



NEWSLETTER

The Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

2 Watch Cottages, Nook Beach, Winchelsea, East Sussex, TN36 4LU

Telephone: Rye (0797) 223862

A registered charity (number 269535) founded in 1973 to aid in the establishment and management of the Nature Reserve within the Rye Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest, (known as the SSSI).

CHAIRMAN: Ian Rumley-Dawson.

SECRETARY: Miss Liz Blackwell.

TREASURER: Stefan Wiener.

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Peter Philpot

COMMITTEE: Jill Barry, Steve Denny, Bob Greenhalf, Peter Greenhalf, Frank Palmer,
Mike Saville, Mrs. Anne Yates (Tern Watch Organiser).

WARDEN: Dr. Barry Yates.

ASSISTANT WARDEN: Dominic Funnell.

SPRING 1993.

NUMBER 44.

WARDEN'S REPORT.

Barry Yates.

JANUARY 1993. The New Year's Day guided walk was well attended and 60 species were seen. The highlights were a Water Rail, 2 Short-eared Owls flying overhead, 3 Bearded Tits and a Bittern sitting in a tree on the Narrow Pits. Other highlights during the month included another Bittern on the Narrow Pits on 14th, a Woodcock on 2nd, a second winter Iceland Gull at Northpoint Pit on 2nd and a Firecrest on 23rd. Duck numbers were generally low, but Smew were surprisingly common for such mild conditions, with up to 4 redheads and 2 drakes on Ternery Pool and the Ruddy Ducks were again seen at Castle Water on 8th. White-fronted Geese flocks of 11, 32 and 13 were seen briefly. Waders were generally scarce with only two counts of Sanderling over single figures and Jack Snipe were virtually absent at the Wader Pool. Raptors were well represented with 1-2 Merlins in the area, a single record of a ringtail Hen Harrier and 3 records of Peregrines flying over the Reserve. There were many records of oiled and dead Guillemots, and a few records of live birds including 2 together on 8th and another at the River Mouth with a Razorbill (the first live individual since 1987!).

FEBRUARY 1993. After many wet months, this was a calm but dry month. Wildfowl numbers remained low, but there were up to 10 Pintail, 18 Eider offshore on 21st and 3-4 Smew until 24th. Other ducks of interest included 2 Ruddy Ducks and a drake Goosander on several dates. The only record of an adult male Hen Harrier this winter was one over Castle Water on 4th, but Short-eared Owls remained common and widespread. Stonechats that were common and widespread throughout January became very scarce by 20th. The only other passerines of note were regular Black Redstarts, a large flock of 97 Corn Buntings on 5th. The first sign of spring was the return of Ringed Plovers to the Beach Reserve mid-month.

The first butterfly sightings were a Peacock and small Tortoiseshell on 13th.

MARCH 1993. The first spring day was the 6th, when many Reed Buntings were singing, the Black-headed Gulls were displaying and a Pipistrelle Bat was flying around Watch Cottage.

Unusual birds included a Dartford Warbler at Castle Water from 6th until at least 8th, an American Wigeon at Ternery Pool on 10th and a Slavonian Grebe at the Long Pit from 2nd. Sandwich Terns were regular at Ternery Pool from 12th, but the first Wheatear was not until 18th.



SMEW

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - 1993

GUIDED WALKS

SUNDAY, 18th APRIL. 10am-1pm. Castle Water - a circular walk of the New Reserve looking at all the varied habitats there. Meet at carpark near Brede Lock at top of Harbour Road (map ref. TQ 919 198).

SUNDAY, 2nd MAY. 5.30pm-9pm. A sunset walk for Warblers and Whimbrels. Meet at Information Centre in Martello Tower carpark at Rye Harbour.

SUNDAY, 13th JUNE. 10am-1pm. Castle Water - a circular walk of the New Reserve looking at all the varied habitats there. Meet at carpark near Brede Lock at top of Harbour Road (map ref. TQ 919 198).

SATURDAY, 24th JULY. 10am-12 Noon & 1pm-3pm. Pond Dipping at Castle Water - limited numbers, please phone Warden for details and booking (0797 223862).

SATURDAY, 14th AUGUST. 2pm-5pm. Insects of Castle Farm. 3 mile circular walk. Meet at carpark near Brede Lock at top of Harbour Road (map ref. TQ 919 198).

