

West Oxfordshire Field Club



www.thefieldclub.org.uk

Newsletter No. 111 Spring 2020

EDITORIAL

I hope this newsletter finds you and yours safe and well. The strange circumstances in which we find ourselves have left large areas of town and country free for the wildlife, but country areas close to towns have seen more people than usual as they seek green spaces for their one hour of exercise. I recently overheard a father and son debating which app best forecast the weather, when the grandfather commented, “I don’t bother with all that, I just look at the swallows – are they flying high or low?” A reminder of how successive generations have become increasingly distanced from nature.

Many people who don’t usually notice nature have become aware of the spring birdsong now the traffic-ridden roads are silenced. Others have enjoyed the changing cloud formations unadulterated by vapour trails, against a sky a deeper blue than usual. Social distancing is not confined to humans – in late summer you can find Starlings on the telegraph wires equally spaced just out of pecking distance of each other. A New Scientist correspondent informs us that in the Falklands humans are keeping one Black-browed Albatross wingspan apart!

Those of us restricted to our home area have been blessed with some glorious spring weather at a time when birdsong is at its loudest and most varied, butterflies are emerging and trees and shrubs bursting into bloom. Nature reserves have reported that wildlife has become bolder in areas where there are fewer humans than usual. Feral Kashmiri goats have been roaming the streets of Llandudno, even climbing up to window boxes to eat the plants. There was a recent news photo of Mo Farah exercising in Richmond Park to an audience of Fallow Deer.

But it is not all good news – there are reports of more poaching of endangered mammals in Africa, and here in the UK of more shooting and poisoning of predators such as Hen Harrier and Peregrine in areas near grouse moors. Even worse, the partial lifting of lockdown has resulted in an astonishing number of nature reserves being “trashed” – BBOWT has reported barbecue-fuelled heath fires, to widespread littering on a scale not seen before, fly-tipping, and even destruction of lakeside banks to create sunbathing areas, trampling of reedbeds and disruption of waterbird nesting areas by unauthorised

swimming and fishing, and fences destroyed. The lockdown interrupted decades of meticulously recorded data on the dates of arrival of migrants, nesting and numbers of young birds and times of flowering of plants, all helping to document the responses to climate change. Some of you may have used online apps to help by recording observations of your own.

preventing livestock grazing. Spring and summer walks have had to be cancelled, but we hope to keep in touch with a series of short newsletters, for which we welcome – or rather need – your contributions. And as lockdown lifts, you may like to peruse the past programmes on our web site for walks a little further afield.

Jill Bailey



Dog Rose – Jill Bailey

YOUR NEWSLETTER

Thank you to everyone who has contributed reports and pictures for the Newsletter. If we do have the opportunity to continue the programme later in the summer, please can you let me have your reports of walks and other Club outings by mid-September 2020 for the Autumn newsletter. For the main Autumn Newsletter, e-mailed flora and fauna

lists in a single column, not in a table or spaced with tabs, please. If a plant list contains both English and Latin names, a table or Excel file (two columns) is fine, but for other lists, please do not use Excel. If this is not convenient, please post handwritten or printed reports to the address given on your programme.

Jill Bailey (Newsletter Editor)
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REPORTS OF FIELD MEETINGS

A combination of inclement weather (too much water everywhere), uncooperative starlings, who murmured away from Otmoor at the wrong time, and the current COVID 19

crisis meant a record number of field meetings had to be cancelled, as well as the last few indoor meetings of the season.

Bat Walk at Sherborne 11 September 2019

Eight people enjoyed a balmy evening's bat-hunting in this quiet Cotswold valley, led by the area ranger, Mike Robinson. To start with, Mike gave us a talk in the National Trust's office on the Sherborne Estate. The bats' mating season runs from August to October, and the females store the sperm until March or April, giving birth in June and July. In winter they roost underground in mines, old buildings, gaps in walls and roof spaces in a state of torpor to conserve energy reserves. Each bat will eat some 3,000 insects a night, about 35% of their body weight. The Sherborne Brook runs through this small village towards the Windrush. The local woods, farmland and river provide fruitful hunting grounds for fourteen bat species, including some 300 Lesser Horseshoe Bats that roost in the former kennels of the Sherborne estate and at another site further down the valley. The bats emerge to hunt at sunset, and have a number of other roost sites where they rest at intervals while hunting. They return to the roost later in the night, then make another sortie just before dawn.

