Glyn and Russel showed us round their school's wildlife area and their answers to our many questions showed a detailed knowledge and involvement. We hope this will continue, despite the problems they have from outside the school itself. They have been awarded the spade and fork donated by Halls, and we hope that they will find it useful in continuing their work there.

I hope you will all get the opportunity to see the winning gardens, and share in their owners enjoyment of them. All three winners had clear aims carried out right through their gardens, giving each one a special 'feel' of its own.

Thank you for asking me to look at all the gardens. Sue Goss.

Once again, our thanks to Sue for helping judge the competition with Roger and to all who supported the competition, especially to West Wycombe Garden Centre who donated £50 vouchers as prizes for each of the winners.

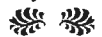
Best established
large wildlife
garden,

John Willson



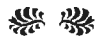
Best established
small wildlife
garden,

Wendy Willson

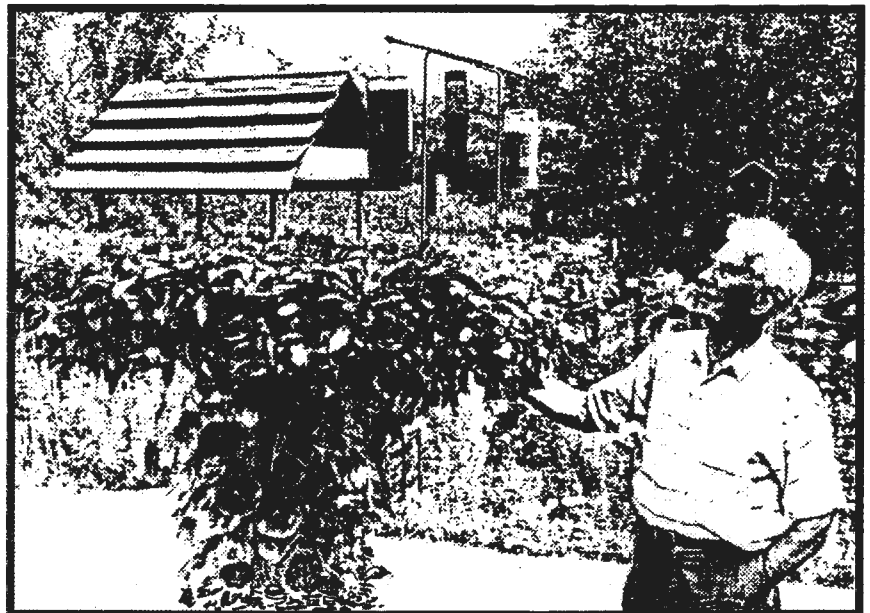


Best
new wildlife
garden

Joanna Hunter



Below
Doug Almond
demonstrates
his 'crab apple'
bird-table





Friends

Empty Boxes for Sale

Foes



Encarsia formosa
wasp
parasitic
on whitefly



Phytoseiulus persimilis
a mite -
predator
of red
spider
mites



Aphidoletes aphidimyza
larvae of a
gall midge
that feed
on green-
fly and
blackfly



Heterorhabditis megidis
a
nematode
'worm'
that
transmits a
bacterial
disease of
vine weevils



Phasmarhabditis hermaphrodita a
nematode parasite of slugs which
carries a bacterial disease of slugs

How can wildlife gardeners control pests if they don't use pesticides? With this question in mind WyUWG members attended an interesting talk by Zeneca Garden Care put on by the West Wycombe Garden Centre.

Zeneca are harnessing Nature's Friends - that's from the gardener's point of view, not the pests' - to control pest species. Basically they have selected a number of species that parasitize or predate (feed on) common garden pests and bred them up in such numbers that they can now supply them to gardeners.

The "friends" won't wipe out the pests but will reduce their numbers to tolerable levels and then remain in 'natural balance' with their host or prey keeping them down to acceptable, sometimes imperceptible, levels for the rest of the year.

To date 5 "friends" have been available: a midge to control aphids, a bacterium to control caterpillars, a parasitic wasp to control whitefly, a predatory red spider to control red-spider mite and a microscopic nematode worm to control vine weevil but demand for something to control slugs and snails has been so strong that the release, at a few, select, outlets such as the West Wycombe Garden Centre, of another nematode worm Zeneca have been working on, has been brought forward by a year.

