# HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA & FLORA SOCIETY

# SPRING/SUMMER PROGRAMME 2024

**Midweek Talk**

**Thursday 18th April 7.30pm Beavers in Sussex – Matt Phelps**

In recent years, the April field meeting has been very poorly attended, so as an experiment, we have decided to make the April meeting a Zoom only talk and invite a speaker from outside of the local area. Matt Phelps is an ecologist and runs the Beaver safaris at the Knepp Estate in Kent, as well as taking on the role of Species Recovery Officer for the Sussex Wildlife Trust (a key part of which will be focusing on Beaver recovery in Sussex). In the talk, he will explain the work he has been doing with Beavers and will explain all of the ways in which Beavers can restore and enrich ecosystems, as well as playing a key role in flood alleviation. Zoom link to follow.

**Sunday 12th May 2.30pm Wistow Wood**

**Leader: Peter Lake**

Wistow Wood is a 9 hectare, old ash woodland with a marvellous habitat for mosses, lichens, fungi and insects. The wood contains evidence of a long history of traditional management. Numerous old ash trees with several stems indicate the past practice of coppicing. During spring, the woodland floor abounds with dog's mercury, bluebells, wood anemones and primroses. Take the A141 from Hartford to B1040 in Warboys and continue north before taking a turning on the right for Wistow Lane Fen Lane. Follow along for half a mile and the wood is on the right. Park on the verge. TL 296 820

**Sunday 16th June 2.30pm Strawberry Hill Farm**

**Leader: Aidan Matthews**

Following on from the talk Aidan gave us in the winter on Strawberry Hill Farm, we are following this up with a visit to the site. Strawberry Hill Farm in Bedfordshire has developed to be one of the richest areas of ex-arable land in the Wildlife Trust BCN area. This 150 hectare site has been left to rewild for 25 years. From Eaton Socon, take Bushmead Road west through Upper Staploe, Bolnhurst and Thurleigh. At the roundabout for the A6, take the A6 north for a couple of miles, before taking a turning right for Knotting Green. The farm is on the left. If approaching from the A6, please enter through the second galvanised steel farm gate and park on the hard standing around the barns (MK44 1AA, Grid reference TL 005 626).

**Sunday 14th JULY 2.30pm Papley Grove Farm**

**Leader: Martin Lines**

Following on from the talk Martin gave about his nature friendly approach to farming, we are visiting Papley Grove Farm to see the results of this work. If coming south from the Godmanchester direction on the A1198 towards Papworth, turn right at the roundabout with the Shilpa Indian to take the bypass. At the next roundabout take the second exit onto St Ives Rd. Further down the road, Papley Grove Farmhouse is on the left (PE19 6TW, grid reference TL273613).

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**Sunday 11th AUGUST 2.30pm Paxton Pits Extension**

**Leader: Mike Drew**

The Paxton Pits extension is part of the approval for Aggregates Industries’ plan to extract the remaining gravel deposits at Paxton Pits, and it will be managed by Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC).  From the A1, take turning for Little Paxton/St Neots.  From the Buckden roundabout on the A1, travel south and take the turning for Diddington village. Drive through the village until you reach a junction. Turn left until you reach ‘The Hidden Boat Place’ (Grid reference TL197659).

**Sunday 15th SEPTEMBER 2.30pm Jubilee Wood**

**Leader: Andrew Frost**

Jubilee Wood is just over a hectare of new woodland (planted in 2002) established on what was once waste ground. The wood is owned by the Parish Council of Great Gidding which, with the guidance of the Forestry Commission, planted a mix of indigenous trees such as oak and ash to celebrate the Queen’s Golden Jubilee in 2002. Park on Main Street (B660) near the pub in Great Gidding (Grid reference is TL121836).

**Sunday 20th OCTOBER 2.00pm Wennington Wood**

**Leader: Alan Robbins**

Join in with our annual fungal foray at this wood, owned by Lord de Ramsey. This wood is one of the few places the elm tree can still be found in Britain and it will be interesting to see the species present. Meet 2pm prompt in the yard of Grove Farm, Abbots Ripton at TL238778, to access the track to the wood, leading to parking on a concrete area by the wood at TL247784.

When attending Field Meetings please wear sturdy footwear and clothing appropriate for the site conditions and weather. For further information about the summer programme please contacteitherPeter Lake on 01763-261554 or Barry Dickerson on 01480-475689.

For further information about the Society please go to www.hffs.org.uk.)