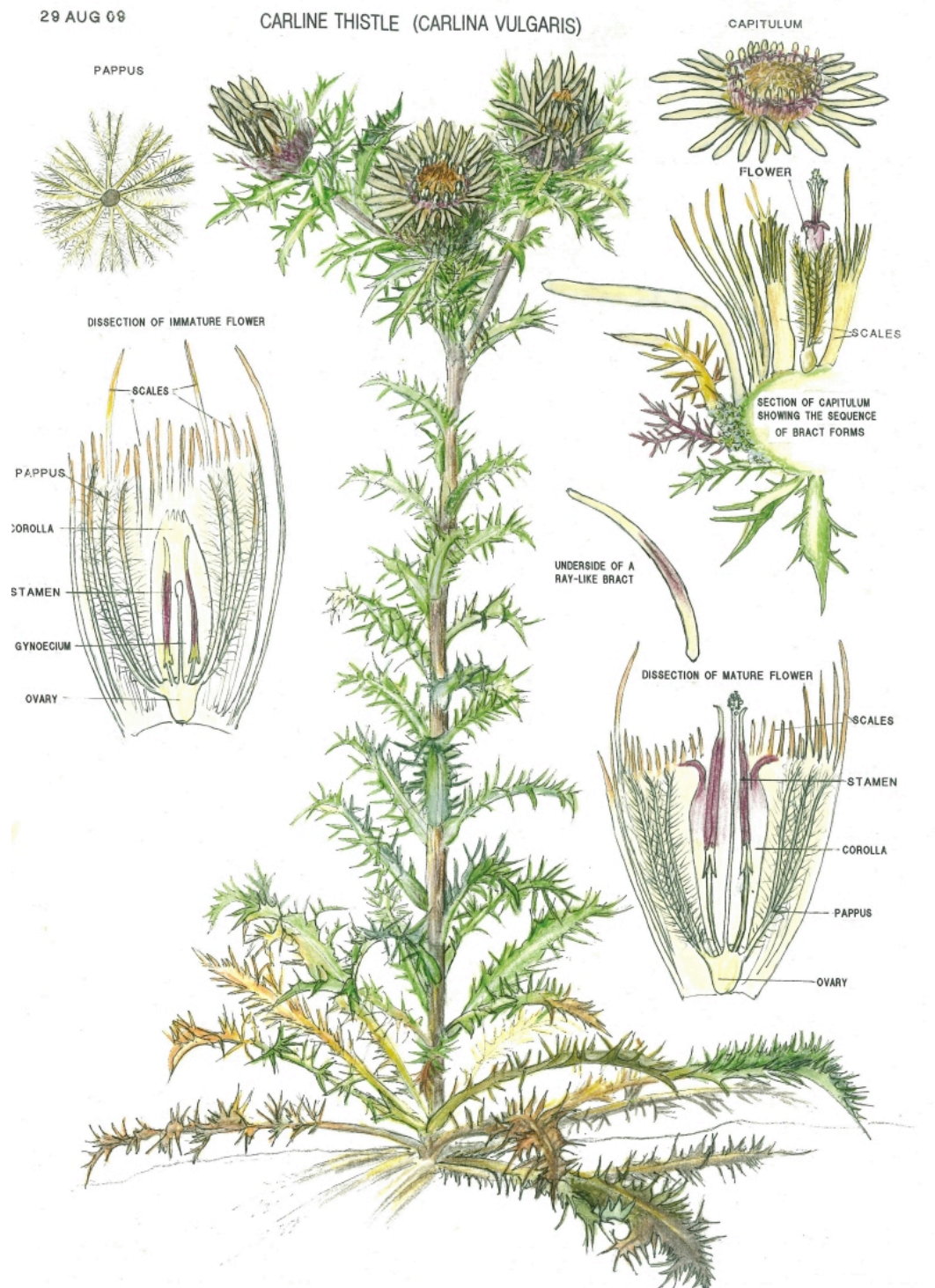




Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke,

November 2009

Newsletter Number Thirty



***Carlina vulgaris*, the Carline Thistle
by Marjorie Powell**

Hold the Front Page!

