



West Berkshire  
Countryside Society

# UPSTREAM

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2017



## 2016 the second best year ever for The Barn Owl Group!

This year 102 barn owls are believed to have successfully fledged from our 174 nest boxes in West Berkshire. This is the second best year The Barn Owl Group have ever had – well ahead of the 31 birds fledged last year, but a long way short of the 173 we recorded in 2014.

The year started well with a mild winter although it was wet in early spring. The critical factor in barn owl breeding is the availability of short-tailed voles – the barn owl's main prey species. Field voles are one of the most numerous British mammals. They are prolific breeders with populations in a favourable habitat often increasing to number in their thousands – a vole plague. When this happens, competition for space and food, plus heightened aggression, leads to less successful breeding; with the result that the population rapidly declines. The fluctuations in populations usually occur in 3-5 year cycles. 2014 was undoubtedly a peak year.

Consequently, in 2015 the population was much reduced. 2016 was a much better vole year and this is reflected in the surveys that we carried out. If the predictions are correct we can look forward to an even better year in 2017.

Barn owls are late breeders usually laying first broods around the end of April. This does not leave much time to attempt a second brood. Most years we have found a few attempts at second broods but these have almost always resulted in failure. Our best year, 2014, was different with about one third of fledged birds coming from second broods. In 2016 we recorded 96 chicks that fledged

from first broods so that if we had a similar story as in 2014 we could hope for about a further 50 fledglings from second broods and it would have been a "super" season! Well, it didn't work out like that. We think that eight or ten pairs attempted to raise a second brood but most of them failed. We conclude that poor weather conditions at the end of April and into early May forced the birds to delay laying and thus making it a "late" season. When the first broods were fledged there was insufficient time left for a second brood to be reared before the end of the summer.

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West Berkshire Countryside Society

*Caring for our Countryside – Join Us and Help Make a Difference.*

# West Berkshire Countryside Society

The aim of the West Berkshire Countryside Society is to promote the understanding, appreciation and conservation of the West Berkshire countryside... furthering these objectives through practical conservation work and guided walks and talks from local experts. It was formed in 2012 by amalgamating the Friends of the Pang, Kennet & Lambourn Valleys; the Bucklebury Heathland Conservation Group; the Pang Valley Conservation Volunteers & the Barn Owl Group.

Upstream is our quarterly publication designed to highlight conservation matters in West Berkshire and beyond and to publicise the activities of the Society.

<b>Chair:</b>	<b>Kay Lacey</b>
<b>Vice Chair, Webmaster &amp; Enquiries:</b>	<b>Tony McDonald</b>
<b>Membership Secretary:</b>	<b>Jathan Rayner (wbcs-membership@outlook.com)</b>
<b>Upstream Editor:</b>	<b>John Salmon (upstreameditor@btinternet.com)</b>
<b>Biodiversity and Conservation Consultant:</b>	<b>Sally Wallington</b>

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<b>Hon President:</b>	<b>Dick Greenaway MBE RD</b>
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Initial contact for all above and for the Barn Owl Group, Bucklebury Heathland Conservation Group and West Berks Conservation Volunteers should, unless otherwise stated, be made via [enquiries@westberkscountryside.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@westberkscountryside.org.uk)

## Volunteers' Task Diary

For outdoor events please wear suitable footwear and clothing. Practical tasks start at 10am and usually finish around 3pm, unless otherwise stated, so bring a packed lunch. However, we are more than happy to accept any time you can spare! All tools are provided.