Some of the "friends" can be used out-of-doors, and others will, of course, escape. I was, therefore, particularly interested in the implications for wildlife and pleased to learn that English Nature are consulted over which species may be developed.

Most of these "friends" are specific predators of the pest species concerned, only the slug nematodes and anti-caterpillar bacteria are relatively "broad" spectrum and, of these, only the latter is of possible concern to conservationists. Used only on cabbages etc. on the allotment or in the vegetable garden, OK, there should be no marked effect on other species of

butterfly in our gardens and these bacteria are, in any case, already present in "the wild". Birds eating the infected caterpillars or slugs and snails parasitised by the nematodes will not be harmed and they will not affect/infect hedgehogs - or us !!!

I am not so confident over a virus control for caterpillars reported in the New Scientist (11 June 1994). The Institute of Virology and Microbiology at Oxford have introduced a gene from a scorpion into a virus that attacks caterpillars (genetic engineering!) so that it kills caterpillars faster. Butterfly Conservation and FOE are opposing proposals for field tests of this 'product'. Their immediate concern is for rare moths at Wytham Wood near the testing grounds. I suggest the concerns are even greater, for once released into the environment the spread of this "engineered" virus will be uncontrolled and threaten ALL our lepidoptera - and

possibly us, for there are natural mechanisms whereby this gene could be transferred to viruses and bacteria that affect other species. When we are not able to predict the spread of introduced genes in the 'wild' I consider the conducting of such tests in the "field" very irresponsible.

That said, however, there is still much to be said for practising "wildlife friendly gardening" and encouraging the natural predators of pest species - hoverflies, blackbirds, bluetits, thrushes, and hedgehogs etc. - to visit our gardens for free.

Zeneca's empty boxes and excellent leaflets explaining their use are available at the West Wycombe Garden Centre. Empty boxes? - Yes - "Nature's Friends" are living organisms so you have to send a form from the box you have purchased to Zeneca who will send you fresh, live supplies ready and eager to devour your pests.

Maurice.



vine weevil



cabbage white caterpillar



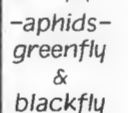
whitefly



red spider mite



-aphid-
greenfly
&
blackfly





Grass identification course

The course started at 8 a.m. on Sunday morning 15th May at the Countryside Centre. In spite of this an astonishing number of would-be grass experts turned up to be greeted by Angus Idle with a great array of flower pots containing grasses of various shapes and sizes and an almost equally astounding array of microscopes. Only the overhead projector failed to put in an appearance. A slide show of some unusual grasses filled the time whilst some stragglers arrived and then into the course proper.

It turned out that all grasses are not exactly alike after all. We were first shown the trick they have developed to survive grazing and trampling and then introduced, in stages, to their structure, to Poas & Fescues, Bromes & False-oats with the distinguishing features of each being revealed. We were then invited to pull them apart and examine their bits under the microscopes and describe for ourselves which ones were hairy and which ones had folded or rolled up leaves.

We then took to the field on a chalk downland bank in a welcome burst of sunshine and found a surprising number of different species of grass, some in flower and some in the tricky, to identify, early stages of their growth. All were confidently identified by our tutor and eventually some of them were tentatively identified by ourselves in the face of confusion by sedges which were also found there. Reluctant to go back indoors we went through some woodland and found new grasses to test our uncertain identification skills.

On return to the centre and refreshments we were treated to slides showing an exotic grass new to science which had been described for the first time, and named, by Angus. We then re-examined the potted specimens and consolidated our notes before packing up on schedule about 1 o'clock. I am sure all the participants found it a very worthwhile morning bringing a ray of hope of identifying some members of this important and widespread family of plants and encouraging further study in the future.
Mike Turner. (Surrey Naturalists' Trust)

Hover Watch

In the last edition of Wycombe Wildlife News, Maurice referred to a study undertaken by the University of Southampton which had concluded that hoverflies were fussy and showed strong preferences for certain flowers, including thistles.