TUESDAY, 14th SEPTEMBER. Mid-week Birdwatch. Meet at 9am at Pett Pools (map ref. TQ 903 145), or at 10am at Dog's Hill Road Toilet Block (map ref. TQ 917 160) for circular walk ending at about 2pm.

SUNDAY, 17th OCTOBER. 10am-1pm High Tide. The year's highest predicted tide (4.3m) may coincide with strong winds to create spectacular scenes along the shore. There should be much wildlife washed up along the tideline. Meet at Information Centre in Martello Tower carpark at Rye Harbour.

SUNDAY, 14th NOVEMBER. 2pm-4.30pm. Low Tide. Another high tide will be followed by a very low tide. We will walk out to look for animals that live amongst the tidal zones. Meet at Information Centre in Martello Tower carpark at Rye Harbour. Bring wellington boots and warm windproof clothing.

SATURDAY, 18th DECEMBER. 2pm-4.30pm. Gulls Galore. Meet at Information Centre in Martello Tower carpark at Rye Harbour. Bring wellington boots and warm windproof clothing.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

SATURDAY, 8th MAY. 7.30pm. Annual General Meeting of the Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve, in the Rye Community Centre, Conduit Hill, Rye, East Sussex.

SPECIAL EVENT.

SATURDAY, 8th MAY. Bird Count. How many bird species can you see on the day of our Annual General Meeting within the Rye Harbour Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and the Wood. Lists to be handed in to the Warden before the start of the AGM. The winner will be announced during the evening and there will be a small prize for the most impressive list, BUT the Warden's decision is final.

JUST HOW IMPORTANT IS THE WILDLIFE OF RYE HARBOUR?

In most accounts of the Reserve it is the birds that are emphasised. These are generally easy to see and identify, but they are not the sole importance. Of greater significance is the large number of Nationally Scarce or Endangered invertebrates and plants. These will be listed in the 1992 Annual Report, due out in May (price £2 including post and packing, from Watch Cottage). But a brief summary demonstrates why we must continue to manage the Reserve for all of its wildlife:

	Total Species:	RDB Species:	Nationally Scarce or Notable Species:
INSECTS	1627	39	212
OTHER INVERTEBRATES	240	8	7
WILDFLOWERS	c. 300	2	24
BREEDING BIRDS	75	3	?

RDB = Red Data Book species, ie. species recognised as rare or endangered in Britain.

PROGRESS AT CASTLE WATER.

Much work has been planned and carried out on this new part of the Reserve. One of the most important projects still to be finalised is the establishment of a circular walk from Rye to Camber Castle to Castle Water and back to Rye. Part of this walk will eventually create a long circular walk from our Information Centre, to Ternery Pool, to the Wood, around Castle Water and back to the carpark.



CASTLE WATER CIRCULAR WALK.

There is some limited car parking near the Brede Lock, just after you turn off the A259, heading for Rye Harbour and cross the River Brede, at map reference TQ 919 198. Start the walk by following the Public Footpath towards Camber Castle, along the recent extension of the "Saxon Shore Way". The Castle is not yet open, but you can get a close look at the outer wall and you can see in through the entrance. From the Castle, walk east towards the pit. It is here that we may be able to develop a birdwatching hide. Then turn northward, walking along the Castle side of the ditch, NOT at the water's edge here please - that would disturb the wildfowl. When you reach the tall, partly dead willow tree, turn right and pass through the gate and follow the track that is parallel with the pit edge. Follow the water around to a gateway, pass through, then turn left to follow a reedy ditch towards the green warehouses, where you can cross a ditch to reach the line of an old railway which you can follow back to Rye, passing through several gates on the way.

This walk is just under 3 miles and will take you to some different areas of the Reserve. At any time of year you should see some interesting wildlife, especially if you stop, look and listen on the way.

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NEWSLETTER DELIVERIES.

Peter Philpot.

430 of the 1,125 Friends' Newsletters sent out in January were delivered by hand, thus saving us £232 in the year. This very valuable assistance is greatly appreciated, but we could do with even more help with this work, particularly in the following areas:-

Beckley, Northiam, Newenden, Rolvenden, Cranbrook, Benenden, Goudhurst, Biddenden, Wadhurst.

Also needed is extra assistance in Bexhill, Rye, Hastings and especially the Clive Vale and West Hill areas of Hastings.

If you feel that you could assist, then please contact me by telephone on 0797 225998 or at the Annual General Meeting. Thank you.

