

RANGER

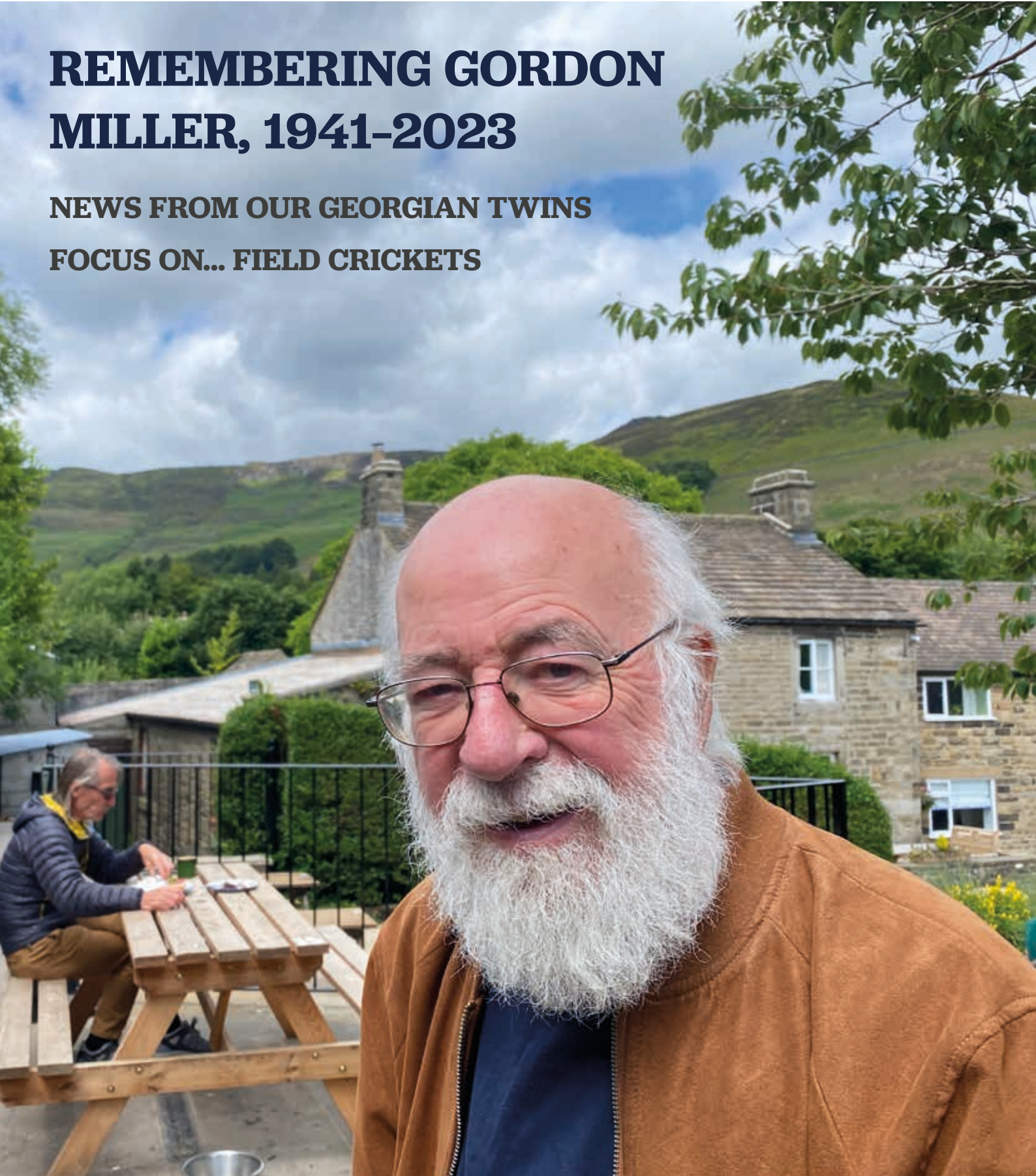
THE MAGAZINE OF THE COUNTRYSIDE MANAGEMENT ASSOCIATION

Issue 139: Summer 2023



REMEMBERING GORDON MILLER, 1941-2023

NEWS FROM OUR GEORGIAN TWINS
FOCUS ON... FIELD CRICKETS



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SUBMISSIONS

We welcome submissions from members for inclusion in *Ranger*. These can include:

- case studies of successful management techniques/projects
- scientific articles on relevant countryside management topics
- news from your managed area or region
- letters about relevant topics
- opinions about current issues

PHOTOGRAPHS

We are always looking for good quality images to use to illustrate our articles or simply to showcase the variety of habitats, flora and fauna in our country. We also are interested in seeing images of countryside management staff doing their everyday jobs. If you are a keen photographer and are happy to share your pictures, please get in touch.

