



# The Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

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A registered charity (No.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:** Michael Saville

**TREASURER:** Frank Clarke

**COMMITTEE:** Steve Denny, Bob Greenhalf, Peter Greenhalf, Frank Palmer,  
Stefan Wiener, Anne Yates (Tern Watch Organiser)

**WARDEN:** Dr. Barry Yates

**SECRETARY:** Liz Blackwell

**MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY:** Peter Philpot

**ASSISTANT WARDEN:** Dominic Funnell.

## **NATURE RESERVE ADDRESS:**

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SUMMER 1994 NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 48.

## WARDENS' REPORT

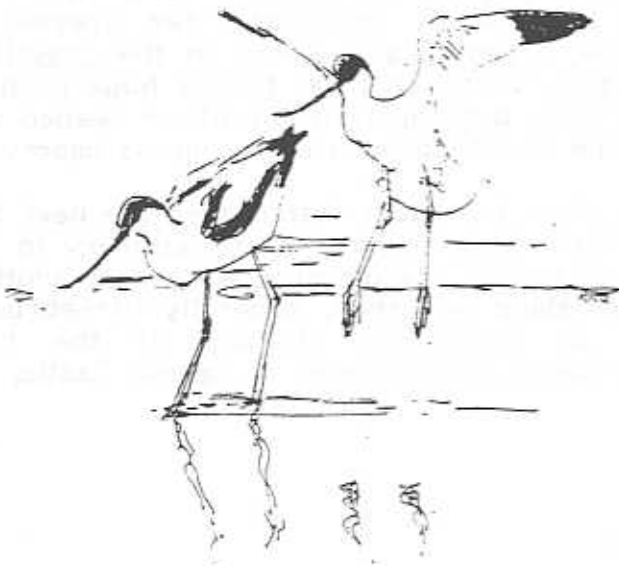
### APRIL 1994

The first records for spring migrants were Swallow (4th), Ring Ouzel and Willow Warbler (10th), a Common Tern (12th, but the next noted were 2 on 19th), Black Redstart (16th), Whimbrel (17th), Sedge Warbler (18th), Cuckoo (the late date of 21st), and Redstart (30th). Most migrants were scarce, but Sand Martins were very common this year with flocks of over 200 regularly over Castle Water from 4th.

The end of the month provided some very good bird records; Merlin, 6 Velvet Scoter, 7 Red-breasted Mergansers and 2 Eider on 21st, adult Iceland Gull on 22nd, Spotted Redshank and a female Montagu's Harrier on 29th

### MAY 1994

The best bird during the month was a Whiskered Tern in full summer plumage (7th and 8th), but almost as unusual for the Reserve was the number of Jay records, with 1 on 26th April and 10 on 8th May. Wader passage this spring was good with a Nature Reserve record of 416 Whimbrel roosting (on 2nd, with the last seen on 22nd), other birds of note included: Golden Plover (8th), Ruff on 4 dates, up to 27 Bar-tailed Godwits, Black-tailed Godwits, Greenshank on 7 dates, Black Terns on 5 dates (including 4 together on 3rd), Whinchat on 3 dates, Blue-headed Wagtail from 23rd April and 2-5 Scaup (until 16th). Raptors were well represented: an unidentified Buzzard (2nd), a Peregrine (13th), a "ringtail" Hen Harrier flew out to sea (22nd), Merlin were noted (29th May and 3rd June) and several Hobbies. Some of the more typical spring rarities were: Temminck's Stint (13th), a calling Quail (20th), up to 2 Roseate Tern (7th-21st), a female Garganey (31st), Little Egrets on 4 dates including 2 together (30th), a "probable" Purple Heron at dusk (22nd) and a male Kentish Plover (30th). However, the best news of the month was that Avocets made their first ever (but unsuccessful) nesting attempt at the Wader Pool.



There were an interesting number of "winter birds" still present: a female Wigeon at Ternery Pool all month with an additional pair in the area until at least 13th; there were up to 3 male and 2 female Pochard until mid-month. A drake Scaup was still at Ternery Pool until 5th and a pair of Common Scoters were at the Long Pit (7th). On 12th there was a flock of 5 Snow Geese and a Barnacle Goose!