Date/ Time	Venue	Details
January 2017		
Tue-03-Jan 10:00	Holt Lodge Farm, Kintbury, SU387 648	Coppicing to refresh the hazel stools and open up the woodland canopy. Meet at Holt Lodge Farm House near Kintbury.
Sun-08-Jan 10:30 -13:00	Bucklebury Common, SU550 688	Join the Bucklebury Heathland Group to help maintain this important heathland habitat. Meet at Angels Corner.
Tue-10-Jan 10:00	Grove Pit Common, Leckhampstead, SU440 777	Coppicing, felling and scrub clearance on this parish wildlife site. Access the common via the track which leaves the B4494 west at Cotswold Farm. Please park at the bottom of the track and walk up to the common.
Tue-17-Jan 10:00	Bucklebury Meadows Off Morton's Lane, Upper Bucklebury, SU545 687	Hedge maintenance and scrub clearance. Parking in Morton's Lane.
Tue-24-Jan 10:00	Elm Farm. Organic Research Centre, Kintbury, SU414 654	Maintenance work on the farm trail and nature reserve. Parking on opposite side of the road from the main building in track leading to barns.
Tue-31-Jan 10:00	Jewells Farm, Stanford Dingley, RG7 6LX, SU573 711	A variety of tasks at this site on the banks of the Pang. Parking off road on site.
February 2017		
Tue-07-Feb 10:00	Sulham Water Meadows, Home Farm, Sulham, SU642 759	Coppicing and other woodland management. Parking at Sulham Home Farm.
Sat-11-Feb 10:30 -13:00	Bucklebury Common, SU550 688	Join the Bucklebury Heathland Group to help maintain this important heathland habitat. Meet at Angels Corner.
Tue-14-Feb 10:00	Furze Hill, Hermitage, SU512 740	Woodland and butterfly habitat management on this parish wildlife site. Parking at new village hall – through double gates off Pinewood Crescent.
Tue-21-Feb 10:00	Boxford Water Meadow. (Site #2 CEH) Westbrook, SU427 716	Scrub clearance and other water meadow management tasks on this SSSI research site. Park in the access strip to the main field. This lies on Westbrook, Boxford about 150 yards on the right between 2 houses.
Tue-28-Feb 10:00	Ashampstead Common, SU5765 7512	Veteran Tree Halo Polishing. Help us maintain the glades that help our veterans prosper. We will be cutting back bracken, bramble and small saplings. Meet at the parking area 100 yards past The Cottage, Ashampstead Common.
March 2017		
Tue-07-Mar 10:00	The Malt House, West Woodhay, SU395 637	Hedge laying on the site we have worked on for several years. If you wish to enjoy the delicious lunch provided by The Malt House then please confirm your attendance to <a href="mailto:tonyjmcDonald@btinternet.com">tonyjmcDonald@btinternet.com</a> by lunchtime Friday 3rd Mar.
Sun-12-Mar 10:30-13:00	Bucklebury Common, SU550 688	Join the Bucklebury Heathland Group to help maintain this important heathland habitat. Meet at Angels Corner.
Tue-14-Mar 10:00	The Malt House, West Woodhay, SU395 637	Hedge laying on the site we have worked on for several years. If you wish to enjoy the delicious lunch provided by The Malt House then please confirm your attendance to <a href="mailto:tonyjmcDonald@btinternet.com">tonyjmcDonald@btinternet.com</a> by lunchtime Friday 10th Mar.
Tue-21-Mar 10:00	Masons Farm Hampstead Marshall, SU403 657	Woodland classroom creation; coppicing, dead fence creation, tree felling. Parking in the Farm yard.
Tue-28-Mar 10:00	Rushall Manor Farm, off Back Lane, Bradfield, SU584 723	Woodland management, coppicing and ride widening. Meet at the Black Barn off Back Lane between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield.





Decoy Heath (Before)

© Tony McDonald

# Conservation volunteers round up

For the first time the Conservation Volunteers visited **Decoy Heath** near Aldermaston, a premier Berkshire site for dragonflies and damselflies with no fewer than twenty-three species known to breed around its shallow pools. Close to the edge of the water – and occasionally in it – we cut down vegetation and trees to improve the habitat and, incidentally, enhance the views across the pools for visitors.

West Berkshire Countryside Society's Bucklebury Heathland Conservation Group, regularly provides volunteers to maintain **Bucklebury Common** – an important habitat devastated during the Second World War when it became a military transport depot, with invasive vegetation taking over during the post-war period. In October the Group's efforts were augmented by one of the largest WBCS teams ever assembled – totalling 23 members – who spent a day removing silver birch and bramble from two bunds (banks of earth) and removing young Scots pine scattered around the heath.



Decoy Heath (After)

© Tony McDonald

At **Cleeve Water Meadow, Streatley**, we raked up large amounts of grass and reed resulting from one of the most efficient cuts we have known by a contractor, with his machine being unable to reach only a few areas because of half-buried logs and stumps. Armed with several mattocks, we made a second visit to completely remove nearly all these obstructions to help the next cut be even more effective.

Another efficient contractor had been employed by the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology to mow the sward which had come to dominate other flora at **Boxford Water Meadow**. We cut back remaining sward from around various monitoring instruments on the site and at the edges of the meadow where his machine could not operate. This should allow more diverse flora to emerge next spring and summer. Some trees on the meadow's boundaries were also cut down.

