



Yare Valley Society Newsletter

Issue 81

April 2010

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

WEDNESDAY 12 MAY 2010

7.30 pm

**CRINGLEFORD PLAYING FIELD
PAVILION (off Oakfields Road)**

To be followed by a talk

***CONSERVATION AND DEVELOPMENT
IN THE YARE VALLEY***

Dr GRAHAM MARTIN

Coffee/Tea

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due if you pay annually, or if you paid in 2005 for five years. The current rates are £2 per year, £8 for five years or £20 life membership per family. Please send your subscription to The Treasurer, Yare Valley Society, 9b Poplar Avenue, Eaton, Norwich NR4 7LB (cheque payable to Yare Valley Society).

Waitrose Community Action

Thank you to those members (and others) who put their green charity tokens in the Yare Valley Society box during Waitrose's December collection in Eaton. We have received a cheque for £227 as our share of the month's donation - a useful addition to funds, but equally important was the publicity given to the Society's work by raising the awareness of Christmas shoppers of what we do. We are most grateful to Waitrose for giving us this opportunity.

Call for sites

The committee has been busy lately on responding to the city about potential building in the valley. The City and South Norfolk authorities contacted landowners about their wishes to build on any sites they own. This is a government initiative. As you may have expected Bartram Mowers and the University have put in applications. At present these are merely a desire to build and contain no details. All interested parties were asked to respond to the requests made and give brief reasons for or against any application. The committee responded as you would expect by objecting to any building in the valley. This includes development of the Bartram site, the parkland area between the University and the Broad, the proposed bus link across the valley and extending the built up area around Earlham Hall.

We are also contacting South Norfolk about the sites in Cringleford, Colney and Keswick.

UEA

Following the national "call for sites" the University of East Anglia has commissioned Bidwells to produce a document indicating future plans for UEA and asking for responses.

This document has been published and we are at present formulating a response.

Colney Hall

At the invitation of James Boddy several committee members met at Colney Hall and were shown the plans for the proposed medical centre and associated development. A preliminary submission has been made to south Norfolk but it is very tentative and is not yet an application.

Eaton Park and Earlham Park

The Friends of Eaton Park have an on-going programme of events, details of which you can find on their website at www.friendsofeatonpark.co.uk. The Friends of Earlham Park is a more recent group and John Elbro and Andrew Salisbury attended the first meeting on behalf of the YVS. The group is concerned about the state of the park, the proposed development near Earlham Hall and in particular the problems with car parking. Their website is at www.earlhampark.org. Both these are groups with whom we intend to maintain contact.

More on wildlife in the valley

Maureen and Colin Forbes write as follows:

As we look out on the white winter wonderland across the river and the water-meadow beyond, a cormorant, in spite of its awkward webbed feet, is balancing on the highest point of the tall tree on the island with wings outspread to dry. Along the quay some 34 gulls await the 'stirring' of the waters by diving cormorants for odd bits to surface and the first gull there is then relentlessly pursued by the rest.

First action in the mornings is the arrival of two resplendent male pheasants from the meadow and on to the bank for take-off for a running landing on our grass to glean under the constantly visited seed feeder which hangs in a tree. Some days as many as four ladies will follow.

A suet block hangs under the nut feeder which has attracted a greater spotted woodpecker, whilst the former is often covered by long-tail tits.

Foxes have been frequent in daylight, as well as in the dark when we also hear the bark of deer and often sight them as our 'warning' lights are activated. The vast array of prints in the snow is evidence of the range of visitors we experience here, both two and four legged.

The great excitement recently has been a vicious fight between two large male swans in our 'pond' where the river divides to flow down both sides of the long island. Wings were locked onto with beaks as they thrashed about in the middle trying for a snatch and neck hold for drowning. Both managed half-holds but broke loose until one was cornered against the bank of the island and held there by the chest of the other which then proceeded to savage at the neck of the other. The vanquished's neck seemed to get longer and stretched thin under the onslaught and eventually he laid motionless on the bank.

Both had their ladies in attendance and while the vanquished was tended by his lady, the victor came across to our side and made love advances to his lady amidst great wing beatings and much splashing and grooming. While this was going on the poor vanquished raised his battered head and assisted by his lady slipped back down into the river and paddled away down the far side of the island, as his neck began to assume normal proportions ere he was lost from sight. Meanwhile the victor's lady went off down this side and he began to follow still indulging in much thrashing and grooming. Later in the day we had a sudden arrival of redwings and fieldfare hopping all over the grass until just as suddenly they all took-off.

Bluebells

The Society has been assured by the City Council that the bluebells, which were planted towards the end of 2008, on the corner of the slipway from Bluebell Road will not be mown before flowering this year!

YVS website

Do look at the website (www.yarevalleysociety.org) from time to time. We put notices and forthcoming events on the homepage, whilst on the planning page, you will find details of the Society's responses to planning applications and other documents on which we have commented. There is a membership form for new members and you can also contact the Society at any time through the website.