Common Sandpipers on 6 dates: Little Gull on 7 dates including a superb adult displaying to an unimpressed first year bird. Avocets were present throughout the month, but did not make another nesting attempt. Other highlights were a female Serin (1st), a Black Kite over the Reserve (5th), a female Montagu's Harrier that roosted overnight (9th/10th). For the first time since 1986 Sand Martins nested in the area, with 2 pairs successfully raising young in a sandy bank very close to Castle Water.

The first returning Curlew were noted on 22nd with a roosting flock of 15.

A good month for nesting species with good fish numbers allowing more than 100 young Common Terns and 15 Little Terns to grow rapidly. The fledging success of Little Terns was greatly reduced by male Kestrels. There were also regular sightings of up to 3 Roseate Terns and 5 first year Common Terns. Another new nesting species for the Reserve was Cormorant, a pair nested unsuccessfully at Ternery Pool.

Returning waders were evident with the first noted as: Greenshank (1st), Grey Plover juvenile (3rd), Whimbrel (3rd), Little Ringed Plover (4th), Turnstone juvenile (9th), Dunlin juvenile (9th), adult Curlew Sandpiper, the first of several on 13th, Knot on 15th, Sanderling and Little Stint on 17th and there were up to 6 Green Sandpipers at Castle Water.

The 1993 Annual Report is now available from the Nature Reserve address for £1.50p plus an A5 sae.

## MANAGEMENT OF THE NATURE RESERVE

The workparties have, for the first time, continued throughout the year and have greatly helped the Wardens. Weeding, island landscaping (both building up and knocking down), Ragwort pulling, fence dismantling and construction, putting in stiles and gates. Without the extra help, progress with Castle Water would have been very slow. It has not always been hard physical work, we spent a day counting Stork'sbill plants (for the weevil - see below), we found and photographed the weevil (to be shown at AGM - don't miss it) and sometimes we just went looking for orchids, butterflies and damselflies !

Tasks over the next few months will include Willow and Bramble cutting, island building, hide and fence construction and much, much more. So if you would like to help with some of the practical work of the Nature Reserve please join us at 10am at the Information Centre on the first and third Tuesdays of each month.