At **Furze Hill** wildlife and recreation site in Hermitage, we used brush-cutters, shears and scythes to clear nettle and bramble from four large overgrown areas in the meadow, raking the results up into several massive piles. It was a very hot day there, though a hardy trio stayed on to clear yet more bramble and nettle from a butterflies' "larder area". We enjoyed rather more the gloriously warm weather at **Winterbourne Wood** where we cut and raked long

grass that had threatened to obscure next year's flowers on Primrose Ridge. We also coppiced three hazel stools at the wood's entrance to allow recently-planted beech saplings greater access to light, and haloed a number of other young specimen trees so that they could be viewed to their best advantage.

A wonderful sunny August day graced our annual tools maintenance & barbecue event. There was time for relaxed conversation, as well as for checking tools, re-setting saw-blades, repainting yellow identity bands on handles and generally making sure our vast range of equipment is in good working order for another year of conservation.

At **Elm Farm Organic Research Centre, Hamstead Marshall**, we continued to coppice selected trees alongside a stream and to remove brambles, with the aim of thinning the tree cover to allow regeneration whilst maintaining the habitat for wildlife. We also completely cleared the Donkey Meadow of bramble. Another area of hazel wood at the **Malt House, West Woodhay**, was coppiced, with poles and binders being selected for hedge-laying on the farm. At **Rushall Manor Farm near Bradfield** we continued a series of ride-widening tasks to let more light into woodlands, so improving biodiversity and making them more pleasant to visit.

Terry Crawford



Continued from page 1.

However, to our great delight, in October the survey team recorded two fully grown chicks and a further two chicks about 7 weeks old in boxes at Hungerford. We think that a pair of barn owls bred in their chosen box earlier this year and before these

chicks had flown the laid eggs in a second box. Furthermore, as we were about to close off our records for the season another volunteer found 2 more chicks from a late brood near Headley. All these chicks looked healthy and we are hopeful they will be sufficiently "streetwise" to survive the winter.

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
No. barn owl boxes checked	111	123	119	125	136	<b>174</b>
No. BO chicks estimated to have fledged	54	72	0	173	31	<b>102</b>
No. boxes with fledged chicks	18	27	0	45	15	<b>40</b>
% boxes successful	16.2	22	0	36	11	<b>23</b>
Average brood size	3	2.67	0	3.84	2.1	<b>2.55</b>



© John Dellow

## Join us!

We now have about 24 people involved with barn owls in WBCS. This is great but we would welcome more volunteers. If you would like to join us (or know of a good new site) please get in touch.



© John Dellow

We still have some boxes in service which were installed when the Barn Owl project was set up 15 years ago. These will not last much longer. We will need to install about 10 boxes each year just to maintain the current number of sites. If a box has not shown any barn owl interest for five years then it is unlikely to ever be successful & will be removed. In 2016, we installed 12 barn owl boxes at new sites and replaced 7 boxes. We are trying hard to ensure that all our boxes are in good habitat where barn owls can find food and security.

Some of these new boxes were particularly noteworthy. At a box that was installed in an ash tree at Brightwalton in March, 3 chicks successfully fledged & were ringed; 3 more healthy chicks fledged from the box at Avery's Pightle.

John Dellow



Don't forget our website!  
[www.westberkscountyside.org.uk](http://www.westberkscountyside.org.uk)



# The craft of laying a hedge

## Why do we lay hedges?

One of the most satisfying tasks which we take part in is the laying of a hedge. Somehow it combines a traditional craft of managing a hedgerow with a delightful art form finishing up with a product which is, purpose built, beautiful and useful.

As hedges mature they grow taller and lose side growth at the base. These gaps create passages for wild animals which wear into larger gaps rendering the hedge less effective at containing stock. Left unmanaged a hedgerow will continue to grow upwards and outwards and will eventually become a line of trees. Farm birds require a dense hedge as a refuge and roosting place.

So why do we lay a hedge? A laid hedge is one which is totally stock proof, uniform, closely formed right down to ground level making it a real haven for farm birds and easier to manage with mechanical cutting devices.

## How do we lay hedges?

First we need to harvest the raw materials for the process. Stakes, which are the fence posts for the hedge and binders, the long flexible wands which bind the structure together. The best source of these is hazel. The ideal stakes are straight, 2m lengths of hazel of approximately 4cm diameter. Binders are long straight lengths of thin flexible stems typically 3+m in length, and 2cm in diameter. Both components are obtained by coppicing – more of which in a later edition. Both components need to be harvested as near as possible to the



© Tony McDonald

actual date of hedge laying while they retain their flexibility and before they dry out becoming brittle.