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CHANGE TO FINANCIAL YEAR.

Stefan Wiener.

To enable Members to see more clearly how our funds are used and their relationship to the Management Committee's finances, the Committee of the Friends believe it would be an advantage to end our Financial Year at 31st March, to coincide with that of the Management Committee. This, in turn, means that future Annual General Meetings (from 1994 onwards) would have to be held in September instead of May as at present.

All this requires a change to the Friends' Constitution, which can be effected by a 2/3rd majority vote of Members attending the AGM. We intend to propose a vote on this issue at the Annual General Meeting on 8th May 1993.

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TERN WATCH.

Anne Yates.

Many thanks to all who have offered to help with this year's Tern Watch Rota. Our regular volunteers are booked into their preferred slots, BUT there are still a few vacancies, so..... if you have a few hours to spend watching over the Reserve and its wildlife - especially the Terns, then please contact Anne Yates on 0797 223862 (or see her at the AGM) to find out more about the TERN WATCH. This is a good opportunity to help with the running of the Reserve and to find out more about its wildlife.

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MEMBERSHIP REPORT.

Peter Philpot

In my 1990 report I was pleased to say that the membership of the Friends had reached 1,120 and that perhaps we could now look forward to a target of 1,500. Alas for pipe dreams, unfortunately it seems that we can reckon on losing 10% of our membership each year, and I understand that this is very good going compared to many other charities, which lose nearly a third of their membership each year. Obviously, we need to enrol more new members than we are likely to lose. However, in 1992 we only made 59 new members and lost 95, which brings our current total to 1,137.

So much for the bad news. The good news is that the average subscription during 1991 was £8.46 which included £691 redeemed from the Inland Revenue on Covenants. These figures increased for the 1992 year to £10.29 per member with £1,218 redeemed on Covenants. A total of 348 of our members now Covenant their subscriptions, thus increasing their subscriptions by one third at no extra cost to themselves. Let me hasten to add that the minimum subscription per person remains at £5 and this is very acceptable, but many of you are much more generous and realise that maintaining a Reserve which has dramatically increased in size, also has dramatically increasing costs.



Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

COVENANTS & BANKERS ORDERS.

From the above report, you can see that an obvious way to increase your subscription is to take out a Covenant, so that for example a £10 subscription becomes £13.34 to the Friends. Quite a large number of the Bankers Orders have been running for 5 or even 10 years without being up-dated. Would you please consider an increase as well as Covenanting your subscription if you have not already done so. I will have Bankers Order and Covenant forms available at the Annual General Meeting or I can post them to you, in which case please send a stamped addressed envelope size 9" x 4".

GIFT AID.

Should any of you consider giving large donations to the Friends' Land Fund or to the Reserve generally, then the minimum amount which qualifies for Gift Aid is now £250. Giving through Gift Aid enables us to reclaim the tax, as in Covenants, which increases your gift to approximately £333.32. If you are considering this, then please contact me before you start the process, so that I can send you the correct forms. Telephone: 0797 225998.

SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE.

Renewals are due on 1st May, and if you have not already paid or pay by Bankers Order, then we would appreciate you doing so before the end of May, using the form at the bottom of this page. I am sure that many of our lapsed members of previous years probably had every intention of renewing, but did not do so at the time for one reason or another, then I am afraid we are all inclined to let things slip past.

If you wish to pay at the Annual General Meeting, then please do so, BUT the form must be completed and attached to your subscription so that I can easily check that all is in order. Please do not put them in an envelope when you bring them to the AGM, because things always get very hectic at the meeting with the limited amount of time available. Thank you.

----- Cut along here -----

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL FORM

Subscription renewal for the Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve for the period from 1st May 1993 to 30th April 1994.

Name:

PLEASE USE BLOCK LETTERS

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone No:

Cash/cheque enclosed for: £

Tick this small box if Bankers Order & Covenant forms are required.

Please return this form to:

Membership Secretary,
Friends of RHNR,
Broadwater, The Ridge,
Winchelsea Beach,
East Sussex, TN36 4LU.

FRIENDS OF RYE HARBOUR NATURE RESERVE

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 1993

Please note that the 21st Annual General Meeting will be held at 7.30pm, on Saturday, 8th May 1993, in the Community Centre, Conduit Hill, Rye, East Sussex.