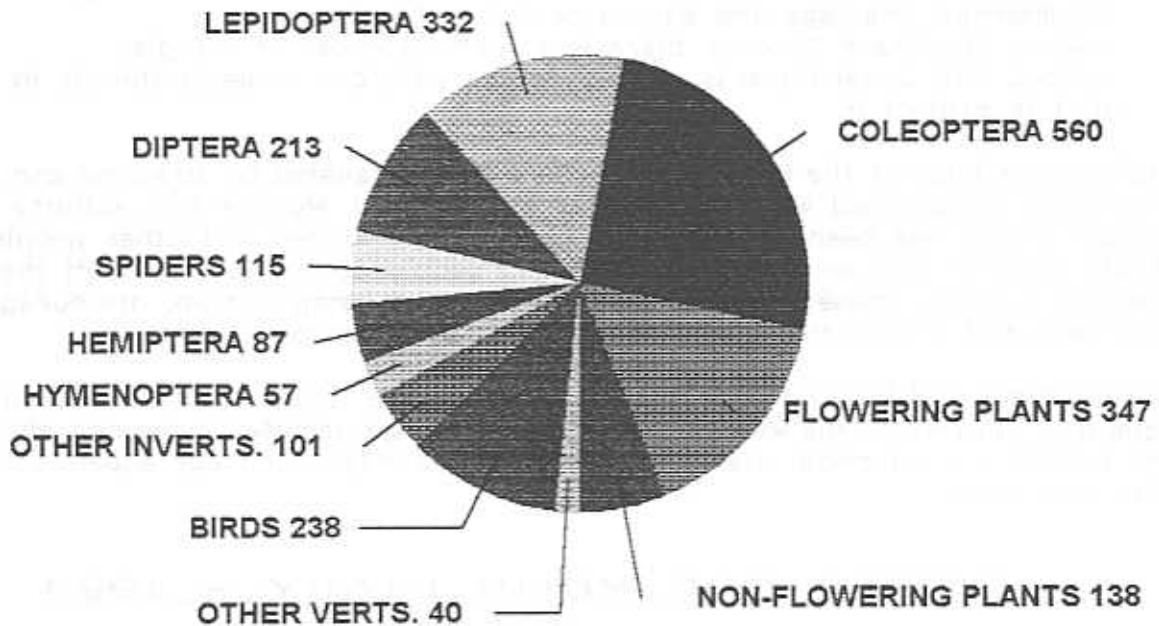


A great deal of the Wardens' time this year has been spent controlling two species of thistle, Creeping and Spear, in the grassland of Castle Water. This has been a huge problem this year, but hopefully the effort needed will decline as management of the grass improves.

The plans for Castle Water over the next few months include the hiring of machinery to re-profile part of the pit edge and create another large island and then, hopefully in February we can start the building of the hide overlooking the pit near to Camber Castle.

## THE SPECIES LIST KEEPS GROWING!

The Management Plan for the Nature Reserve includes a comprehensive list of species recorded within the Reserve (excluding marine species). As of April this year this included 2,227 species and is summarised below, but already there are nearly 2,300 species.



Despite this huge number of species there are many gaps in our knowledge, for example, only 4 fungi have been identified ! Even some of the well studied groups, like the beetles with 560 species, have many more species to be found and I would hope that the total will reach 3,000 species by the end of the century.

More important than just the number of species is the number of rare and endangered species that occur on the Nature Reserve. To increase our knowledge of the distribution and habits of these species the FRIENDS have funded a project that will employ an entomologist for a few days each year to gather more information. This will enable the Wardens to manage some habitats for the rare species. After a couple of visits we have identified 48 new species, including 2 scarce species, and learnt a lot more about our very rare weevil, *Limobius mixtus*. This tiny weevil was thought to occur in only one small patch of sand at Castle Water, and nowhere else in Britain. However, it is not so threatened now because we found it at another patch of sand at Castle Water some 300 metres away! The weevil lives on just a single species of plant, Stork'sbill, and we will be studying the plants distribution and counting the numbers of plants in a few areas each year.

## MARITIME HERITAGE TRAILS

The RYE BAY PROJECT is a new initiative from East Sussex County Council that aims to bring together and help the various countryside projects in the area. It has an office at 111b High Street, Rye that is open most Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

The project is creating circular walks to be known as *Maritime Heritage Trails* which will look at all aspects of the countryside near the coast. Several of the trails will include the Nature Reserve.

The first trail starts at the Rye Harbour car park, and then takes you to the River Mouth, Ternery Pool, the old lifeboat house, through the Wood, the southern part of Castle Water, the planned birdwatching hide, Camber Castle, the northern part of Castle Water and Rye Harbour Church. The trail is now "waymarked" by finger posts with green bands and directional arrows. There are to be leaflets and several interpretive boards on the Trail. The first board is in place near the River Mouth, entitled, 500 Years Of Coastal Defence.

## BEACH FEEDING AND THE BEACH ROAD.

The Beach Reserve is owned by the National Rivers Authority in order for them to maintain the sea defences, taking into account the following;

- The prevailing wind is from the south-west and this moves shingle along the Sussex coast from west to east.
- The mouth of the River Rother is kept straight and clear of shingle to allow for maximum drainage and easy access for shipping.
- Along the Beach Reserve there is a "soft defence" of shingle.
- Along Pett Level there is a concrete sea wall, but it needs shingle in front of it to protect it.

Shingle accumulates at the River Mouth where it is excavated by dragline and loaded onto lorries to be transported westwards as far as Cliff End. Most of this activity takes place in winter. There has been some conflict between the lorries and other people using the road and there is also an element of danger if people do not get right off the road when lorries are passing. These problems led to some signs being put up, discouraging the use of the road, but I hope that there will soon be some improved signs.

Next year there will be a new "terminal groyne" at the River Mouth to reduce the loss of shingle into the river. This will be constructed of large granite blocks and should provide a new habitat for intertidal plants and animals and may encourage a pair of Rock Pipits to stay and breed.

## DATES FOR YOUR DIARY - 1994

Monday, 29th August.