First we decide on a direction in which to work. The trunks should be cut to lay uphill. We start by cleaning the growth from the side of the trunk which is going to finish up on the underside of the layered hedge.

The tricky part of the process follows when we make a cut at the base of the trunk on the side which will finish facing upward. The cut slices downward toward the base of the trunk at an angle of 15 degrees to the vertical finishing up as close to the ground as possible. A second cut is made from the base of the trunk, taking out a long wedge. This leaves a tongue connecting the upper part of the tree to its base thin enough to allow the tree to be bent over to lay along the line of the hedge close to the horizontal. Each tree in line lays on top of its neighbour as we work along.



© Tony McDonald

Time to install the stakes. These are laced through the layered trunks so that they form an upright line of posts 40cm apart along the centre line of the hedge. They are hammered into the ground until firm.

The most complicated job comes next, binding the hedge together using the binders. Each area of the UK has its own style for hedge laying, we use the "Southern Style" based on starting a binder behind each stake twisting the binders with each other and with the stakes at a uniform height along the top line of the hedge. This should hold the whole structure together. Great care is taken at this stage that the line of binders forms a straight line.

To finish off the hedge we trim and dress the sides of the tree growth, tidying up the structure and forming a uniform "wall" Lastly the tops of each of the stakes are cut to form a wedge shape thus preventing rainwater from resting on top causing rotting.

Looked at from a distance the hedge should have a neat, uniform appearance which is both attractive, useful and extremely fulfilling.

Tony McDonald

## Why do they do that?

**Tony McDonald's article on Hedge Laying is the first in a new series called 'Why do they do that?'**

The series will explore countryside skills & practices their history, purpose & techniques. In our Spring edition, the feature will discuss coppicing.

If you have a question that you would like one of our WBCS experts to explain in a future edition, please email [upstreameditor@btinternet.com](mailto:upstreameditor@btinternet.com).



# 2017 and beyond?

As 2017 commences, I am both delighted with our achievements as a Society but also conscious that we cannot rest on our laurels (or any other somewhat invasive plant species!).

Our volunteers, whether they are on Bucklebury Common, at any of our other Berkshire wide conservation sites, or are putting up owl boxes, work really hard each week to bring about real change and improve our local countryside. Their work is hugely appreciated.

Our membership is steady but there is scope to encourage more people to join the Society; spreading our knowledge, appreciation and understanding of the beautiful West Berkshire countryside. I would like to ask you to encourage just one more person to join us and become a member. Or if you are reading this and are not already a member, please consider it. £15 membership, which

covers one person (or a whole family) for a year, is about the same as three pints of premium beer in the pub or two good bottles of wine! Perhaps all those who are embarking on a 'dry January' could be persuaded to put a small amount of the money they will be saving into a year's membership of Society. How much more beneficial that would be. They will receive four editions of our delightful 'Upstream' and will be contributing towards our valued conservation work. They might even be persuaded to work off some Christmas excess by joining us on some of our guided walks or conservation tasks.

Let's help preserve the countryside for future generations – it is up to all of us to make sure that organisations such as ours are, like the Berkshire Countryside, healthy and flourishing.

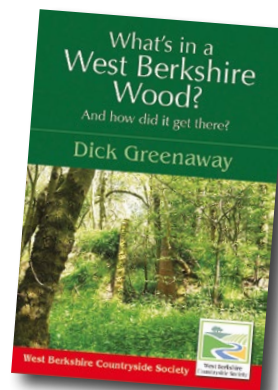
Kay Lacey, Chair WBCS

## Successful launch of new book

Dick's new book, 'What's in a West Berkshire Wood?', was successfully launched at a well attended 'Books, Beer & Music' event held on 21 October at Yattendon Village Hall. Professor Williamson's review on this page testifies to its interest & readability. If you would like a copy, please contact Dick on [rg.greenaway@btinternet.com](mailto:rg.greenaway@btinternet.com).

Some of the features explained in the book were brought to life when, 48 hours later, Hannah Piekarz led an enthusiastic group of members & non-members, on

an exploration walk around Park & Down Woods in Hampstead Norreys. The walk (designed by Dick) included chalk pits, flower rich areas, a deer park, a bronze age barrow, lynchets, manor boundary banks, a saw pit, a potash pit, an old pond, a chalk quarry, a lime kiln & some terraces – all in a walk of less than 2 miles.