When I first started looking for illustrations for this newsletter, Marjorie Powell, then a regular member of the Mid-Week Conservation Volunteers, suggested Stella Ross Craig, who in 1948 produced the extraordinary volumes of illustrations for the entire British flora called Drawings of British Plants, now long out of print and still very little known to the general public. The librarian at the Central Library gave me permission to copy drawings of calcareous flora because we did not intend to make any money out of them. Since Stella Ross Craig was born in 1906, it seemed unlikely that she was still alive, and I never got round to checking and thanking her. So I was sad to learn, driven by this article to do a quick check with Google, that she was still living near Kew until her death in 2006. Moreover, the obituary by Peter Marren in The Independent quotes her as saying "I didn't want to sell them. I just wanted them to be done as records." Sins of omission.

At the next work party, Marjorie produced a folder of her botanical illustrations of tropical flora in the Santa Lucia Cloud Forest Reserve, Ecuador. Some of these have been included in their website which is on www.santa-lucia.org/biodiven.html I asked hopefully if she had done any calcareous flora, particularly a Carline Thistle. With characteristic thoroughness, she grew one before drawing it.

The little Carline thistle, only 6 -10 inches tall, is quite distinctive, and easy to identify at any season because the woody stems and dried seed heads survive over winter. There are some plants north of Mutlow Hill, but the main stock is to be found south of the A11, on the banks of the dyke and also increasingly on the path which runs along its eastern side. Recently, more and more of the flower heads have been eaten away, possibly by the micro moth *Endotrichia flammealis*. This is obviously good news for one micro-moth, but not so good for the Chalkhill Blues, which love to nectar on the Carline Thistle. An annual, it does not reproduce as freely as other thistles. However, last summer, there was a remarkable flush on the dried-out bottom of one of the four roadside settling tanks near the layby on the A11.

Mutlow Hill, August 2009



Common Knapweed, Harebells, Yellow Rattle and other less visible flowers, such as Lady's Bedstraw, Milkwort, Rock Roses, but no Carline Thistles!

Success! Traffic Restriction Order granted

When the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke were set up in April 2001, one of the things that Sam Agnew, our first Chairman, hoped to achieve was a TRO on the Horseheath end of the Roman Road. As anyone who lives in the area knows, the old green way from the Balsham-Hildersham Road through to the West Wickham-Horseheath Road has been deeply rutted and almost impassable for years.

In 2002, in conjunction with Balsham Parish Council, the Friends applied to the County Council for a TRO, without success. A year or two later, the Council Countryside Access Team began the long drawn out process of getting a TRO, as described by Roger Moreton in the newsletter for February 2008. The Roman Road was finally put on the list of byways needing a TRO. However, it is a very long list, and the County Council has to find money for the legal costs of a change in the law, and for the actual barriers and sign posts. At this point, Karen Whymark took over the job and suggested that we could get the Roman Road to the top of the list by writing individual letters to the Countryside Access Team and getting a petition going. This turned out to be much easier than I had expected. The Council received perhaps a dozen well written letters, and several sheets of signatures to a petition were sent to Shire Hall. The Cambridge Evening News published an excellent article dominated by Rob Mungovan's beautiful eye-catching picture of blue sky reflected in the extensive puddles of the damaged track.

Hey Presto! Before I had sent in the last the petition sheets, I received a letter from the Traffic Department saying that they had agreed to impose a TRO and the decision was final. It was some time before I received the full details, and discovered that our TRO only restricts 4 x 4 drivers not motorcycles, and will only be imposed from October to April. I was given to understand that there had been a consultation period when the decision was open for discussion, but I had not received any information about it.

This means that if there are very wet weeks in the summer, nothing will be done about motorcyclists and 4 x 4 chaps joy-riding in the mud. The gates will not be closed. However, half a loaf is better than no bread, and a winter TRO is a considerable achievement. Thank you to everyone who signed the petition, in particular to Carolin Gohler and the staff at Wandlebury for getting several sheets of signatures on the table in the back porch, and to Rita Lemon who took a petition sheet and got lots of signatures from the Horseheath area. Particular thanks to the dozen or more people who wrote letters. It is worth knowing that public authorities pay a great deal of attention to well written letters. Pass it on.

Success! The Flowers that Bloomed in July tra - la continued to bloom in August!