AGENDA:

1. Apologies for absence.
2. Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting held on 9th May 1992, will be displayed on the walls of the hall for members to read prior to the start of this meeting.
3. Matters arising from those previous minutes and approval of same.
4. To approve the accounts for the year ending 31st December 1992.
5. Proposal to change the Friends Financial Year to end on 31st March, and as a consequence of which the Annual General Meeting to be moved to September each year.
6. Chairman's chat - New land for the Reserve, increase membership, the future.
7. Any further nominations for 1993/94 Committee?
8. Election of Committee for 1993/94. Any new nominations for Committee should be sent in writing to the Secretary at:- 2 Watch Cottages, Nook Beach, Winchelsea, East Sussex, TN36 4LU. All members of the current Committee offer themselves for re-election in the same posts as presently held, with the exception of Stefan Wiener (Treasurer) who wishes to retire. The existing Committee will be nominating Frank Clarke for this position. The current Committee is as follows:-

CHAIRMAN = Ian Rumley-Dawson.

SECRETARY = Liz Blackwell.
TREASURER = Stefan Wiener.

MEMBERSHIP = Peter Philpot,
SECRETARY (Ex officio).

COMMITTEE:

Jill Barry.
Steve Denny (Sales).
Bob Greenhalf.
Peter Greenhalf.
Frank Palmer.
Mike Saville.
Anne Yates.
Barry Yates (Warden).

9. Appointment of Honorary Auditor for the coming year, currently Frank Clarke.
10. Any other business.
11. Warden's report - Previous breeding season on the Reserve, latest sightings and news.

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The Annual General Meeting will be followed by an interval for refreshments and an opportunity to buy some of our Friends sales goods, as well as Reserve leaflets and reports. There will be a raffle to help pay for the hire of the hall. After the interval there will be a short illustrated lecture by our Warden Dr. Barry Yates entitled:-

WILDLIFE & MANAGEMENT AT CASTLE WATER

Barry will show us some of the wildlife and other aspects of our new area of the Reserve.

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If you have any items to exhibit in connection with the Reserve, such as photo prints, drawings or reports, etc., then please bring them along to this AGM for everyone to see and to help make it an interesting evening.

FRIENDS OF RYE HARBOUR NATURE RESERVE - INCOME AND EXPENDITURE AS AT 31st DECEMBER 1992

	<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1991</u>	<u>1992</u>
<u>GENERAL FUND</u>			<u>GENERAL FUND</u>	
Subscriptions and Donations	11,157.74	11,473.24	Printing etc.	41.79
Sale of Publications & Goods	924.76	1,009.02	Postage Newsletters	373.64
Deeds of Covenant Tax Refund	1,934.80	1,013.59	Stationery & Sundry Postage	149.10
Events	898.55	331.53	Books etc.	24.80
Sundry	51.98	16.13	Sales Goods	322.00
Interest on Savings Accounts	1,464.60	1,935.84	Equipment	250.00
			Sundry Expenses	2,120.10 *
<u>WADER POOL FUND</u>			Hides and Signs	167.50
Interest	47.32	Nil	Management Committee	1,111.30
Donations	Nil	Nil	Assistant Warden	1,300.00
			Wader Pool	1,672.50
			Land Purchase	Nil
<u>LAND FUND</u>				20,000.00
Interest	3,991.80	2,697.90	<u>LAND FUND</u>	
Donations	1,520.00	950.00	Land Purchase	Nil
			* Includes Repairs to Wardens Cottage 1,238.00	
Excess of Expenditure over Income		24,852.70	Excess Income over Expenditure	14,458.82
	<u>21,991.55</u>	<u>44,279.35</u>		<u>21,991.55</u>
				<u>44,279.95</u>

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 1992

Accumulated Fund	62,970.91	38,118.21	Current Account	43.56	352.12
			General Fund Saving Accounts	19,506.64	10,698.48
			Land Fund	43,074.36	26,722.26
			Colin Green Fund	345.35	345.35
	<u>62,970.91</u>	<u>38,118.21</u>		<u>62,970.91</u>	<u>38,118.21</u>

Treasurers Note: Assets to be shown at 31.12.92 were stock valued at £568.75 and the Wardens Cottage valued at £48,000 at cost.

I have examined the books and vouchers of the Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve for the year ended 31st December 1992 and certify that their accounts are in accordance therewith.

(Signed) **FRANK CLARKE** (Hon. Auditor) 2nd March 1993.