The recent hot weather has brought large numbers of hoverflies into gardens, giving plenty of opportunity for watching the habits of these fascinating insects. They certainly visit a wide range of both native and garden plants and do appear to have preferences as to the flowering species they visit. When seeking the honeydew deposited on leaves by aphids, the choice of plants seems to be less significant and their preferences for flowering plants seems to change, plants visited regularly on some days being ignored on others. For example, although purple toadflax appeared to be the favourite hoverfly plant in my garden, a few days later this species was ignored when marjoram became the main attraction.

I feel my casual observations have raised more questions rather than found answers about the species of plants visited. Colour is sometimes considered to be a factor affecting choice, although having observed purple, yellow and white native flowers and red garden flowers being visited regularly, it may not be very relevant. Do plants get left alone once the flowers have been pollinated and to what extent is the choice determined by the range and quantities of species present?

I can certainly recommend marjoram for the wildlife garden: this plant attracts vast numbers of bees as well as butterflies and hoverflies.

Would any wildlife gardeners be interested in taking part in a hoverfly survey next year in which we would attempt to compile a hoverfly 'top ten'? We would need information on species in flower and an indication of the quantity of each species as well as dates and numbers of hoverflies visiting each species during the survey period.
Roger Wilding.

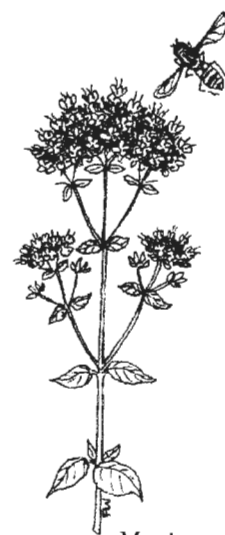
Anyone who would like some marjoram plants should contact Roger



False-oat grass
(*Arrhenatherum elatius*)

HOVERFLIES IN WYCOMBE TOWN CENTRE

THE NEW FLOWER TROUGHS BY THE ROUNDABOUT AT THE FOOT OF MARLOW HILL HAVE ATTRACTED HOVERFLIES RIGHT INTO THE TOWN CENTRE.



Marjoram
(*Origanum vulgare*)

attractive to hoverflies & butterflies



Questions and answers



Dear Pat,

Whilst waiting for my husband in the "Do-it-all" car park in Wycombe on one occasion I witnessed the following incident.

It was a brilliant day and a lizard was scuttling across the hot tarmac at a terrific rate. I got out to have a look at it but it was sliced in half by a moving car. The dead body portion lay still but the long tail piece was jerking and leaping all over the place. It did eventually stop and I took both parts home to identify. It appears to be a common lizard.. What I would like to know is this: do they have their brains or nervous system in their tails ?

Barbara North.



Common lizard
(*Lacerta vivipara*)

Lizards, like all vertebrates, have a central nervous system consisting of a brain and spinal cord. The brain is in the skull and the spinal cord is in the backbone and runs down into the tail. It carries messages to and from the brain and acts as a "relay station" for reflex actions. When you touch something hot, nerve impulses pass from pain receptors in your fingers, up the sensory nerves in your arm, to the spinal cord. Now it would take too much time to send the message up to the brain for a considered response, so the spinal cord "short circuits" across to outward going, motor nerve fibres. These carry nerve impulses out to the muscles in your arm to instruct them to contract and remove your hand from the source of heat - a "reflex" action. Reflexes to this sort of stimulus reduce the likelihood of serious injury. Messages (nerve impulses) do pass on to the brain so you feel the pain and say "ouch" - after you have removed you hand from the hot object.

The lizard's tail continues to move after it has broken off because it is still alive, and it contains spinal cord tissue which continues to function as the relay station for reflex actions - keeping the tail muscles twitching. Lizards lose their tails very easily. If a predator grabs a lizard by its tail, the lizard sheds it. The tail continues to twitch, keeping the predator's interest focused on it, while the rest of the animal runs off & hides - to live another day & grow another tail! Maurice.

and a letter

Pauline's letter demonstrates the pleasure that can be derived from feeding and observing wildlife in your own garden, and why we must continue to fight for a place for wildlife in our town

As a member I would like to write and say how much I enjoy the news-letters and thought you might like to know about my garden.