The foot path along the Fleam Dyke from Fulbourn to the disused railway and the wide verges of the Roman Road will no longer be mowed by the County Council contractor in high summer. The Countryside Access team finally adopted this new biodiversity-friendly system on condition that there were no complaints. Thanks to increased subscriptions, the Friends had enough money to ensure that this did not happen. Paul Stebbings, an expert wildlife contractor, did a beautiful job on the Fleam Dyke path in early July, skilfully brush cutting round the Dropwort flowers and discouraging the Burdock and nettles. The Roman Road has a wide track all the way to Hildersham, except for a 300 yard section of raised bank or agger. Over time the track has dwindled to a narrow footpath with a thick hedge on one side and the overgrown bank of the agger on the other. Paul kept the path clear there too. Mission accomplished. There were no complaints and so the County Council have agreed to continue this policy, with all the benefits that brings to butterflies, bees, bumblebees, hoverflies, solitary wasps etc.

The Fleam Dyke and Roman Road Walk and Guide Book by Roger Lemon

This 25-mile long-distance circular walk, using existing rights of way, has been developed by the Friends, in association with the local branch of the Ramblers' Association and Cambridgeshire County Council.

The work involved planning and waymarking the route, liaising with parish councils and landowners, obtaining the necessary funding, and producing the Guide Book. A lottery grant of £4872 to cover all the costs was obtained from Awards for All.



The walk was launched on 13th September at a special event held on the Roman Road near Wandlebury. The 24-page Guide Book, which gives detailed directions and route maps and includes information on flora, fauna and places of interest along the way, was on sale at the event. It is now available at a price of £2.50 from various retail outlets including tourist offices and local post offices, or by post for £3.25 including postage and packing, from Roger Lemon, Brecklands, Main Street, Shudy Camps, CB21 6RA. Leaflets and posters are also available.

About 60 people attended the launch, which was celebrated with glasses of Buck's Fizz and a cake decorated with a copy of a waymark sign. The sign, which incorporates the Friends' logo, was designed specifically for the new walk and more than 200 have now been used to mark the route. The signs were placed mainly on existing structures but 29 additional posts were also installed. The launch was followed by a 15-mile circular walk via Balsham, in which nearly 30 people took part. The organisers would like to thank all those who came along to support the event and make it a memorable day.

Further information can also be obtained on our new website: www.frrfd.org.uk, which is currently under development

The Devil is in the Detail – footnote from Julia

The project was planned by a sub-committee of the Friends, consisting of Sam Agnew, Nigel Copeman, Peter Duthie from the CCC Countryside Services Team, Roger Lemon, Janet and Roger Moreton for the Ramblers' Association, Julia Napier, and Sarah Poppy from the CCC Department of Archaeology. However, the lion's share of the work was done by Roger Lemon who designed the waymarker and wrote most of the text, with contributions from Sarah and Julia. Roger checked a staggering amount of detail, and took nearly all the photographs except for the close-up photographs of flowers taken by Jack Harrison. Janet and Roger Moreton are a mine of information about footpaths, rights, possibilities, do's and don'ts. Roger, Sam, Janet and Roger Moreton walked the whole route during the planning, and then a team of five committee members did the waymarking in stages over five days. Julia



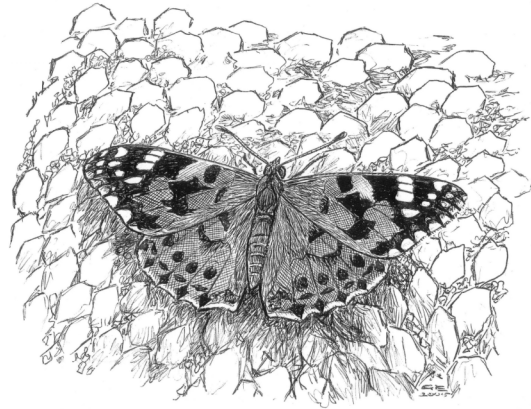
When Rita Lemon heard that there was to be a launch with refreshments, she said, "You can't have a launch without a cake!" or words to that effect, and produced this delicious cake artfully decorated with the waymarking sign. Our thanks to Rita for making both it and several plates of savoury goodies, and for all the coffees she made for our sub-committee meetings. Rita also collected some weary walkers at Balsham and brought them back to their cars.