Armed with bat detectors, we set out for the roost site just before sunset. It was fascinating to stand outside the roost and hear the rapid-fire echolocation clicks as the bats swooped in and out of the roost around us, often only

narrowly avoiding us as they sampled the outside environment before going off to hunt further away. These bats have the highest frequency (108 kHz) of clicks of any British bat. They may travel more than 2km away from Sherborne while hunting. When most of the bats had left for the first hunt of the night we wandered down to the river, to where it widens into a large pool with a weir. On the way we spotted a Noctule Bat, one of the larger British bats, flying in and out of the trees. This bat seemed to have a more gliding flight pattern than that of the Horseshoe Bats, and in low light might easily be mistaken for a bird. It also has a relatively low frequency clicks (20-25 kHz) that can be heard without a bat detector by many young people. We also picked up the higher frequency clicks of the Common Pipistrelle (45 kHz) and Soprano Pipistrelle (55 kHz).

Down by the river we shone torches across the water to try to spot bats hunting insects close to the water surface. Unlike previous visits, we were not lucky this evening. In the past this has been a good spot to see Daubenton's bats, but even the stronger torches did not pick up as many insects as usual, so perhaps that was why we didn't see any bats here.

Jill Bailey

Fungus Foray at Foxholes 13 October 2020

Six members met our leader Peter Creed in the car park at Foxholes on a soggy day. The puddles on the track to the site from Bruern

were the sort that Dr Foster had to contend with on his walk to Gloucester! This was quite a contrast with the previous year's

fungus foray, when a very dry summer and early autumn made it difficult even for Peter to find many fungi. There were no such problems this time, as the conditions were just right and we saw a good variety. I remember in particular the Amethyst Deceivers and Stinkhorns. After going through the woods, we returned via a meadow where in the past Peter had found Ballerina Waxcaps. We didn't find any this time, but were surprised to discover quite a few of the aptly-named Devil's Fingers, most bizarre clusters of red, finger-like fungi coming up through the grass.

Many thanks to Peter as always for sharing his knowledge and enthusiasm.



Devils fingers - John Cobb

Sue Morton

Field Trip to Weymouth 18-21 October 2020

On Friday 18th October 17 of us booked into the Royal Hotel on Weymouth sea front and met up for dinner in the evening. The next morning, after a hearty breakfast our first port of call was Lodmoor RSPB Wildlife Reserve just a mile east along the seafront. This is a large reed bed, open water, salt marsh, wet grassland and bushes which attract a variety of birds and is just over the shingle bank from the sea.



Great White Egret - Adrian State

Here we saw notably Little Egrets, a Great White Egret, Common Snipe, Black-tailed

Godwit, Dunlin, Curlew; Mediterranean Gulls amongst the large numbers of Black-headed Gulls (these are getting quite common now), there were various duck species and a Kingfisher flashed past. Talking to another birder there we had just missed a Bittern sighting viewable by telescope on the other side of the lake. The previous week when the weather had been very wet and windy a Grey Phalarope, White-rumped Sandpiper and Jack Snipe had been seen there but we had good weather and the birds had moved on! We heard Cetti's Warbler before moving to another RSPB Reserve at Arne, about an hour's drive and just along from the wonderful old Corfe Castle up on the hill.

It is lovely walking along the Shipstal trails at Arne, through scrub, farmland, ancient oak woodland, pine and birch forest, lowland heath, salt marsh, acidic ponds. A wonderful view out over Poole Harbour from the top of a hill with Brownsea Island, Furzey Island which is the home to a well disguised oil well and gathering station for Wytch Farm (Britain's largest onshore oil development) and is also the home to a thriving community

of Red Squirrels, plus Long Island, a privately owned island that is currently for sale with an asking price of around £1 million if anyone fancies a desert island close to home! There are eight islands altogether. The recent wet mild weather made perfect conditions for fungi and there were some fine specimens of Fly Agaric. From the only hide on this section we had great views of no fewer than 55 Spoonbills, the most I have ever seen in a group. All the way along we had sightings of small Red Darter Dragonflies making the most of the warm sun. Some of us disturbed a pair of Sika Deer on rounding a bend in the footpath but they soon disappeared into the surrounding woodland.

After tea and cake at the cafe we walked onto the other area of Arne, Coombe Heath, to look for Dartford Warblers without success. However, we had great views of Raft Spider on one of the ponds, a very large stripy beast.