The deadline for the next issue is **31 July 2023**.

For more information and to submit your articles and photos, email Liz Bourne at ranger@countrySIDEMANAGEMENT.org.uk.

Opinions expressed in *Ranger* are not necessarily those of the Countryside Management Association.



COMMENT

Nearly nine pages of this edition of *Ranger* is devoted to international news of one sort or another. That is an immense tribute to Gordon Miller, whose vision was that rangers should be helped to network, exchange ideas and meet each other to learn from their experiences. None of those pages would be possible if Gordon and his colleagues from Scotland and the United States hadn't chatted on the banks of Loch Lomond about their innovative idea to form an international body to link rangers up globally. Being elected the first President of the International Ranger Federation (IRF) must have been such a proud moment for him. Perhaps we need to remember that if you have an ambition, wrapped up in indomitable spirit, dogged determination, persistence and belief, you will achieve it. Gordon did ... and how.



The IRF now has around 170 member associations comprising many, many thousands of rangers around the globe. Several regional federations have also now formed under the umbrella of the IRF, to encourage frequent collaboration and mutual support within the countries of Europe, Asia, Africa and most recently within South America, Central America and the Caribbean. The Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) made up of the major environmental NGOs is working, alongside and for the IRF, to improve working conditions, the welfare, training and safeguarding of rangers; a Ranger Code of Conduct has been translated into 20+ languages for wide dissemination and both the IRF and the regions produce regular newsletters, e-bulletins and offer training webinars and events for colleagues.

The IRF champions the role of rangers worldwide and to such extent that it now receives invitations to global proceedings such as COP26 in Glasgow and the Convention on Biological Diversity in Montreal in May of this year. All this is due to the ranger profession now being much more widely recognised, acknowledged and valued for the role it plays in the protection and conservation of the natural environment and resources, alongside cultural heritage and its key relationship with indigenous and local communities.

Gordon knew rangers were key players in the future of this planet – wherever they are from. He so passionately believed it's better to work together than being isolated. There's much more work to do of course and Gordon would have been front of the queue to lead it. Endless passion, determination, commitment and a wholehearted belief in rangers. Perhaps Gordon and his co-conspirators didn't realise, back in 1992, just how immense a legacy would develop from their burning desire to bring rangers together across the world – or perhaps they did ...

The CMA has been honoured to have Gordon, the 'ranger guru', as its Honorary President. He was offered the role in 2016 on our 50th anniversary. It was a small but utterly heartfelt and respectful 'thank you' for his endless support and belief in rangers both here and abroad. He inspired many of us to do so much more, reach out further and to achieve bucket loads more than we ever thought possible. A true gentleman too, whom we've been privileged to have known and had at the helm of the CMA. I am humbled to be attending Gordon's funeral on 10 July 10 in Edale, his beloved home patch. I will take all your thoughts with me, as we say goodbye to a giant of a man.

Take care all,

Linda

NEWS FROM THE FRONTLINE

UPDATE FROM THE COED Y BONT PHOENIX PROJECT

By Chris Harris



The project, funded by The Heritage Lottery Fund, continues to gain momentum. The first 50% of the funding has been spent. I recently sent in reports and updates to the HLF to release the next 40% of funding.

The first camera trap results were sent to WWBIC, The West Wales Biodiversity Information Centre, which records wildlife in the West Wales area then centralises on a Welsh National level. The path and culvert have been finished. The next step with this is to erect a disabled gate and some railed fencing. My son Owen has now finished his Community Challenge as part of his Welsh Bac and helped at volunteer sessions, assisted with other woodland management at the woodland and updated achievements, both in a report and on the website. Five including myself and members of the School and Cylch Meithrin have passed level 3 in Outdoor First Aid. They have also been registered on the level 2 and 3 Forest School qualifications and two have now passed Level 1 in Outdoor Education. The Open Day on 16 June 2023 is in the process of being organised, with posters, flyers and packs for the children being worked on. The children of the Cylch Meithrin and School will be connecting with nature with outdoor activities at the woodland. There will be a drop-in open event at Pontrhydfendigaid Village Hall, with representatives present from our management partners NRW and other organisations that we work with or are connected with in different ways. There will be a talk by the Butterfly Recorder for Ceredigion, Paul Taylor.