The Great Painted Lady Migration

Painted Lady basking on gravel.

drawing by Graham Easy

These Mediterranean butterflies, like our native Wall Brown, the Grayling, the Small Copper and some others, use ground source heat as well as Solar power to keep warm.



On 24th May, I happened to be at Wood Walton Fen and saw a stream of Painted Ladies flying northwards across the ploughed field. This was the second day of the biggest migration of Painted Ladies ever seen in this country. By the end of June, Butterfly Conservation estimated that there might be a billion Painted Ladies in the country. Martin Warren said he would not like to be a thistle in the coming summer. I hoped to see thistles stripped to the stem, as had happened in Maldon in 1996. But then the weather changed, and the Painted Ladies disappeared from my buddleia, and I went on holiday. When I came back, the only plant I saw stripped to the stem was a neighbour's variegated garden Mallow. However, no one who visited the Roman Road on sunny days at the end of July and the beginning of August could have been disappointed. On the Transect walk from the Golf Course to Worsted Lodge on 2nd August, I recorded 101 Painted Ladies. The number reflects the marks in my notebook, not the actual number. I am sure I missed many as a result of what one might call Painted Lady Fatigue! There were also, as everyone noticed, substantial numbers of Large Whites, Small Whites, and far more Peacocks than usual. Many of these would have been immigrants too. The next day I walked from Worsted Lodge to the Balsham-Hildersham Road, and counted a similar number of Painted Ladies, Large and Small Whites, and Peacocks. This summer there were also, in very good number, the Meadow Browns, Gatekeepers and Ringlets which one would expect on such a butterfly-friendly site. The highlight of my walk came at the Hildersham end of the Road. There is an area just below Deadman's Hill which is full of Small Scabious, Hoary Plantain, Lady's Bedstraw, Common Knapweed and other flowers. The many cyclists who use the Road have worn a sandy track rather lower than the surrounding turf. For about 30 yards along this track, there were, alternately, Painted Ladies and Peacocks sunning themselves. And I had no camera!

The Migration Continued into October.

In October, the Butterfly Conservation website stated: "Britain is experiencing an autumn invasion of butterflies, long after butterfly migration from Europe has usually ceased. It comes at the end of a summer which has seen the biggest migration of butterflies into the UK for more than decade. The warm, sunny September weather is probably a factor. Over recent days there have been numerous reports of newly-arrived Red Admiral, Large White and Clouded Yellow butterflies along the South Coast." Unfortunately, the Clouded Yellows do not get as far as Cambridgeshire in any numbers, but when you do see one the mustard yellow wings are unmistakeable.

A Good Butterfly Year then?

Dr Martin Warren, Chief Executive of Butterfly Conservation, said: "It was fantastic to see so many Painted Ladies and now to have all these Clouded Yellows. However, we have to remember that these are not native butterflies. Their appearance is the result of a rare combination of circumstances, mainly in North Africa. **Most British butterflies continue to decline. Until we halt that decline the vast majority of summers will see very few butterflies in many parts of the country.**"