Great raft spider - Elaine Steane

From the hide looking down towards Middlebere Lake we saw a lone Avocet and watched a fox making its way alongside a hedge.

Early the next morning we did a pre-breakfast walk to nearby RSPB Radipole Lake and reed beds looking for Bearded Tits. We were not successful and the thought of breakfast back at the hotel got the better of us. After breakfast we headed towards Portland, calling in at Ferry Bridge on the way. This is the point at which the Fleet joins Portland Harbour. The Fleet Lagoon was formed when

Chesil Beach moved onshore as the sea levels rose. It is just over eight miles long, finishing at Abbotsbury and the famous Abbotsbury Swannery. The water is fully marine at Ferry Bridge and gets less saline up towards the Abbotsbury end. The Fleet lagoon is one of the few remaining undisturbed brackish lagoons left in the world. Being tidal it is an important area for wildlife and is a Ramsar site. When the tide goes out there are some good areas of mud exposed at the Ferry Bridge end and great for varieties of wading birds. The tide was in now and we decided to spend more time there on our return in the afternoon.

We headed up the steep hill towards the castle and stopped near Portland Heights Hotel to look back along the coast and the whole length of Chesil Beach. The beach or bank of pebbles is 18 miles long and runs from Portland down to West Bay. In places it is 50 feet high and up to 660 feet wide. Portland is a tied island and Chesil Beach is the tombolo (a spit joined to land at both ends). That morning with a blue sky it made one of the most impressive views in the country and is certainly my favourite. When I lived in Weymouth as a boy back in the 1940s/50s I could lie in bed and hear the pebbles roaring on rough nights. Author, John Fowles wrote: "it is above all an elemental place, made of sea, shingle and sky, its dominant sound always that of waves on moving stone: from the great surf and pounding of Sou'westers, to the delicate laps and back-gurgling of the rare dead calm". The pebbles on Chesil Beach are graded in size from potato-sized near Portland to pea-sized at West Bay. It is believed that smugglers landing on the beach at night could judge their position along the coast simply by picking up a handful of shingle.

We drove on out to the car park at Portland Bill and walked along the coast past the

lighthouse. This area of coast had been notorious for the number of shipwrecked vessels over the centuries. The dangerous coastline features shallow reefs and dangerous rocks and is made even more hazardous due to the strong Portland tidal race. We saw Gannets out to sea, a Sparrowhawk and a Merlin flew over and a Razorbill was seen by some as we headed towards the old lighthouse, which is now the Portland Bird Observatory and Field Centre. Ringing is carried out here and is a good spot at this time of year to see migrant birds. We were lucky to see a good number of Goldcrests moving around in the surrounding bushes and to see a Goldcrest and a Firecrest close to, in the hand.



Goldcrest - David Roberts

There were also Blackcap and Chiffchaff.

After lunch at the cafe on The Bill we drove back through Portland and called in at Church Ope Cove taking a walk down a lovely, steep path through the woods past an interesting old ruined church of St Andrews and the old graveyard. The path drops down to a little shingle beach at the bottom, the only beach on Portland. We branched off up a long flight of

steps to a viewpoint and the impressive ruins of 12th century Rufus Castle. The area around here is a land slip or under cliff and is covered in small bushes and undergrowth down over the cliffs. It was recommended to us by a birder at the observatory as a good place to see migrants sheltering in the bushes, but we had no luck in that respect. We drove back down through Portland and along the causeway back to Ferry Bridge again where we had a much needed cup of tea just before the cafe closed and then telescoped some birds on the Fleet out on the mud left by the receding tide. Some of the birds we saw were, Brent Geese, Grey Plover, Ringed Plover, Oyster Catcher, Dunlin, Black-tailed Godwit, Turnstone, Great Black-backed Gull, Sandwich Tern, Common Tern, Little Egret and Grey Heron.

The following morning we checked out after breakfast and some of us headed for Longham Lakes, near Ferndown, where we had had a report of an American Black Tern which had been around for several days. We parked in the car park of Haskins Garden Centre and walked around to the lakes. Here we were able to see several Scaup and eventually had great views of the American Black Tern, a beautifully marked bird which flew low over us several times and was surprisingly catching insects. We returned to the garden centre for lunch before driving home.

A very successful few days birding, a new venue for the Field Club and a total of approximately 100 birds.