I will post further developments in the next issue of *Ranger*. Thanks again to the Heritage Lottery Fund for providing the funding, NRW for their continued support and of course our volunteers and committee members are paramount in continuing this project and for assisting in managing the woodland as a whole.

ABOUT THE NATIONAL LOTTERY HERITAGE FUND IN WALES

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we inspire, lead and resource the UK's heritage to create positive and lasting change for people and communities, now and in the future. www.heritagefund.org.uk/in-your-area/Wales

Thanks to National Lottery players, more than £30 million goes to good causes across the UK every week.

Follow @HeritageFundCYM on Twitter, Facebook and Instagram and use #NationalLotteryHeritageFund



CLWYDIAN RANGE & DEE VALLEY AWARDS PRESENTED FOR 2022



The Clwydian Range & Dee Valley Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) have given awards to two deserving causes for their contributions to the countryside and landscape of the AONB.

An inspirational Llanarmon-Yn-Ial volunteer has been presented with a coveted countryside award made every year to a community, individual or business that has made an outstanding contribution to the landscape it covers. This year the awards recognised the volunteering work of Christine Evans.

Christine has been involved with the AONB for many years and first became part of the Partnership or as it was then known as the Joint Advisory Committee, when she was a County Councillor for Llanarmon-Yn-Ial and following on from that a member of the AONB Partnership.

AONB Officer, Howard Sutcliffe, said: "The AONB have benefited over the years from all who have given their time and effort to help improve the landscape and communities of the AONB and it is important that recognition and appreciation was given from the AONB to those special people and groups.

Christine has been fundamental in putting the 'heart' back into the community of Llanarmon-Yn-Ial."

The AONB also recognised the work of National Grid for their support of the 'Lost Landscapes' project, funded through their Landscape Enhancement Initiative scheme, which has helped to restore some key features of the AONB.

AONB Project Officer, Ruth Calcraft explained that the project, which began in March 2018, had strengthened the visual character of the landscape through hedge restoration and planting, the reviving of old ponds, rebuilding drystone walls, scrub removal and woodland planting.

The project has also supported important habitats for wildlife including helping wildflowers to thrive on roadside nature reserves and carrying out management work on heather moorland to benefit rare species such as the black grouse. In addition, access work to increase visitor enjoyment of the area had been completed including work to improve views from the Offa's Dyke path above Tremerchion and the installation of new gates to replace stiles on two footpaths. AONB Officer, Howard Sutcliffe said:

"From Caer Drewyn, Corwen to Minera, and the heart of the Morwynion Valley, the work carried out on the Lost Landscapes project with support from the Landscape Enhancement Initiative has already begun to have a significant positive impact within the AONB."

Chris Baines, Chair of the Visual Impact Provision Stakeholder Advisory Group said: "One of the most exciting outcomes of the Landscape Enhancement Initiative has been the way that it has inspired local people to get involved and enormous credit should be given to those farmers and landowners who live in and deeply love this landscape. Collective action from those who know and understand the landscape of the Clwydian Range and Dee Valley AONB means that we're now seeing enhancements on a truly landscape scale. It is inspiring to see the success of communities coming together to effect great change. The whole Visual Impact Provision project of which LEI is part has been transformational, something acknowledged only last month in a personal letter from Sir David Attenborough praising our work with willow tit in the eastern Peak District." You can read more about Chris Baines' involvement with National Grid on pages 10-11.



CMA ANNUAL CONFERENCE: ACHIEVING NATURE RECOVERY

9-11 OCTOBER 2023

ILAM HALL, ASHBOURNE, DERBYSHIRE

The CMA will open for Conference bookings on Eventbrite very soon so watch out for the email and book yourself a spot.

The programme is being drafted, but at this point we're looking at the following schedule:

Day one: 'What do we mean by Nature Recovery?'

Day two: field trips to see 'Nature Recovery in Practice'

Day three: a look at the various financing options to assist nature recovery: green finance, mitigation projects, Biodiversity Net Gain, Environmental Land Management and more.

If any of you work within a relatively short minibus distance from Ilam Hall and have nature recovery work or projects underway,

please do get in touch as we are looking for several field trips for the second day and this is a great opportunity to share and showcase what you are doing.