PLANT & PRODUCE SALE. In aid of the FRIENDS, to be held in the Winchelsea Beach Village Hall. Cakes, plants and bring-and-buy items will be most welcome, preferably on the day, or beforehand to the Warden at the Reserve address. Anyone with new ideas for different or additional stalls please contact Liz Blackwell (0424) 753016.

Tuesday, 13th September.

WADERS AND OTHER MIGRANTS AT PETT AND RYE HARBOUR. Meet at 9am at Pett Pools (TQ9014) or at 10am at Dog's Hill Road toilet block (TQ917160) for a circular walk around the Reserve, returning about 1pm.

Saturday, 17th September.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING. At Community Centre, Rye. Meeting starts at 7.30pm. Agenda and accounts enclosed.

Sunday, 16th October.

WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT OF CASTLE WATER. A three hour circular walk to look at principles and progress! Please book with Barry; 0797 223862.

Saturday, 19th November.

THE CASTLE WATER CIRCULAR WALK. Leaflets available @ 20p, with a chance to go inside Camber Castle. Meet at 9am at the Brede Lock car park TQ920198, returning about mid-day.

Sunday, 18th December.

WINTER WILDLIFE AT RYE HARBOUR. Are there any Swans, Partridge, Geese and Turtle Doves for Christmas?

## AND 1995 !

Sunday, 1st January.

START YOUR BIRD YEAR LIST HERE. Meet at Information Centre at 10am, returning about 1pm.

Sunday, 12th February.

MARITIME HERITAGE TRAIL. A long circular walk as described above. Meet at Information Centre at 10am, returning about 2pm. A picnic stop at the Castle.

FRIENDS OF RYE HARBOUR NATURE RESERVE  
Notice of the 22nd Annual General Meeting  
to be held

on  
Saturday 17 September 1994  
at 7.30 pm  
In the Rye Community Centre, Conduit Hill

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Confirmation of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on 8 May 1993. (Copies of the Minutes will be on display in the Hall.)
3. Any matters arising from the Minutes
4. To receive and approve the Committee's Report for the period since 1 January 1993
5. To receive and approve the audited accounts for the period 1 January 1993 to 31 March 1994.
6. Amendments to the Constitution

{a} to provide for a Vice-Chairman  
{b} to provide for the Membership Secretary as an Officer  
{c} to bring the Warden into the Constitution and clarify his status

{d} to amend the quorum of the Committee  
{e} to alter the number of 'elected members' on the Committee.

Copies of the existing Constitution will be on display in the Hall.

The AGM is asked to consider and approve the following amendments:

Clause 3 Insert 'a Vice-Chairman' after 'Chairman'.  
Insert 'and a Membership Secretary' after 'Honorary Treasurer'.

Clause 4 Delete 'of the group' in the first line as unnecessary.

Delete 'not more than 7, not less than 4, (elected members) and substitute 'five'.

After 'elected members', delete full-stop and insert 'together with the Warden for the time being of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve who shall be a member ex-officio but who shall not have a vote and whose presence shall not be taken into account when forming a quorum.'

Delete the last sentence dealing with the quorum and insert 'Four members of the Committee, at least two of whom shall be Officers, shall form a quorum.'

Clause 17 Insert 'Membership' before 'Secretary'.

[Note: under clause 18 the Constitution may only be amended by a two-thirds majority of members voting at an AGM.]

7. Election of the Committee for 1994-95.  
ANY NEW NOMINATIONS FOR THE COMMITTEE, DULY SECONDED AND ASSENTED TO BY THE NOMINEE, SHOULD BE SENT IN WRITING TO THE HON. SECRETARY AT 'Bowerhurst', 4 Bover Close, St. Leonards-on-Sea TN37 7JX NOT LATER THAN WEDNESDAY 14 SEPTEMBER.

Under clauses 3 and 5 Officers and members of the Committee shall hold office until the next AGM when they will retire but are eligible for re-election from year to year. The outgoing Committee is as follows:

Chairman	Michael Saville
Hon. Secretary	Liz Blackwell
Hon. Treasurer	Frank Clarke
Steve Denny	Peter Philippot ex-officio
Bob Greenhalf	Stefan Winer
Peter Greenhalf	Anne Yates
Frank Palmer	

Stefan Winer wishes to retire. The remainder offer themselves for re-election.