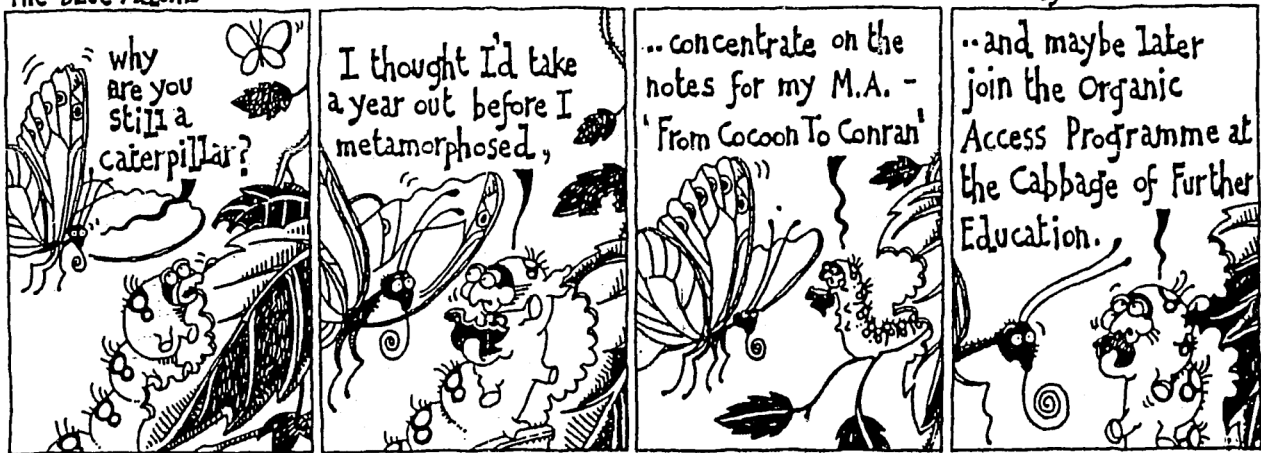
Chalkhill Blue News

The Chalkhill Blues were seen on the Fleam Dyke again this year, mainly south of the A11. The first sighting was of two on 25th July 2009. The last, just one on 12th September. The largest total seen on any one transect walk was five. For several years one or two males have also been seen on the flowery area just north of Mutlow Hill. Encouraging though it is to have this small colony apparently persisting steadily for five years, it would be good to increase the numbers in some way. We hope to have a meeting of local butterfly experts and enthusiasts to share ideas on what needs to be done.

Cue for a cartoon, with thanks to Derek Andrews for the original, Mike Albutt for producing this cleaned up version of an old newspaper cutting, and most of all, of course, to David Shenton. In Newsletter 29 we learned that a blue butterfly, hitherto unknown to science, had been preserved in a blob of amber. Now read on.

The Blue Adonis

by David Shenton



Autumn Gentians doing well in 2009

Rachel Gray found plenty on 18th August, earlier than last year, and by September there were even more. Steve Hartley counted no less than 244 spikes at the usual place near the disused railway. South of the A11, the small colony near the junipers found by David Barden last year was also doing well, with 30 flower heads on the path and 8 more to the side of the bank. About 200 yards further on, another group of plants, stood out clearly on the rabbit grazed path. The uppermost pale purple flowers were wide open and facing upwards. Autumn Gentians have also been found this year at the West Pit Nature Reserve off Lime Kiln Hill.



Greater Knapweed - white variation

Some years ago a member reported a white variant on the Roman Road, and indeed there are usually a few not far south of Copley Hill. This year, however, there was a definite increase. Many flowers produce white variations, most noticeably bluebells. I thought the same was true of violets, but in David Barden's expert article on violets, he said that the white violet was a distinct sub-species, *Viola var. dumetorum*. Would any botanists like to comment on the white and pink varieties of Greater Knapweed? Do red-tailed bumblebees like them as much as the purple variety? If you have not associated Knapweeds with bumblebees, walk up the Roman Road from Worsted Lodge next July or August and look for them. Towards evening, you may see red-tailed bumblebees tucked up for the night under the ray florets of the Greater Knapweed. Bed and breakfast!

Entrance to Roman Road at the top of Wort's Causeway.

For many years now, the green lane leading to the Roman Road has been spoiled by fly tipping. The pot holes grew in size and depth. The gypsy caravans with their mess and their dogs discouraged visitors, and the lane was increasingly used as a meeting place for homosexuals. One of the best statements of tolerance I have ever heard was from the old Traveller who I got talking to as he damped down his bonfire on a beautiful evening in 2007. He said, "We have our place up here and they have theirs down there. They don't bother us and we don't bother them. Everyone needs somewhere to be." Unfortunately, both groups effectively stopped other people from using what was formerly the main place for people from Cambridge to get onto the Roman Road from Cambridge.

In 2008, Christine Tucker of the Countryside Access Team found the money to install gates which excluded caravans, fly tippers and 4 x 4 vehicles from the 5 main access points along the road. Subsequently, John Cooper, the Senior Access officer, saw the state of the road and promised action. There is now a possibility that Cambridgeshire County Council will secure a grant from the new Housing Growth Area fund. During the summer, John Sargeant, who is in charge of larger countryside access projects, has been consulting widely with everyone who has an interest in the area, including the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke. 'Consulting widely' may sound like a cover for doing what has already been decided, but I should like to say how impressed I was by the time and effort he has put into a careful plan for a better parking area which will also blend with the green and leafy entrance to the old Roman Road.