David Roberts

Rushy Common and Standlake Nature Reserves 15 December 2020

This was a joint trip with the Oxford RSPB Group and 17 of us turned up at the Rushy Common car park. As we arrived there was a short, sharp shower of rain so we headed straight to the bird-watching hide. Due to the very wet Autumn water levels were very high, both here and on nearby lakes, and some of the small islands were underwater.

The usual duck species that over-winter here were present, with no unusual ones, just Mallard, Gadwall, Common Pochard, Shoveler, Teal, Tufted Duck and Wigeon. A Green Woodpecker flew past and briefly climbed an oak tree on one of the islands, and a Common Buzzard was perched some way off. We then made a quick visit to the Tar Lakes, where on the Amenity Lake there were more Tufted Duck, and on the Conservation Lake 11 Red-crested Pochard were seen close to.

At Standlake, we parked in the village and walked to the Pit 60 hides. On the way, two pairs of Goosander were spotted on Pit 27, a fishing lake. Both hides that overlook the reserve's lake are smallish, so we split into two small parties – one for each hide. All those who visited the Langley's Lane one were fortunately wearing knee length wellies, as the path to it was completely underwater, and were just able to reach the hide without
Lapwing - Adrian State

getting wet feet. There were enormous numbers of Wigeon and Teal on the water, plus Tufted Duck, Pintail and several Goldeneye.



A flock of a hundred or so Lapwing were seen circling above the water meadow beyond the lake. Some of our group also saw 2 Great White Egrets in the same location.

On the way back to the village, 4 Roe Deer were spotted in one of the meadows and 2 Raven were calling overhead. Just over 30 different bird species were seen.

David Rolfe

Visit to Oxford University Herbaria 26 February 2020

What a fascinating, interesting time we spent in the Herbaria with Professor Stephen Harris, the Curator, who gave up a whole evening to tell us about the collection, how it is used, and the work involved to maintain it. To illustrate his talk, he had set out a range of examples taken from the collection demonstrating the various topics he was covering.

The collection contains, as well as over one million dried specimens, 30,000 samples of wood in blocks and some beautiful botanical watercolours. The dried specimens are all kept in colour-coded folders housed in wooden cabinets. There are some specimens which cannot be squashed, examples he showed us were a Banksia cone from

Australia, a Devil's claw from North America and a Raffia Palm seed.



Raffia Palm Seed - Mary Elford

About 40,000 type specimens are held here. When a new species is described for the first time a 'type' specimen is preserved and held in one of the world's herbaria. The collection is being digitised and put online making them accessible to everybody. They are still adding to the collection (about 500 a year). All new specimens are subjected to freezing to -30°C to preserve them. This method replaces the one using mercury or other toxic substances. The Plant Sciences building provides the ideal conditions for their storage, the fan in use is only to extract and monitor mercury levels in the atmosphere.

The earliest book in the collection is of dried plants which were collected by Bobart in 1642. He identified the specimens using the polynomial system and arranged them alphabetically. Two other very valuable books are of water colour paintings, one of plants and the other of birds found in the eastern Mediterranean in the 1780s. The artist was Ferdinand Bauer, one of the world's finest botanical illustrators. He had an extraordinary memory for colour and produced his paintings from sketches made in the field, on which he gave every part of the specimen a number which he could match from his palette of eight pigments.

Other valuable items we saw were specimens collected by Linnaeus in Lapland in 1792 and

some of the plants collected by Darwin when he was on the voyage of the 'Beagle'. The first artificial hybrid (Fairchild's Mule) between two different species, a carnation and a sweet William, is preserved as a pressed specimen. At the time (early 1700s) this caused a big upset as it shattered millennia-old beliefs about the nature of plants.

Tiny fragments taken from specimens collected at known dates provide material for DNA analysis or for dating ancient artefacts. An example of the former is the potato, from which DNA extracted from the plant and the fungal spores on it was used to pin down the origins of both host and pathogen. Carbon-14 dating of herbarium specimens collected in Egypt has been used to re-calibrate Egyptian dating models.

Stephen mentioned that all the plants from Australia collected in 1699 by William Dampier, a pirate turned naturalist, are in the Oxford collection. Under the heading 'extinction and conservation', Stephen showed us specimens which are (a) rare because they were over-collected, e.g. Fen Orchid, (b) extinct because of natural causes, e.g. the only population of a vetch on the Azores, which disappeared under a landslide soon after it was described and pressed, and (c) extinct before being described, e.g. the tree on St Helena that had hard wood good for making stairs.