We will also have the traditional raffle throughout the Conference, with winners announced on the final day so perhaps start thinking about a prize you may be able to donate, either linked to your site, some speciality food or drink from your area of the country or something entirely different! All donations gratefully received with money being donated to a worthy ranger cause.

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in October!



FIRE AWARENESS TRAINING WITH BILL WHEELER



Bill Wheeler had many years experience as a ranger here in the UK until he emigrated to New Zealand 20 years ago and continued in the sector there. He is now Operations Manager, TECTPARK, in Western Bay, New Zealand. He has a wealth of experience dealing with wildfires. Bill kindly offered to give some fire awareness training to rangers here while back in Blighty for a long-awaited family reunion.

In Dorset, 22 rangers from all around the southwest gathered to hear Bill focus on how fire behaves in different vegetation types, how to pre-prepare for the outbreak of fire and keeping sites, visitors and ourselves safe. In the afternoon, a visit to a local NNR looked at the practicalities of preparing for an outbreak of fire. The big lesson taken away from the day was how vital it is to prepare, with our teams, a Fire Plan covering issues such as when/how to mow certain areas to slow the spread of fire, how does a fire engine actually access your site, where exactly is the water going to come from (engines only carry a fairly limited amount and they'll need more) and will everyone know their role if the worst happens? All common sense but how many of us really prepare beforehand?

Bill very kindly then offered a second training day to Lee Valley rangers and staff.



FIRE AWARENESS IN LEE VALLEY WITH A KIWI TWIST

By Derek Evans

After a year of unprecedented numbers of fires at Lee Valley Regional Park in 2022, several members of staff identified the need for some sort of training in fire management.

When I saw that a fire awareness training day had been organised in Cranborne Chase AONB, I would have jumped at the opportunity, except that we had Green Flag judging at the same time and I couldn't afford the time to travel to Dorset. Fortunately, I was able to arrange for Bill Wheeler to repeat the day here at Lee Valley.

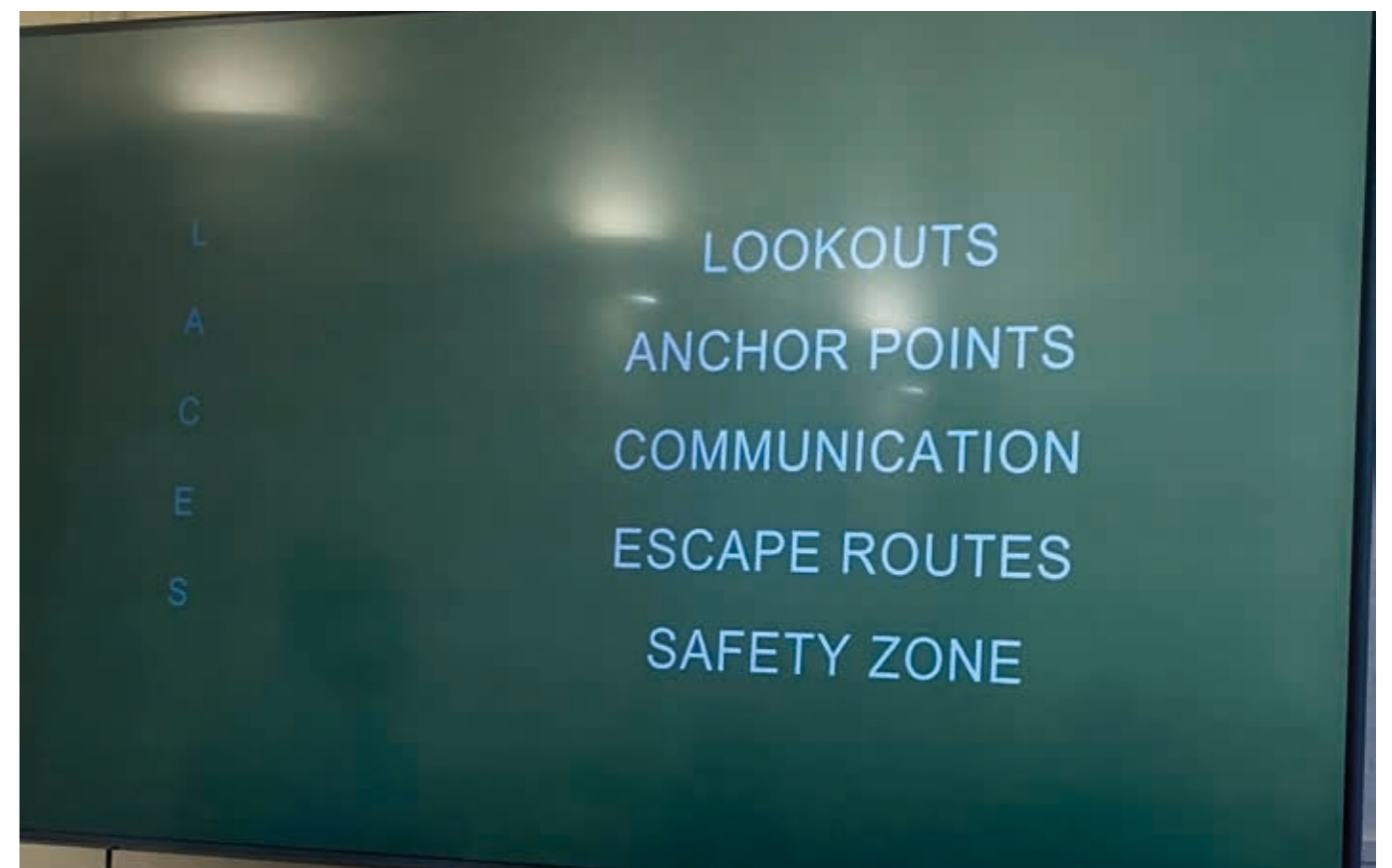
With 15 participants from five organisations, Bill presented an entertaining, but thought-provoking series of slides looking at how fires work, things to be aware of regarding how they spread, what can be done to prevent or reduce the risk of grass and scrub fires and perhaps the most important element, what not to do when dealing with a situation.