It is not laid out as a wildlife garden completely nor do we have a pond yet, although my husband has promised one for this year, but my neighbour & I do all we can to encourage wildlife.

We have, at the moment, great tits & a pair of magpies nesting, collared doves, wood pigeon, a thrush, numerous sparrows and some wrens.

We also feed hedgehogs and have had as many as five at one time on the patio. We are visited by a fox and vixen, rabbits and deer and also have grass snakes raising families under the greenhouse and if it is really

warm lizards play on the patio. Butterflies and bees also abound in the summer. So as you can see we are very lucky.

We have a sparrow hawk, but I have never yet seen him attack another bird, although he sometime perches on the crab apple tree in the garden. The squirrels stay mainly at the bottom of the garden and only once in the last ten years have they ventured in to the garden to steal nuts and that year they got in to my neighbour's attic to nest, and my husband had to drive them out. It was rather funny to see him up the ladder filling in the hole under the eaves and the squirrels sitting in the chimney peering down watching him. Pauline Cauvain. Guinions Road.



Grass or ringed snake

(*Natrix natrix*)

You have a wonderful abundance of wildlife for a town garden, especially mammals. I bet, no I'm not a betting man so I checked, your house backs on to the railway line which has a relatively wide embankment on that side of town. This makes a super wildlife corridor for animals to move into built up areas and possibly through them, although as you are close to Gomm Valley, they don't have far to come to get to your garden. Maurice.



Wycombe's Wildlife **WATCH** Group

Writing this on yet another hot sticky day, I find it hard to remember that the first 2 sessions of the **WATCH** Group were influenced by the vagaries of the British Weather.

At the first session, pond dipping was enjoyed by 20 children, who were quite amazed that, despite the absence of fish, their trays were brimming with life - leeches, water mites and damselfly larvae. Then it was an early retreat to Bassetsbury Manor to utilise the 'wet weather' programme of environmental games from "can I be a frog" to dragonfly making.

In June it rained solidly so instead of planning a mini-beast hunt through Keep Hill Woods the children, & adults!, enjoyed a session at the Chair Museum.

July and glorious sunshine! All went to plan, the children getting just as dirty as expected, pond puddling at Sands Bank - lots of children in wellies stomping up and down on wet clay. When the canals were built, cattle were used for this, led in at one end and out the other, and they did not have to go home in cars afterwards!

Rain or shine the **WATCH** Group is fun and although the age range is approximately 8-12, some sessions, such as the talk on bats in October, will be suitable for all the family.

Elaine Tague.

For further details of **WATCH** activities contact Elaine on 0494 536930.

W. D. C. ENVIRONMENTAL AWARDS 1994

You might have expected it splashed across the front page and for me to enthuse over the fact that we have, yet again, won an award in Wycombe District Council's Environmental Award Scheme. We are, indeed, pleased that we received an award for our promotion of wildlife gardening & our Demonstration Wildlife Garden at West Wycombe Garden Centre in the Small Projects section. But even more 'newsworthy' and pleasing to members representing WyUWG at the presentation was to see the success of a number of youth groups that submitted projects and the widening of the scheme by the introduction of several new sections.

The Premium Award went to the Hill Crest Day Centre who also received a separate special commendation for the creation of a wildlife area, including a pond, in the grounds of the day centre.

Wycombe Youth Action won the Schools/Youth Section and Wycombe (East) District Scout Council

received a commendation as did Butterfly Conservation for their work on the Prestwood Picnic Site - our congratulations to all three.

Hardly had the presentations finished when we were exhorted to take application forms for next year's awards. Entries for the 1995 Awards have to be in by February 28th, 1995, we, certainly, will be putting in another project - more on that (next time) - but how about it WyUWG school members? there is a section now for Schools/Youth Projects - any initiatives no matter how large or small within the broad 'environmental' heading that enhance or conserve the environment are eligible - and work on wildlife areas school grounds could, as the Hill Crest Centre demonstrated this year, even walk off with the Premium Award.

Entry forms and information are available from Ian Westgate at the Wycombe District Council Offices, Queen Victoria Road, High Wycombe, HP11 1BB.

