

Greetings to everyone from newsletter co-ordinators John & Jane Cribb. As we write, it's a dull and rainy day, but somehow the dullness is accentuating the brighter greens, deep reds and sunny yellows of the garden. Where would we be without rain? Necessary as it is, however, rain was fortunately a welcome absentee from the group events featured below! We hope you'll enjoy the usual newsletter mix of news, views, eco-jottings and 'what's on?' This time we particularly want to draw your attention to the evenings in November with Ruth Valerio in Wimborne and Uplyme (see overleaf), and would love you to use the publicity in the accompanying file attachments to make these as widely known as possible – and to come yourselves, of course!

John's slot: Seedtime and harvest

It seems early, but my first seed catalogue for 2011 has arrived to tempt me to spend my gardening funds on all the things I really don't need, or like, to grow and eat. Maybe something new, or more flowers, that all look great in the catalogue. For some of us, it's just not possible: space, time, soil and sunshine all have to be taken into account, and for those of us who do a bit of growing, part of our planning for next year involves looking back at past crops and working out which ones did well, and which didn't. We can plan, buy the right seed, prepare the ground, plant the seed, feed it and water it. There's a parable tucked away in Mark's Gospel, just after the parables of the sower and the lamp on its stand (Mark 4:26-29). A man scatters the seed, but whether he sleeps or gets up, the seed grows. He doesn't know how, but he can watch it grow and then harvest it. It's God who gives the growth, not only in our gardens, but also in our lives.

Local group events: looking back

'The flowers that bloom in the spring, tra-la..'

John Spatchet writes: Dorset and West Hants group members and friends enjoyed the beauty of God's creation in glorious June sunshine on the chalk downland of Hambledon Hill. The views over Dorset were stunning but the afternoon's focus was the ground as group member and botanical enthusiast, Pam Marchant, expertly led our flower walk. Walking up through the woodland we identified Bryony, Cleavers



and Dog Rose; on the hill, we spent time learning to distinguish Mouse-ear Hawkweed, Chalk Milkwort, Wild Thyme, Horseshoe Vetch and Quaking Grass. Also 'enjoying' the flowers were many Six-Spot Burnet moths. Higher up we came across Cowslips, Yellow Rattle, Common Spotted Orchids, Pyramidal Orchids (left) and Common Twayblades. Fluttering around were beautiful Chalkhill Blue butterflies. Thank you, Pam, for sharing your passion with us and looking after us all so well on this outing.

'Wet and Wild' morning at Longham Lakes, Ferndown

'I've caught a slug, Mummy. I'm so excited!' was one six-year-old's comment during this event, when a large group of all ages met to walk round the lakes and discover more about pond creatures, birds, bugs, moths and butterflies. We were ably led by Dominic Couzens, locally-based wildlife expert and A Rocha Friend, who shared his encyclopaedic knowledge in a fun, informal way, moved the action along and held the interest of children and adults alike by balancing humour, anecdote and information. A bug-catching competition kept the children motivated (wildlife postcards as rewards). As another six-year-old enthused: 'I loved the Wet and Wild day. When can we do it again?'



Local group events: looking forward

Living lightly: Christian living that doesn't cost the earth



Ruth Valerio, author of *L is for Lifestyle* and manager of A Rocha's Living Lightly online forum, explores how our day-to-day lifestyle choices should reflect our belief that God made and loves this world and has given us the privilege of looking after it. **Wednesday 10 November at 7.30pm at St John's Church, Wimborne BH21 1AE.** Please use the attached poster and flyers to publicise this event among your friends, churches and other contacts. It couldn't be a more important message!

(For your information, this presentation is being repeated in Uplyme Village Hall, Uplyme DT7 3UY, on Thursday 25 November at 7.30pm.)

Return to Blashford Lakes Following our local group 'launch' day at this Hampshire Wildlife Trust reserve near Ringwood last February, we're delighted to be going back for another work-party/bird-watching combination on **Saturday 29 January 2011**. More details to follow but please book the date now.

Forthcoming A Rocha events

Wessex Region Conference Find out about A Rocha's Partner Churches scheme and what your church can do. Last-minute booking enquiries for 'Partners in Caring for God's World' at Beechen Cliff Methodist Church, Bath, on Saturday 16 October, to elaine.brown@arocha.org

Kingfisher's Fire Peter and Miranda Harris, founders of A Rocha, will give their own biblical and personal response to the challenges and opportunities that a creation-friendly life can bring. 15-19 November at Lee Abbey, Lynton, Devon. Details on www.leeabbey.org.uk or phone 01598 752621.

National Conference 'Save-the-date' notice for **18-20 February 2011** in Northampton. Celebrate 10 years of A Rocha UK, be inspired for the future, make contact with other A Rocha Friends and relax together. More details in the autumn magazine. Booking forms available from the website, www.arocha.org.uk or from the office, 020 8574 5935.

Jottings

'Win-win' green shopping If you like buying pre-owned books on Amazon but would prefer a 'greener' option, try www.greenmetropolis.com, which you can also use to sell the books you've finished with. For every book sold, 5p is donated to The Woodland Trust. And while on the shopping theme, if you donate your old M&S clothes to Oxfam, you'll receive a £5 M&S voucher. Visit <http://plana.marksandspencer.com/> and click on 'Oxfam Clothes Exchange' to find out more. Apparently, since January 2008, over 5 million items of unwanted clothing have been kept out of landfill and over £3 million has been raised for Oxfam.

Recycling with a difference Using recyclable materials such as plastic bags and bottle-tops, Lois Walpole designs and makes functional objects, such as fruit and laundry and rubbish baskets. She explores how 'waste' materials can be used to inspire and create new objects. Her exhibition, 'Lois Walpole urbanbaskets; tradition recycled', is at Walford Mill, Wimborne, until 24 October.

Green energy The National Trust autumn news reports that they are committed to reducing their use of fossil fuels by 50% by 2020. In West Dorset, a previously derelict building has been refurbished to become the new NT office on the Golden Cap estate. A small biomass boiler will provide heating; solar thermal roof panels will heat the water, and photovoltaic cells provide electricity.

And finally...

If you have any relevant news/info about local events/website links/book or film recommendations/recycling or grow-your-own tips, etc, which you would like John & Jane Cribb to consider for inclusion in a future newsletter, please contact us on jandjcribb@btinternet.com or 01202 883307.

Please contact David & Jean Morgan (david.morgan@arocha.org or 01202 883504) if:

- you would like any more information about the Dorset/West Hants local group;
- you would like to get your church interested in A Rocha/Christians and the environment;
- you don't wish to receive local group info in future.