Some of the information was obvious when you think about it: don't try to tackle a fire without the correct PPE as the lifeguards from Piha, a site in New Zealand, were doing, wading into a fire in their swimming trunks (!) with hose pipes they were not trained to use; or the simple fact that a fire will spread more quickly up a hill with the wind behind it than downhill on a calm day.

Other things were a bit less obvious, islands of vegetation being left within a burnt area, identifying the point of ignition within a fire site, or the frightening temperatures that can be reached by a 'simple' grass fire.

After lunch, we visited a couple of the sites where we had suffered so many fires last year, looking at practical ways that the potential for a fire to spread could be reduced without destroying the habitat mosaics of small grass areas among scrub and natural regeneration. Examples included mowing 'paths' through an area to create a fire break (width of path ~two and a half times the vegetation height), or just mowing the area a bit earlier – lose this year's seed because the plants haven't finished flowering yet, or lose the same and more to fire.

Thanks again to Bill for so generously giving up a day of his visit back home to lead a much-needed awareness-raising session.



FOCUS ON...

FIELD CRICKETS AT SHORTHEATH COMMON

BY NICKI PATON, COUNTRYSIDE TEAM MANAGER NORTH SITES, HAMPSHIRE COUNTRYSIDE SERVICE



In the early 1990s, the number of field crickets had reduced in the UK to a single surviving colony of just 100 individuals in West Sussex, but thanks to the conservation efforts to support the species there are now six populations in southern England.



Shortheath Common is an area of lowland heathland and mire near to Bordon in East Hampshire which is under the management of Hampshire County Council. The site supports a number of rare habitats and species and, in recognition of this, it is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) under UK legislation and as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under EU legislation. The site is also registered common land, having been registered under the Commons Act 1965.

One species of particular importance at Shortheath Common is the field cricket *Gryllus campestris*, one of the most threatened invertebrates in the UK. This brown-black cricket with striking yellow wing-bases can walk up to around 100 metres each day. The intricate patterning on the wings resembles wrought iron work and the males use their wings to 'sing' (stridulate) to attract a mate at the entrance to their burrow. A population of these special creatures was re-established at the site through a series of releases beginning in 2000. Since then, careful targeted management supported by grant-funded schemes has allowed the population to thrive despite many conceivable threats.

Field crickets are widespread across many parts of Europe, but in the south of England are almost at their most northern range. Fragmentation of habitats is a major threat, but they are also highly sensitive to weather conditions and their breeding success can depend on cold dry winters followed by warm dry summers. At only about one inch long and being flightless they are somewhat susceptible to predation, but these plucky characters are holding their own making the most of the favourable habitat at Shortheath Common.