In the interim, the CCC Countryside Services Team have levelled the badly eroded surface and cleared bushes back from the sides of the entrance track, revealing the row of Scots Pines and other trees planted to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Cambridge Rambling Club in 1977. If you look to the left as you come through the barriers, you will see the wooden plaque which marks the event. The track itself has been surfaced and patched with road planings over the years, so it may hold together better now that heavy vehicles have been excluded, but it is to be hoped that the County Council will get some if not all of the grant they applied for. See page 12.

As I was taking this photograph of the clearance work at Wort's Causeway, I met a couple returning from a walk. Paul Truelove's family had lived in Cambridge so I asked whether he had known the Road as a child. What he wrote will stir a few memories.

Cubs and Scouts on the Roman Road Fifty Years Ago

by Paul Truelove



Field Maple

I remember going out to the Roman road with cubs or scouts, about 1950. It was a major expedition. We went to the long thin stretch of wood that begins a hundred yards or so from the start, on the left hand side. There was less undergrowth in the woodland then, but quite enough dead wood for making smoky fires. The fires were not for fun, but for cooking, of a sort. The prime delicacies were dampers and twists, both composed largely of flour and water. Someone had brought some blue colouring material which made the dampers appear blue: not the most appetizing appearance for food. The twists were made by wrapping a pasty flour mixture round a newly shaved stick, which was then held over the fire in the flames/smoke. My recollection is that it was quite usual for children to have the use of penknives, which had plenty of attachments, useful if there was a need for removing stones from horses' hooves etc.

19th October 2009

Enemy Aliens on the Roman Road

For many years now, there have been two patches of a kind of spurge spreading steadily along the eastern verge of the Road. It is a pretty, medium height variety. David Barden writes: "Euphorbia x psuedovirgata, the taxon present at TL525.521, is a 'catch-all' for a number of alien species, the taxonomy of which is very complicated - they all look pretty similar."

It is an invasive species, similar in habit to Hoary Bitter Cress which is spreading so fast along all our roads. The numerous fine roots run around and through the roots of neighbouring plants, competing for water and nutrients. Iain Webb took a Work Experience student along during the early summer, and they had a session pulling out as much as they could. However, it is a very tough plant, and in September there were many flowering heads there again. More work needed!

Native enemies on the Fleam Dyke

Ten years ago most of the northern end of the Fleam Dyke, was covered with scrub, among which there was quite a lot of Old Man's Beard, or *Clematis vitalba*. It is the only native British clematis. There are others on the continent, but this is the only one that made it back after the glaciers retreated, before the Land Bridge gave way and the north sea poured through into what is now the English Channel. Looking at the way the thing has taken over the cleared areas of the Fleam Dyke, one can see that it is a fast operator.

Thanks to members who are now paying a subscription of £10 or sometimes more, this year the Friends had some extra money in the bank. The Committee therefore authorised the payment of £400 to Paul Stebbings for 5 days work cutting back clematis and treating the rootstock on the south west side of Mutlow Hill and on the areas of improving flora north of the disused railway. The result of his work was and is a lot of invisible clematis!

A Very Hot June Work Party

The aim was to reduce clematis in certain areas nearer to Fulbourn, in order to encourage surviving fragments of flora. Young clematis shoots were pulled off the root, and tougher stems cut back, bringing light to the flowers underneath. To Helen Chubb and Richard Fowling, Sue and Matthew Wallis and Christine Newell, many thanks for their work. By late July and August there was a marked increase in flowers in those areas, especially Common Knapweed. The work party also uncovered the first plant of Fairy Flax which has been recorded north of the disused railway. This diminutive, pale version of flax was formerly used as a purgative, hence its Latin name *Linum catharticum*.

The south west side of Mutlow Hill looked wonderful in July and August with two large patches of blue Harebells and other calcareous flora. See page 2. Annual mowing and raking has steadily improved a surviving areas of flowers and Yellow rattle, which is semi-parasitic on grass, has spread, visibly reducing the grass in its area. It was here in 2007 that Rachel Gray and I poisoned the stumps of several square yards of clematis.



Common Knapweed, like Greater Knapweed, is a very good source of nectar for many insects.