## Book review

Dick Greenaway's new book, 'What's in a West Berkshire Wood', is an erudite yet immensely readable account of the history, ecology and archaeology of ancient woods. It provides not only an excellent description of how woods originated, and how they were managed in the past, but also a comprehensive field guide to what can be found in them today, carefully explaining the significance of particular plant species, archaeological features, and varieties of

tree. This is an excellent book, beautifully illustrated, which is based on the very latest research. While it will have a particular appeal to people living in West Berkshire, anybody with an interest in, or a role in managing, the rural landscape will find it an invaluable addition to their bookshelves. Highly recommended.

Tom Williamson,  
Professor of Landscape History,  
University of East Anglia

## New Editor for Upstream

After many years as our editor, Dick has decided the time is right to step back and pass on the reins to someone else. We thank him for all of his hard work and are extremely grateful for his many insightful and interesting contributions. He has written a vast number of fascinating articles for Upstream – entertaining and educating us over the years. Looking ahead, we hope Dick will continue to share his knowledge and expertise as a contributor.

We are delighted to welcome as our new editor, John Salmon – one of our Volunteers. John would really like to hear your suggestions for new articles, subjects you would like to see covered, comments etc. Additional contributors would be most welcome. He can be contacted via [upstreameditor@btinternet.com](mailto:upstreameditor@btinternet.com).

## West Berkshire Countryside Society Wins £500 funding from Skipton Building Society

750 applications were received from community groups, clubs and associations from across the UK, for the 2016 Skipton Building Society, Grassroots Giving initiative.

Skipton Building Society narrowed this down to a short list and then the public were asked to vote for the organization which they wanted to receive one of the 163 pots of £500 available in this year's initiative.

38,000 votes were received, in total, and West Berkshire Countryside Society was fortunate to be one of the lucky 163.

This is thanks to all the members, volunteers, friends and followers who were good enough to vote for us. Our grateful thanks go to each and every voter, the £500 will be of considerable help to the Society.

# Volunteers' twenty years at Holt Lodge Farm

For twenty years, volunteers from the West Berkshire Countryside Society and its forerunners have been carrying out environmental activities at Holt Lodge Farm, Kintbury, making it one of our longest-established sites. It also has an ancient history of its own..

The place name comes from one of the many Saxon words for "wood", with the specific meaning of a wood of standard trees, rather than one that has been coppiced. 'Holt Manor' is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086 and was later added to Kintbury Manor. The farm remains a site of great interest to the landscape historian. Like so many early communities, Holt is a spring line settlement sited where reliable springs come out of the hillside. Another example is Ufton Court, twelve miles

to the east. There are springs near both the Lodge and the Farmhouse caused by rainwater collected in the sands and gravels of Inkpen Common meeting a clay layer and running to its edge. Over millennia the water has eroded the steep-sided valleys running down to Curr Copse (north-west of the farm). A dam was built across one channel in 1950 to create a pond.

Today Holt Lodge is a beef farm of 120 acres run since 1989 by Ian Freeland, whose grandparents moved their cattle from Kent by train in 1939 and then, with the help of villagers, herded them up to the farm on foot from Kintbury Station.

"My father became involved with the original Pang Valley Volunteers in the mid 1990s, and since then they've

visited us every year," said Ian. "A lot of their early work involved planting mixed hedges, which have now become established and form a great wildlife habitat. Some look as if they've been there for ever and ever."

The volunteers make several visits a year, with bracken-bashing a regular task, humans being able to work on steep slopes that are difficult for machinery to negotiate. The hazel in Curr Copse is also coppiced to allow more light to the flower-rich woodland floor – the stools are then covered with brash to deter deer from nibbling fresh shoots. The cut wood is stacked into piles to become wildlife habitats.

Holt Lodge will always provide plenty of work for environmental volunteers to do, and the famous sit-down teas provided by Ian and his family help to make the farm a very popular item on the Society's calendar.

Dick Greenaway and Terry Crawford



© Tony McDonald

## Up close and personal!

Would anyone like to get 'up close and personal' with some state of the art, ultra high tech agricultural kit? We see the combines, sprayers, ploughs, drills etc. trundling up and down in the fields around us, but how many people realise just how sophisticated they (and their operators) are?