Keen members at the Herbaria - Mary Elford

Also on view were fungi from Germany, preserved as sliced material and spore prints

in the 1880s, and algae, which are displayed by being floated on water on paper before being dried. A collection of lichens was saved from the bin when the Museum of Oxford did not want them anymore.

Thank you, Stephen, for giving us such an informative insight into the herbaria, one of the world's greatest. We feel very privileged to have been given this opportunity to see this valuable collection of plants preserved for posterity. Thanks also go to Jonathan for organising the visit.

Brenda Betteridge

Whitehill Wood to Stonesfield Common – a reconnaissance 15 March 2020

This was cancelled because of coronavirus, but John and Sue who did a reccy the week before:

The 'star' species of this walk was to be the Yellow Star of Bethlehem. Even a week before, social distancing was already advised and we wondered how we could all get close to some small plant whilst still maintaining a safe distance, and the weather was still as



Yellow Star of Bethlehem - Mary Elford

It was early afternoon, gloomy and still raining when we left the car at Ashford Bridge. It was clear that the path by the river had until very recently been under water; it was muddy, Wellies were definitely in order, and we didn't entertain many hopes of seeing anything of interest. Nevertheless, there were some encouraging signs of spring. The steep wooded bank on the right of the path was covered in bright green flushes of emerging

atrocious as it had been all winter so surely the path by the Evenlode would be very muddy, if not still flooded. With all that in mind, Sue and I decided we should at least do a reccy

Ramsons (wild garlic) leaves; a few Wood Anemones were in flower and closer to the river there were a number of Violets. We had previously found Town Hall Clocks – always cheering – along there and after some searching we found a few just coming out amongst the leaves of Lesser Celandine, which was not yet flowering; one Toothwort was showing in the bowl of a hazel. The Yellow Stars of Bethlehem were not yet in flower, but we tentatively identified quite a lot of plants by the spotted strap-like leaves. As they were all close to the river they had obviously been under water until a few days earlier but had survived. (I subsequently learnt that there were a number in flower ten or so days later.)

Not too far from the Yellow Stars of Bethlehem there was a very distinct animal track crossing the path and leading uphill. It was undoubtedly a badger's because we found a fresh latrine and some footprints very close by, although there was no sign of a sett, which was presumably on higher, drier ground. The path in the woods by the river was muddy and very slippery, as a slightly bruised knee

and very muddy trousers can testify. In places it was still under water and we had to bushwhack through the undergrowth to avoid the worst of it.



Toothwort - Mary Elford

That path, with the river on one side and a steep wooded bank on the south side, is always dark, damp and extremely ‘tulgy’ – we would even say weird (we once found a sheep’s skull on a stick...). It seems to have its own rain-forest microclimate.

Our reward was to see some splendid mosses and lichens on the trees and fallen branches; I wouldn’t dare to identify them but I’m sure that Peter Creed, who was to have led the planned walk, could have done. Perhaps the weirdest thing, just beyond the railway bridge, was what appeared to be part of a fox’s tail caught about five foot up on a bush. No explanation! We also glimpsed a Tree Creeper on a tree (where else?) on the far side of the river.



Ransoms - John Cobb

When we emerged into the open, the rain had eased off a bit and we crossed the river and walked beneath the woods along Stockey Bottom. The track was wet and muddy with little interest although, curiously, someone seemed to have planted hyacinths at the bases of some of the trees by the track. Once we were out of the woods and back onto tarmac the rain had more or less stopped and in warmer, sunnier corners Cowslips and Primroses were flowering along with White Dead Nettles and Celandines. We puzzled, as always, over the presence of the small grass airstrip to the west of the Ashford-Stonesfield road – whose is it, and why is it there? We then made a quick tour around Stonesfield Common but it was too early for anything to be flowering save for a few violets. We sat on a bench on the common for perhaps half an hour to take in the view over the Evenlode valley. Apart from the occasional train on the Cotswold line, it was eerily quiet, which seemed like an omen of the impending lockdown. However, as we walked back to the car a blackbird was singing fit to bust from a treetop by Bridgefield Bridge, perhaps as a sign of how much we – and everyone – would come to appreciate birdsong in these current, surreally quiet days.