WILDLIFE MARATHON - ANOTHER HUGE SUCCESS

The nine events organised by WyUWG in conjunction with WDC Ranger Service were well supported, in spite of the lack of press publicity. From 8 to 30 people attended each activity, the most popular being the morning events for children, the butterflies at Cock Lane Nature Reserve, and moth trapping at Sands Bank. A number of those who stayed all day were children, the youngest being James McDonnell, aged six.

A mini-bus, kindly loaned by PHAB, was available for the afternoon and evening events - many thanks to the driver, James Donald. Thanks also to Lucy Elmidoro who made cakes for the afternoon tea;

Margaret Simmons, the indefatigable tea maker, and Elaine and Julie for the barbecue and, of course, all the leaders and Elaine Tague who master-minded this highly successful event.

Winners of prizes donated by Beaties, W. H. Smith, and Wycombe Bookshop were:



Sky blue badge - Mr & Mrs Tonks.

Sunshine Yellow Badge - Lisa Harmsworth.

Environmental Green Badge - Matthew Hopton.

WILDLIFE NOTICE BOARD

DID YOU SEE ?



April

c. 240 Bramblings, - Putt' Place Farm, Penn
2-3 Corn buntings - Sheepridge E. R. (29/4).

May

Buzzard - Prestwood/Gt. Kingshill (8/5/94)

June

Mullein moth larvae - Sheepridge Ed. R.
Water whorl grass - Hughenden
Marsh Harrier - Little Marlow gravel pits
2 Corn buntings - Lodge Hill (26/6/94)

July

12 glow worms - Sand Bank (16/7/94)
Crassula helmsii - Dyke, High Wycombe
2 muntjac - High Wycombe Cemetery

August

Dark green fritillary - Micklefield Bank
Clouded Yellow - Carver Hill (5/8/94)
Round-leaved fluellen - Sands Bank

The WyllWG contact list:

Chairman & Newsletter Editor:
Pat Morris, 0494 529484
Secretary and Wildlife Gardening Officer
Roger Wilding, 0494 438374
Treasurer: Sue Haines, 0628 532334
Membership Secretary:
James Donald, 0494 445334
Project Co-ordinator: Elaine Tague 0494 536930
Administrator: Ross Hall, 0494 536930
Biological Surveys: Angus Idle, 0494 563673
Education Officer & Assistant Editor:
Maurice Young, 0628 472000

Welcome to
Ross Hall & James Knight
who will be helping Elaine Tague
in her new post as Project Co-ordinator

memo: copy to Pat Morris by 25 Nov 1994, please

Our congratulation to Andy Correy
on his appointment
as Habitat Instructor at the Berkshire College.
We thank him for all his help during the year.

NAMES OF CONTACTS FOR WILDLIFE GROUPS IN WYCOMBE DISTRICT

BC	Butterfly Conservation	Ron Beaven	0494 444158
BTCV	British Trust for Conservation Volunteers		
	Buckinghamshire Office / County Officer	Marion Vere	0296 383393
	Wycombe Office - The Countryside Centre	to be appointed	0494 536930
BBONT	Berks, Bucks & Oxon Naturalists' Trust	Bucks Office	0296 433222
	South Bucks Region, Reserves Manager	Maurice Young	0628 472000
BBG	Buckinghamshire Badger Group	Mike Collard	0494 866908
BBC	Bucks Bird Club	Arthur Brown	0628 604769
CPRE	Council for the Preservation of Rural England	David Norman	0296 622280
FOE	Friends of the Earth	Lyn Jack	0494 447680
EN	English Nature	Frances Richmond	0635 268881
SWS	Saunderton Wildlife Sanctuary	Margaret Baker	0844 342188
StJw	St. Tiggwinkles	Les Stocker	0844 292292
SL	Swan Lifeline	Tim Heron	0753 859397
TVMG	Thames Valley Mammal Group	Ian Saunders	0734 344127
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature	Valerie Lambourne	0494 443761

For other groups or if you have any enquiries about BATS contact The Countryside Centre, Bassetsbury Manor, Bassetsbury Lane, High Wycombe, HP11 1QX, telephone: 0494 536930