Roman Road Work Party, 20th September

David Barden, Steve Hartley and David Seilly turned up to help Iain Webb mow and rake off the bank of the Roman Road near Worsted Lodge next to the section where we worked last year. The flowers will be even better next year. Do make sure you go and see them!

Fleam Dyke Work Party, 18th October.

See page 11.

Fleam Dyke Work Party 22nd November.

A gap in a very wet week, almost.

Many thanks to Mike Albutt, David Barden, Helen Baker, Helen Chubb, Christine Newell, Edmund Tanner, David Seilly, Matthew and Susan Wallis, and David Waterhouse. Iain Webb had mowed the top third of the bank of the Dyke in advance, from 7.30am, to be precise! That was raked up and a great deal more done before everyone stopped for tea, and the heavens opened.



Shock, horror!

A member of the Friends was walking along the Fleam Dyke on a nice sunny day in August when she caught a glimpse of a chap walking towards her with his T shirt off. He disappeared into one of the breaks in the dyke and when he emerged, it became clear that he had been planning to enjoy the full benefit of the sunshine but was now holding his kit strategically to the fore.

What does a lady do? She kept her eyes on his face, and said "What a lovely morning", of course. To which he replied, "Yes, isn't it!"

A Norwegian friend reminded me of Baden Powell's advice for the lads on the subject of cleaning windows. "Boys, if as you begin to clean a window, you see a lady in her bath, you say 'So Sorry, Sir,' and move quickly to the next window", which does not quite meet the case!

Wings and Legs on the Roman Road

On 30th May, I took part in the National Painted Lady count. As instructed, from 11.00 am - 1.00 pm, I sat on a camp stool on the Roman Road a few hundred yards up from Worsted Lodge and waited. I saw only 2 Painted Ladies, although Roger Lemon had seen dozens there 5 days earlier. Val Perrin, recording for the same scheme at Dry Drayton saw about 100. I imagine that a dot map of the results will show the main migration route that day was west of Cambridge.

So I counted people instead. My totals were: **7 cyclists, 7 walkers and 3 runners in two hours.** This seems to me be typical of any sunny weekend day, with smaller numbers on weekdays. This suggests that hundreds of people use one part of the Roman Road each year! Our Chairman, Edmund Tanner, has found a student who is prepared to attempt a scientific survey of usage. This was one of the tools used by the Ely campaign to save Roswell Pits from a marina.

Farewell

Shaun Wylie, who recruited friends to help keep the Fleam Dyke clear in the 1960s and 70s, died in October. I knew him only slightly but was aware of a man of enormous intelligence, energy and charm, and one of the Code Breakers at Bletchley Park. At his funeral, I learned that he had been a wonderful maths teacher and the best lecturer in mathematics anyone could remember in Cambridge University. I also learned that according to Hugh Alexander, who took over Hut 8, that only Alan Turing 'made a bigger contribution to the success of Hut 8 than Wylie'. This was the section where the Enigma code was broken. In a month when we commemorate those who died in battle, it seems right to pay tribute to one the leading members of the team which shortened the Second World War by perhaps two years. As you walk from the A11 towards the Bedford Gap, think of Shaun, who cleared scrub from the path because he enjoyed the exercise and 'so that friends could walk along it side by side'.

The Mid-Week Conservation Programme

The Mid-Week Conservation Volunteers will be working on the Fleam Dyke and the Roman Road this winter, as well as on other areas managed by the Wildlife Trust. **Please ring Iain Webb, the Wildlife Project Officer on 01954 713531 for more information.**

Other Work Parties and Events

Sunday 3rd January, 2010 Helpers wanted for work on Fulbourn Nature Reserve

Work Parties last from 10.0 am to 12.30 or so. First Sunday of winter months.

Contact Nigel Copeman: e-mail: ncopeman@tinyworld.co.uk or Julia Napier.

Sunday, 17th January 2010. Work Party on the Roman Road.

We shall be mowing and raking at the Hay Rattle area at TL 556 551 just north west of the Balsham-Hildersham Road. Parking possible on the side of a narrow road. Best to share transport in the Wildlife Trust van. Email or phone Julia for details. This site was full of flowers and butterflies in August. Pure delight!