We have been offered an opportunity to examine a selection of kit and the way it fits into a very modern operation. The date is yet to be arranged but it will be before Easter at a venue in the Pang Valley. Expressions of interest will not be binding but we need to know numbers and preferences for an evening or a Saturday/Sunday visit. If you would like to participate, please email Dick Greenaway at [rg.greenaway@btinternet.com](mailto:rg.greenaway@btinternet.com) with your preferences.

## From our Agricultural Correspondent

Writing this in November the main topic has to be a review of the harvest. As I commented in the last Upstream, the cold wet June resulted in most crops under-performing although their quality was reasonable. Oil seed rape and barley were badly affected but winter wheat did better. Next year malting barley will be the local staple. A relatively small number of countries grow malting barley and the export market is booming. In particular the demand from China seems insatiable.

Internationally things have been quiet. The drastic collapse in the milk market shows some signs of having bottomed out and, although average prices are still below the cost of production, a small rise could make dairying sustainable again.



# Help hedgehogs this year!



The British population of hedgehogs was estimated in 1995 at 1.55 million. Now listed as an endangered species, both rural and urban populations are declining. The People's Trust for Endangered Species estimates there are now fewer than 1 million hedgehogs left in the UK.

The causes of this decline are largely due to changes in forestry and agriculture, loss of hedgerows, use of chemicals, urbanisation and increasingly climate change.

Hedgehogs, are seen as an 'indicator' species for the health of the natural world. They are quite generalist, feeding on soil invertebrates, and are not very fussy in habitat requirements, so a big decline in hedgehogs raises concerns about the quality of the UK's environment generally.

## How you can help?

- Keep aside a hedgehog-friendly area of garden, leaving heaps of leaves and brushwood. Stack material for bonfires out of the way then build it on the day you want to light it or fence the circumference at least 2 feet high. Check for hedgehogs when turning your compost heap. If they are present leave it a while, they won't be there forever.
- Before using mowers or strimmers in areas of long grass, or the bottom of hedges, check for any sleeping hedgehogs. Hoglets in a nest are tiny and can be easy to miss.
- Slug pellets and pesticides can poison hedgehogs. Try other methods such as beer traps or Una Dunnett's Garlic Wash. If all else fails and you have to use pellets, place them under a tile which is inaccessible to hedgehogs.
- During January to March hedgehogs should be hibernating. Some venture

out from their nest during mild weather to find food and water. A shallow dish of chicken-based cat/dog food, along with a shallow dish of fresh water, put out each night will help those that are late or early and those in trouble. Hedgehog biscuits such as Spikes or Ark are available. Never give them milk as they are lactose intolerant.

- Hedgehogs are nocturnal and shouldn't be seen out in daylight. Dawn and dusk may be OK as long as the hog looks like it's going somewhere. Exceptions to this are pregnant females gathering nesting materials just before she gives birth, or a new 'Mum' taking a break from the nest to get food and water while her young sleep. If a hedgehog is lethargic, has flies around it, is wobbly, or gives you any other cause for concern, cover it with a box so it can't wander off then contact Hedgehog Bottom ASAP.
- Hedgehogs love gardens and need lots of connected neighbourhoods of gardens, rich in insects and free from hazards if they are to survive. Recent research advises that a viable population of hedgehogs requires, at least 90 hectares of good quality unfragmented habitat. I have joined the Hedgehog Street campaign ([www.hedgehogstreet.org](http://www.hedgehogstreet.org)) and have cut a 13cm hole in my fence (in agreement with my neighbour!) which now connects my garden to next door and an area of park.

Our local rescue centre Hedgehog Bottom based in Thatcham does amazing work rescuing and helping hundreds of sick and injured hedgehogs each year. Visit their Facebook page or [www.hedgehog-rescue.org.uk](http://www.hedgehog-rescue.org.uk) for lots of useful information, including a free hedgehog house offer and contact details if you have found a hedgehog that needs help.

Sally Wallington

## Date for your diary!

### An Ancient Track – The Middle Ridgeway

Join us for a fascinating evening exploring the Middle Ridgeway with Patrick Dillon who takes us on a journey on this ancient track through the iconic chalk landscape between Goring Gap and Avebury. His talk will include illustrations from his book co-authored by Eric Jones and beautifully illustrated with new paintings by his daughter, well known artist Anna Dillon.

Members & non-members welcome – admission free. No need to book.

**7.45 – 9.00pm, Wednesday  
29th March at the Oak Room,  
Memorial Hall, Broad Lane, Upper  
Bucklebury, RG7 6QH**