

I wrote to you last August about the loss of the terns eggs. Coming as this did just at hatching time in the first year the birds had returned to Hook Beach it was a very bitter blow and caused widespread concern in National as well as County ornithological circles. Should the terns nest this year they must be protected. It is not only the Common terns which are at risk but the little terns too. These did better last year but are among the rarest breeding species we have and an increase of several 100% as achieved at Tatham is not impossible at Rye.

We have a new, energetic and experienced Warden in Richard Knight whose letter is appended. The more volunteers we can get to help with wardening during the breeding season the better. Please contact Richard straightaway if you can help.

Since Richard arrived in December great strides have been made in fencing, sign posting and general reserve management. Records of winter visitors have also been meticulously kept. Some hundred species visited during December-February this year including Bewick Swan, Whitefronted, Grey Lag and Brent Geese, Avocet, Snew and Black and Red Throated Divers. Your Committee has great faith in Richard's ability and we hope the good start already made in helping him with general maintenance work will be kept up. We are also having a membership leaflet printed for his use when escorting visitors round the Reserve. We hope this will be ready for you to see at the Annual Meeting.

The Committee has undergone changes during the year. Mr. S. Jones and Mr. M. Barne have resigned but are still available to help with work on the reserve. We are sorry to lose them and grateful for all their efforts in the past few years. Their places have been taken by Mr. Aubrey Sinden of Brade who has also taken over as Honorary Treasurer of the Management Committee and Kalvin Cawte whom you will all know as a previous Warden. We are delighted to have them with us; I very much hope you will confirm their membership of the Committee at the Annual Meeting. I would also like you to know that on the death of Mrs. Cawte earlier in the year her family asked that gifts should be sent to the Friends. Nearly £100 was received and I am sure you will want to join the Committee in our gratitude for this very kind thought.

A few copies of the Annual Report for 1975, (published in September '76) are still available, together with the systematic list of birds seen that year and an up to date list of flowering plants. The Report includes notes made by the Warden on the common butterflies and moths found in the area. These may be obtained from the Secretary - at Ades Cottage, Idon, Rye.

Cost	Report	35p	post 9p
	Bird List	20p	post 3½p
	Plant List	15p	post 6½p

Turning to the Management Committee, there are several matters you should know:-

1. Jack Harrison of Sanford, to whose pioneering work the Reserve, to a very large extent, owes its existence, has resigned as Hon Secretary and Treasurer. He remains on the Committee where his wisdom and many years experience will be greatly valued.
2. As already mentioned, Aubrey Sinden has taken over as Hon. Treasurer. The Committee were anxious to have a local resident in this position and I am sure this will strengthen the Rye-Lewes links. The County Council is taking over full responsibility for the Secretarial work with Mr. G. C. Child, the Clerk to the Council as Hon. Secretary. This has already shown advantages in that the County Planning Officer has submitted a detailed report to the Recreation and Countryside Committee. The Council has also increased its grant to the Reserve to cover the Warden's salary and it is hoped that this will now be adjusted whenever necessary to ensure our Warden enjoys a salary equal to that of other County Council employees in similar posts.

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3. Draft Byelaws have been going the rounds for some considerable time and are now with the Department of the Environment for final approval. Once this official blessing has been received they will be displayed on various permanent notices at the approaches to the Reserve and will give easily enforceable and official sanction to the Warden in controlling anyone doing damage to the Reserve.

4. Finally what is fast becoming a hardy annual, the Information Centre. Although the money is now available there are still snags. Rother District Council have still not completed the purchase of their new or nearly new Car Park, where the Centre is to be sited and cannot therefore lease the small parcel of ground required. The Management Committee are trying to arrange a temporary lease from the landowners, the adjacent Caravan Park, or alternatively to resite the Centre on a Southern Water Authority site. In the meantime the Architects have sent a letter of Intent to the builders so that all the necessary material can be bought before prices go up again - but labour is of course a different matter. We may still be asked to help foot the bill if a settlement is not reached quickly.

So once again may I appeal to all of you to do everything you can to help the Warden during the breeding season. With your help and weather permitting we can I am sure look forward to a successful season and indeed future for the Reserve.

Yours sincerely,



Guy Crittall

1, Coastguard Cottages,
Rye Harbour
Tel: No: Rye 3862

Dear Friends,

Since taking over the job as warden in December, I have had the pleasure of meeting some of you who have braved the elements during the winter months. Now that spring is here I look forward to meeting many more who will be visiting the reserve to enjoy the wildflowers and birds for which the area is noted.

The unusually high water levels at Ternery Pool have been a cause for concern. As a newcomer with no experience of previous winters here, I can only hope that we have a drier period during the next few weeks to allow the levels to drop sufficiently to expose the nesting islands before the terns arrive.

During the Easter holiday we have had some enthusiastic working parties who have helped to build up some of the islands with shingle, which we transported in plastic bags on a raft. Further working parties are proposed for this task as well as path maintenance and the never ending job of litter clearance. Tasks will be arranged according to season, so as not to disturb nesting birds.

May to July will be a critical time for the terns, and anyone who is able to assist in the protective wardening at anytime during this period, please contact me at 1, Coastguard Cottages, Rye Harbour, Rye, East Sussex. Tel: Rye 3862.

I will be pleased to have the opportunity to meet you when you visit the reserve and I hope that the coming season proves successful.

(snd) R. Knight