Sunday, 28th February. Raking up on Mutlow Hill. This site also was remarkably full of flowers and butterflies as a result of all these work parties. See photo on page 2. Meet at Stonebridge Lane, Fulbourn at 9.45 am to share transport to the site.

Sunday, 21st March. Mowing and raking on the bank opposite the Golf Course.

We had to neglect this section last year. Meet at 9.45 am at the junction of the Roman Road and Wandlebury Country Park.

Thursday 22nd April 2010

Eighth AGM of the Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke

7.30pm in the Function Room of the Six Bells Public House, Fulbourn.

All welcome. Non-members £3

Guest Speaker: Ed Turner, Ecology Groups Officer for the Wildlife Trust of Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire and Peterborough.

Talks run by the Cambridge City Group of the Wildlife Trust

These talks are held in the hall of St. John the Evangelist, Hills Road, opposite Homerton College,

7.30pm. All welcome. Entry: £2 for members of the Wildlife Trust, £3 for non-members

Wednesday 27th January. Wildlife Sounds and Wildlife Recording: nature as you have never heard it before. **William Seale**

Wednesday 24th February. Monitoring and Management of the endangered Cape Mountain Zebra. Illustrated talk by **Rebecca Smith**, Dept. of Zoology, Durham University

Wednesday 31st March. Wildlife Gardening in a Landscape Garden. Illustrated talk by **Richard Todd**, the Head Gardener.

Contacts

Iain Webb,
Wildlife Trust Project Officer
The Manor House, Broad Street,
Great Cambourne, Cambridge, CB3 6DH
Tel: 01954 71353531
e-mail: Iain.Webb@wildlifebcnp.org

Julia Napier
Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke
30a Hinton Avenue,
Cambridge, CB1 7AS
tel: 01223 213152
frfdjin@freebie.net

Fleam Dyke Work Party, 18th October

For several years I have been hoping to get Plantlife, to include our sites in their list of winter work parties. This year, thanks to Tim Pankhurst, the Plantlife Officer who is based in Cambridge at the moment, five extra helpers joined us to get through a great deal of work on the Fleam Dyke.

Many thanks to: David Barden, Jon and Liz Checkley, Plantlife members who came from Watford. Rachel Gray, Steve Hartley, Dick Martin, Tim Pankhurst and Helen Jobson, Tim's assistant, Lynne Farrell, Plantlife member, David Seilly, Ed Tanner, Sue, Matthew and David Wallis, their son. David, who is at Sandhurst, said scrambling up and down the Fleam dyke reminded him of military training in the Black Hills of Wales. Helen, Liz and Steve are not in the picture. Sincere apologies to them and to Iain Webb, now Wildlife Project Officer, who is invisible, almost.



These healthy little bushes are cuttings from the tall Fleam Dyke juniper which was snapped in half by a gale in 2002. These were grown by Christine Newell, who did not impatiently throw them out after a year, as I did!

In September 2005, they were planted in Hildersham churchyard, overlooking Dove House Close and its mysterious wood. Initially they had good wire-netting rabbit guards. These were removed a year ago, allowing the branches to spread out naturally. Hildersham used to be known for the junipers which grew nearby, as recorded by John Ray in 1660 and many subsequent botanists. Our thanks to Andrew Westward Bates, for the whole idea and the beautiful photograph.



The cleaned up Cambridge end of the Roman Road, looking towards Wort's Causeway at the point where it joins the Shelford Road. The trees planted to mark the fiftieth Anniversary of the Cambridge Rambling Club can be seen to the right. Our thanks to the C.C.C. Countryside Access Team for this splendid clean up. Let us hope they get the grant to complete the plan in detail. See page 7

Clementine Gillick and her daughter, Maia, who live in Haverhill. Behind them the southern end of the Roman Road goes 'over the hills and far away'. The wood on the horizon is Hare Wood. The last remaining cypress from the grounds of the long vanished Horseheath Hall is to the right of the track.

Photo taken from the West Wickham-Horseheath Road.



Many thanks to Mike Albutt for his help with photographs and last minute technical hitches and to Mark Bishop at Copy Studio, Cambridge Place, Hills Road, CB2 1NS 01223 327627 action@copystudio.biz

Julia Napier, November 2009