Natural England's Species Recovery Programme (SRP) supported the original release of field crickets back in 2000. Monitoring visits to Shortheath the following year revealed a widespread and numerous presence of singing males, being found in an area which had been scraped of all vegetation several years earlier as a pre-introduction management technique. During 2002 the success of the re-establishment of field crickets was noted and a subsequent reinforcement release was carried out.

While the grassy heathland habitats at Shortheath are ideal for the field cricket, as we all know, heathland sites need constant and careful management to ensure the success of all species which depend on them for their own success. Management techniques such as rotational disturbance (scrapes), mowing of grass and heather, bracken control and scrub clearance all help to maintain the optimum conditions in which the field cricket can flourish. Maintaining a matrix of bare and revegetating ground is key for the field crickets' survival. Grazing is also used at many heathland sites, but this has not currently been achieved at Shortheath Common.

By 2005 the population was stable and the scraped areas in the grassland areas had small concentrations of crickets around them, giving confidence that the management approaches were working well for the site in general and more specifically the field cricket. The population was expanding its range into previously unused areas of the site following this targeted management, however the increase in size of heather together with the growth and abundance of birch on the original release site continued to give cause for concern, so more targeted management in this area was instigated.

By 2009, 37 males were heard stridulating around various parts of the common. The following year, populations remained fairly healthy with 42 individuals being recorded. Since then, with ongoing financial contributions from the SRP, Back from the Brink and Heathlands Reunited projects and Countryside Stewardship, annual management practices have ensured the continued success of the field cricket and in 2021, singing male numbers were up to 128 which reflects the healthy population of crickets at Shortheath Common. In the early 1990s, the number of field crickets had reduced in the UK to a single surviving colony of just 100 individuals in West Sussex, but thanks to the conservation efforts to support the species there are now six populations in southern England all successfully supporting good populations of field cricket.

The County Council has been effective in managing the special habitats and species at Shortheath Common and the work of its Countryside Service is highly regarded by partners such as Natural England. Extending, connecting and conserving these special places is a principal aim of the local authority's new nature recovery approach, which includes continuing to support the restoration of species such as the field cricket, and developing Citizen Science to help monitor such indicator groups of species within our landholdings.

GHOSTS IN THE LANDSCAPE

By Chris Baines, CMA patron

I grew up in Sheffield, with a landscape on my doorstep that shaped the rest of my life. The Rivelin is a stream that flows rapidly from the Dark Peak towards the heart of the city. In its heyday it powered more than 20 industrial watermills in just three short miles. The earliest was a Saxon corn mill, but most were built at the beginning of the industrial era. They formed the basis of Sheffield's famous iron and steel economy, producing goods as varied as scythes and polished optical lenses. The Rivelin even powered the production of anvils for export to North America through the 19th century – so the 'Wild West' was won, at least in part, on horses that were shod thanks to the Rivelin Valley.



Watercolour of Nethercut Mill, Rivelin Valley, painted by Ben Baines, Chris' paternal grandfather exactly a century ago



Credit: National Grid / Benjamin Graham



Credit: National Grid / Benjamin Graham

Rivelin was where I saw my first kingfisher, my first dipper and my first water vole, and it left me with a life-long love of landscapes that are haunted by the ghosts of their industrial past. Rivelin's ruined mills, stone clad mill races, dams and weirs continue to provide a rich mosaic of wildlife habitat, but more striking still are the clues they give to a landscape that once rattled and roared to the sound of hundreds of workers. Men, women and children hammering, grinding, sharpening and polishing their way through their grim short lives of heavy industry.

I left Sheffield to study horticulture in rural Kent, and then moved to the West Midlands. The Black Country is an old industrial landscape of a different kind. Sometimes described as the 'Endless Village', this is an area of middle England with a history built on limestone, coal and metal-bashing. Small communities with specialisms such as chain-making, locksmithing and brass founding were linked together by a complex web of canals and railway lines. No shortage of ghosts in this landscape. By the late 70s much of the large-scale industry had moved overseas, and then something remarkable happened. The landscape's industrial legacy spawned a conservation revolution. The first of the urban wildlife groups was forged in the Black Country and I was lucky enough to play a part.

I have always loved Snowdonia. My mum and dad were life-long Sheffield ramblers, and many of my earliest memories are of soaking-wet summer holidays 'enjoying' the mountains, castles and beaches of North Wales. Now I spend much of my time in the glorious Conwy Valley – a place uniquely blessed with two UNESCO World Heritage designations. The human history of Conwy's walled town has been rightly recognised for generations, but now the slate quarries at the head of the catchment have been given equal status. These are wild landscapes where rare alpine still survive in the inaccessible cliffs; where hen harrier, curlew and chough still breed successfully – and where the mountains have been spectacularly reshaped by past generations of labouring locals. My kind of place!