(a) To announce the names of any nominations to serve on the Committee.

(b) On the assumption that the amendments to the constitution set out in item 6 are agreed, and if there are no nominations, it is recommended that the Committee for 1994-95 should be:

Chairman	Michael Saville
Vice-Chairman	Nikki Frith
Hon. Secretary	Liz Blackwell
Hon. Treasurer	Frank Clarke
Membership Secretary	Peter Philippot
Steve Denny	Pete Greenhalf
Bob Greenhalf	Frank Palmer
Anne Yates	

8. Appointment of Hon. Auditors, currently Roger Bailey and Michael Russell.

The AGM will be followed by an interval for refreshments and an opportunity to buy some of our Friends' sales goods, leaflets and reports. There will be a raffle to help pay for the hire of the Hall.

After the interval there will be an illustrated talk by Barry Yates describing the management of the Nature Reserve and some of its interesting wildlife.

FRIENDS OF RYE HARBOUR NATURE RESERVE  
(registered charity 269535)

REPORT BY THE COMMITTEE  
FOR  
1993-1994

1. Background The Constitution of the Friends does not provide for the preparation of an Annual Report. It should. In any case the Charities Act 1992 stipulates that a charity prepare an annual report. This Report covers the period 1 January 1993 to the end of June 1994 allowing for the change in the financial year and the date of the AGM as agreed at the May 1993 AGM.
2. Chairmanship Ian Rumley-Dawson resigned as Chairman in May 1993. The Friends owe him a great debt of gratitude for all he did for the Reserve over 14 years. He organised fund-raising events every year. In 1979 the membership stood at 169; when he left there were over 1200 members. The climax of his Office was the acquisition of Castle Water by Sussex Wildlife Trust to which the Friends contributed one fifth of the cost. David Hill was elected as Chairman but resigned shortly afterwards because of work commitments. The Committee asked Michael Saville to take over under the terms of clause 6 of the Constitution.
3. Meetings The Committee has met 9 times over the 18 month period. Michael Saville and Frank Palmer have represented the Friends at the quarterly meetings of the Management Committee.
4. Newsletters and publications The Committee is grateful to the Warden for editing the Newsletter which comes out 3 times a year and to Bob Greenhalf for his sketches which make the issues so attractive. The Committee is grateful to the Wardens for the issue of 3 new leaflets on Shingle Flowers, Breeding Birds and Wintering Birds.
5. Financial support of the Reserve The Committee pays £ of the Assistant Warden's salary. £500 have been provided for a monitoring programme of the rare and scarce species on Castle Water and £600 towards the cost of new computer hardware. The Committee financed the Warden's participation in a Conference on Coastline Management in May 1994. The Committee has also agreed to contribute towards the cost of a 4-wheel drive vehicle to replace the van which was bought by the Friends.
6. Castle Water This wonderful asset has brought new responsibilities. Work parties of the Friends have assembled twice a month creating an island, cutting bramble, coppicing willows and putting up fences. The Committee's thanks go to these stalwarts. More hands are needed and would be welcomed.
7. Tarn Watch This remains as much a pleasure as a responsibility. The Committee's thanks go to Anne Yates for organising it all and to those who do this voluntary wardening.

There were 15 chicks from 35 little tern pairs in 1993. NRA lotties in 1994 may disturb the watchers, but not apparently the watched.