John Cobb

OBITUARY

GORDON OTTEWELL 1931 - 30 August 2019

Gordon passed peacefully away on 30th August 2019 aged 88. He was a friend of the Field Club and led us on a number of Cotswold rambles, he was a fount of interesting knowledge on both natural history and local history. He also gave us some interesting talks and was a great authority on William Warde Fowler, who was an Oxford Don and ornithologist from Kingham and whose books had a great influence on Gordon's passion for natural history.

Gordon started his working life in the coal mines in the industrial Midlands. A fellow miner said to him one day: "You're a square peg, do you really want to spend the rest of

your days stuck in a bloody round hole?" This question, put to Gordon, served to concentrate his mind on how to change the course of his life after spending a few years below ground.

He went on to become an inspirational head teacher of Kingham village school and later Burford primary school where he began to instil in his pupils a love of their natural surroundings. He retired from teaching and moved with his wife Margaret to live in Winchcombe. He wrote a number of books, lectured about the Cotswolds and led guided walks.

David Roberts

OBITUARY

MORNEE ROSE BUTTON 15th November 1944 - 11th September 2019

Another good friend of the Field Club sadly passed away on 11th September 2019, at the age of 75, after a valiant fight with cancer which was diagnosed in February 2017.

Mornee excelled at sport and played for all school teams - hockey, netball, tennis, rounders and badminton and was selected to play for Warwickshire U18 Hockey Team; she also achieved academic success with 9 'O' levels and 3 'A' levels. With this she decided to train as a Teacher of Physical Education and attended Chelsea College of Physical Education at Eastbourne from 1963 to 1966.

Throughout her childhood Mornee had a great interest in nature, especially wild flowers. Thanks mostly to a "Nature Table" at primary school Mornee was able to name all her local wild flowers by the age of 11. As a teenager she enjoyed long walks in the countryside, observing all aspects of nature.

In 1966 Mornee was appointed PE Teacher at Bourton Vale School, Bourton-on-the-Water, she quickly gained promotion and eventually became Head of Department and continued to teach PE until 1994 (28 years). In 1988 Bourton Vale School joined with Westwood's Grammar School, Northleach, to form "The Cotswold School" at Bourton and Mornee was able to put to good use the Open University

degree she had been studying for and taught Environmental Studies as well as PE.

Mornee played for Bourton Ladies Hockey Club for 20 years and it was here that she met a keen cricketer for Bourton, Peter, who she married in 1977. They shared a love of both sport and natural history and were members of many organisations including RSPB, Gloucestershire Naturalists' Society, Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust, RSPB, WWT and Butterfly Conservation and spent much time in the countryside, observing wildlife, taking photographs, recording what they saw and sending details to the relevant organisations.

Among Mornee's many attributes she was also a member of the Wild Flower Society and entered the annual photographic competitions, she won the top prize in both 1998 and 1999 for best print in the national competition and after these successes she was asked to judge the competition, which she did for the next four years.

Mornee and Peter spent all their holidays, while they were both working, exploring most of mainland UK and parts of continental Europe and taking many pictures and slides of wildlife, particularly flowers. After retirement they decided to do more European travel, so from 2001 they spent a two-week spring holiday in places such as Portugal, Spain and Corsica, observing the landscape, flora and fauna and taking lots of slides, of

course! Later in the summer two weeks were spent visiting over the years Switzerland, Austria, the Italian Dolomites and French Alps.

All these slides were put to good use in talks Mornee gave to numerous local groups. Over a period of 20 years she gave more than 300 of these illustrated talks. Soon after retiring from teaching, Mornee started to write monthly articles for "Cotswold Life" magazine and from 1995 to 2004 these items, mostly natural history and landscape, were all illustrated with her own photographs and occasionally Pete's. For several years Mornee also wrote a monthly illustrated double-page spread for the NFU "Countryside" magazine as well as having articles published in "The Countryman" magazine and in "Country House and Home". She also wrote a "Nature Notes" column every month for the next 9 years in the local "Bourton Browser".

In September 2015 Pete passed away suddenly and unexpectedly. It was a great shock, a devastating blow and life for Mornee changed dramatically. Soon afterwards she developed health problems, culminating in the cancer diagnosis in February 2017.

Mornee will be remembered by members for the wonderful wildflower talks she gave to us and the fascinating nature walks she took us on over a number of years, passing on her knowledge in a unique and memorable way.

David Roberts