

# THE BERWICKSHIRE NATURALISTS' CLUB

Instituted 22 September 1831



April 2021

Dear Members,

Welcome to our 2021 season. The grip of the pandemic may be loosening but I suspect that we should not be complacent.

You will now have received your Library Card showing this year's Programme of Field Trips. A 'thank you' is due to our Field Secretary, Chris Neville-Taylor, who is responsible for putting the programme together and additionally has arranged the on-line lectures held throughout the Winter months. You will find some of the recorded lectures on our website. [www.bnc1831.co.uk](http://www.bnc1831.co.uk)

I sincerely hope that we can meet up in person later in the year and wish you an interesting season.

Kind regards,

Lesley Gray, President

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During the Pandemic we hope that we have managed to maintain some sense of community amongst our members through Facebook, YouTube, Zoom and the increased use of email. We look forward to returning to "real" meetings this year, but we will not be ignoring all the benefits that resulted from our enforced dependence on the internet. Most of you have agreed to be reached via email and this has enabled us to contact you more regularly without the cost and delay experienced when we were dependent on external printers. For those of you who have declined our offer to communicate electronically, fear not, the stalwart efforts of our secretary to print and post hard copies will mean that you will not be left out of the loop. With the freedom electronic communication affords us we will be sending out newsletters more frequently. Not only will this mean that we can respond to changing conditions more easily but also that members will be receiving final details nearer an event. We would welcome your views on whether we should continue with Zoom talks, maybe in the "off" season, and recommend that you join our Facebook group to view the stunning photographs posted by some exceptionally talented members.

## Events in May and June

### Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> May

#### ONLINE TALK

2:00 p.m. Via Zoom.

“Classical Odyssey” by John Dent

Our Past President and former Borders Region Archaeologist takes us on a trip across Europe and the Middle East.

### Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> May

#### HETHPOOL and COLLEGE VALLEY, NE71 6TW

Meet at 10:30 a.m. in Hethpool car park. (NT895283)

College Valley is a haven for wildlife and vegetation and is home to the largest semi natural woodlands (Harrow bog) in the Northumberland National Park as well as the Cheviot massif, the highest hill in Northern England at 2,672ft. Starting at the car park this walk will take us up the Valley and represents the rare opportunity for members to enjoy an Spring ramble. Among the birds that we should see on our walk are Red-Legged Partridge, Dippers and Bullfinches as well as Willow Warblers and Meadow Pipits. Flora to look out for include Wood-Sorrel, Heath Bedstraw and Blood-drop Emlets. Feral Goats also roam the valley. Roger Manning will be our guide for this walk which will finish about 4:00 p.m.

#### Directions

The valley is best approached by taking the B6351 off the A697 Wooler to Coldstream road at Akeld. Following the signpost to Kirknewton. Continue along this road and about ½ mile after passing through Kirknewton take a left turn signposted Hethpool. At the end of this road the entrance to the car park is clearly indicated.

Most of the walk will be on tarmac but stout footwear is suggested. Regarding appropriate clothing come prepared for whatever North Northumberland in May is likely to throw at us. Don't forget the suncream. The length of the walk makes it unsuitable for wheelchair users.

The nearest catering outlets are in Milfield and Wooler so members are advised to bring a picnic.

Public lavatories are available in Wooler.

### Tuesday 15<sup>th</sup> June

#### ONLINE TALK

2:00 a.m. Via Zoom.

“Twixt Thistle and Rose” by Linda Bankier.

The Berwick Archivist will tell us more about the project to re-catalogue the Berwick Borough Archives.

## Wednesday 23<sup>rd</sup> June

### VISIT TO DUNGLASS HARBOUR. TD13 5XD

Meet at 10:30 a.m. in the top car park. (NT 780 717)

Cove has probably had some form of harbour since pre-historic times with the natural harbour being improved in 1831. The Harbourmaster, Ben Tindall, has kindly offered to be our guide for a tour of this fascinating place which has long been of interest to Geologists, including James Hutton, as well as being popular with Artists. The "Glasgow Boys" based themselves in the area around the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup>/20<sup>th</sup> Century. Ben will cover the geological, geographical and historical aspects of the site while Roger Manning will be on hand to cover flora and fauna. Expect to see Fulmars, Gannets, Eider and Rock Pipits as well as a variety of plant species including Greater Stitchwort and Common Scurvy-grass. The visit is likely to extend into the early afternoon, including time for a picnic.

#### Directions

Cove is clearly signed off the A1 at Cockburnspath. After about 250 yds turn left, a small sign shows "Cove only". Follow the lane almost to the end and there is a large carpark on your right.

Stout footwear should be worn, and a small torch would be useful at a particular stage of the visit. It is not suitable for wheelchair users.

There are no catering facilities in the area so please bring a picnic. Hot drinks will be available at some point during the day.

The nearest public lavatories are at Cockburnspath.

### **All Our Yesterdays**

BNC members first visited Dunglass on Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April 1833 on an apparently dreich day.

"Dunglass Dean at all events, was visited, and miserable indeed must be the day which will render it unworthy of unbounded and unmingled admiration. Occurring in this beautiful station, two new plants, new I mean to the Flora of Berwickshire, were gathered by the Rev John Baird. The one was the *Chrysosplenium altermfolium*, occurring mixed with the more frequent species, — *Chr. oppositifolium* ; the other was the *Marchantia conica*, growing on moist banks in considerable abundance, and in fine fruit. Various species of land shells were also gathered in the sheltered recesses of the dean."

### **Other plans for 2021**

We hope to hold an exhibition to celebrate the bicentenary of the birth of Margaret Rebecca Dickinson (1821-1918). Miss Dickinson was a talented and prolific botanical artist and plant collector and had a long association with the BNC. She was elected as an honorary member in 1873 and remained as a member until her death at the age of 97. As well as an exhibition the Club will be publishing a book featuring her life and works.

A new publication about Grave Slabs will also be sent to you in due course.

### **BNC Website**

The Club's website has been updated to include trip details and links to our YouTube and Facebook pages. Password: woodsorrel

### **Subscriptions**

Annual subscriptions are now due. For those members not paying by direct debit cheques can be sent to the treasurer at the address shown on the library card. BACS payments can be made to:

Berwickshire Naturalists Club. Sort code 831528 and account number 00218195

### **Contact us**

If you need any further information regarding the Club's planned activities, please contact:

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