8. Guided Walks were arranged on a monthly basis from April 1993 and a full programme for 1994 published. The Committee's thanks go to the Wardens for all that they have done to make the walks so enjoyable. Suggestions from Friends would be most welcome. The Committee hopes that Friends will bring their friends so that the latter may also become the former.
9. Harbour Farm There have been months of frustration for the Committee which was in a position to contribute substantially towards the cost of purchase of this farm which in part separates the beach reserve from Castle Water. The prospect has receded.
10. Events A Plant and Produce Sale was held on August Bank Holiday 1993 and raised over £400; it will be held again in 1994. A successful Members' Evening was held in April 1994 when Andrew Lee, the Director of Sussex Wildlife Trust, gave a most enjoyable illustrated talk. The Committee mounted a small exhibition as part of the fringe activities for the Rye Festival in September 1993.
11. Local government reorganisation The Committee has written to the Commission saying that it would disapprove of any reorganisation which detracted from a strategic view on environmental and conservation issues and which might diminish the professional and financial resources available to the Reserve.
12. Unity of the Reserve The Committee has continued to press through the Management Committee for a definition of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve which emphasises the unity of the Reserve despite the fact that it is made up of separate local nature reserves declared under statutory provisions.
13. Land Fund The Committee has operated a policy whereby surpluses are placed in the Land Fund to enable additional Land to be purchased for the Reserve. This Fund is accumulating rapidly and this policy is being kept under review.
14. The future The affairs of the Friends are in good heart. There are 1136 Friends including junior and group members. In the context of the surpluses mentioned above and which will be apparent in the accounts, thought has been given to a greater emphasis on publicity, information and education all of which lie within the Objects of the Friends. The Committee may well turn to the Friends in search of skills and time to assist in the furtherance of these activities.



Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

Income & Expenditure Account  
For The Fifteen Months Ended 31st March 1994

	<u>1993/4</u>	<u>1992</u>	<u>1,009.02</u>
Cost of Sales			
Purchases	568.75	941.50	
Closing Stock	(201.25)	Nil	
Profit on Trading	(572.00)	(568.75)	372.75
	<u>408.80</u>	<u>606.80</u>	<u>616.27</u>
Income Received			
Subscriptions & Donations	15,607.83	11,473.24	
Land Fund	823.50	950.00	
Tax Refunds	2,131.39	1,013.59	
Interest on:	451.57	331.53	
Savings Accounts	Nil	16.13	
Land Fund	(3) 802.06	1,935.84	
	<u>1,554.98</u>	<u>2,697.90</u>	<u>18,418.23</u>
			<u>19,054.50</u>

Less Expenses

Printing Etc	83.75	Nil	
Postage Newsletters	479.57	427.51	
Stationery & Sundry Postages	208.44	151.93	
Books etc	27.95	Nil	
Equipment	Nil	202.18	
Sundry Expenses	376.51	227.46	
Management Committee	600.00	2,590.87	
Assistant Warden	4,620.00	680.00	
Land Purchase	Nil	40,000.00	
Legal Fees	235.00	Nil	
Room Hire	31.80	Nil	
	<u>5,663.02</u>	<u>5,663.02</u>	<u>44,279.95</u>

Excess of Income over Expenditure (25,225.45)

Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve

Balance Sheet  
For The Fifteen Months Ended 31st March 1994

	<u>1993/4</u>	<u>1992</u>
<u>FIXED ASSETS</u>		
Freehold Property at Cost (Wardens Cottage)	48,000.00	48,000.00
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
Stock	572.00	568.75
Premier Interest Account	10,000.79	10,698.48
Current Bank Account	525.44	352.12
Land Fund	(5) 42,705.84	26,722.26
Collin Green Fund	(6) Closed	345.35
	<u>53,804.07</u>	<u>38,686.96</u>
<u>TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>	<u>101,804.07</u>	<u>86,686.96</u>
<u>REPRESENTED BY:</u>		
Accumulated Fund	86,686.96	111,912.41
Add: Excess of Income Over Expenditure	15,117.11	(25,225.45)
	<u>101,804.07</u>	<u>86,686.96</u>

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS

- (1) Stock. Pricing policy is to double the purchase price, therefore valuation is at half the selling price.
- (2) Deeds of Covenant and tax refunds. 1992 figure is subject to a clawback of £381.55, and 1993/4 includes £750 Gift Aid tax refunds.
- (3) Interest. The reduction in interest is caused by reduced balances, and falling interest rates. Also, the Land Fund now attracts interest in May and November, instead of December annually.
- (4) Assistant Warden. 1993/4 figure includes £1870 carried over from previous year.
- (5) Sums in excess of £10k now transferred from Premier Interest Account to Land Fund Account.
- (6) Colin Green Fund transferred to Land Fund on 1st August 1993.

I have examined the books and vouchers of the Friends of Rye Harbour Nature Reserve for the fifteen months ended 31st March, 1994 and certify that their accounts are in accordance therewith.

*Ray B. ...* 19/4/94