For almost ten years I have chaired a landscape Stakeholder Advisory Group, appointed by the energy regulator OFGEM and the power distributor National Grid, to help in steering the multi-million-pound Visual Impact Provision (VIP) initiative. With a panel of representatives from government agencies such as Natural England and CADW, and environmental charities including The National Trust, Ramblers Association, CPRE and Campaign for National Parks, we have worked with the Grid's technical experts, their engineering contractors and communities of interest and expertise from national to local level. Now the pylons are beginning to disappear from a few of our most treasured landscapes. Undergrounding the power cables along the skyline of the Dorset Downs and tunnelling beneath Snowdonia's Dwyryd estuary is undoubtedly transformational. It will increase landscape enjoyment for millions of people.

At a personal level, the VIP project that thrills me most is on the eastern boundary of the Dark Peak. The small village of Dunford Bridge sits among heather moorland and dry-stone walls, beside the headwaters of the river Don. This is the place where the trans-Pennine trail enters the Peak District National Park, and where the old Woodhead railway tunnel emerges into the daylight. The tunnel was built to carry coal from the pits of south Yorkshire to the mills of Lancashire. When it was closed to trains, the National Grid took it over as a pylon-free means of carrying power across the Pennines. This meant massive impact for Dunford Bridge, where tunnel cables and overhead pylons reconnected.

For two hundred years this lovely valley has been dominated by industry – firstly by the tunnel's work camps and spoil heaps, then by the shunting yards of coal waggons waiting to travel west, and for the past 60 years by all the pylons and powerlines of the National Grid. Now, those pylons have gone, the powerlines have been hidden beneath the old railway line and the natural beauty of the river valley has been restored to a quality not seen for several generations. There are brown trout and otters in the stream, curlew and red grouse on the hillside, willow tits nesting in the stream side woodland, plenty of happy walkers, cyclists and horse riders – and ghosts galore!



Credit: Cranborne Chase AONB

STORYTELLING IN DENMARK

BY ELLIE SHENK, COUNTRYSIDE WARDEN WITH DERBYSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

‘Show, don’t tell’ is a saying of any writer, artist, dramatist or other creative interpreter. It was also a saying frequently used by Naturvejleder ranger Bo Storm during the ‘Nature Interpretation Course’ I attended, along with 15 other rangers from across Europe and Israel, in Frederikshavn (northern Denmark), through the European Ranger Federation. In Denmark, there is a dedicated Nature Interpretation Service (naturvejleder.dk) that aims to provide people with meaningful experiences and knowledge of the countryside, in the belief that they would, in turn, appreciate it and care for it more.

As a countryside warden in Derbyshire, I am out in nature most days. I have a deep appreciation for the environment I work in, but I know that not everyone has the exposure to the outside that I do on a daily basis. On the course, each day brought new ideas of how to share this knowledge and get others engaged.

Our first day took us to Skagen Odde reserve on the northern tip of Denmark, where the North Sea and Baltic Sea meet, and which is a stopping point for many migratory birds (up to 9,000 per year in fact). We met Simon Christiansen, a ranger and bird-ringer at the reserve. He showed us a robin, just caught, and how its weight and health is assessed. At 17.6 g, with 4 g being fat, the robin would continue its flight south. It was incredible to think about what that robin and other birds see on their journeys.

In the afternoon, we were tasked with putting on a mini theatrical production, using only materials we had at hand. Productions included lessons on acting responsibly in nature (e.g. lighting of fires and litter) and a ranger congress with a twist (the twist being that delegates were animals from participating nations discussing the impact of humans). From the skies and woods, we were taken into the bowels of the Earth in the form of a 5,000 year old Stone Age burial mound. We heard stories about what the site was possibly used for and its significance. The burial mound was as much a part of the landscape, as a meadow or river. I was learning that the best way to do

storytelling is to dive in, head first! Only then would I get the most from the experience and, in turn, so would those I communicate with.

This theme continued the next day, as we were taken back some 3,000 years. Bo welcomed us in the morning, dressed in Bronze Age attire, with a story and the recital of a lur, a horn instrument from that time. A visit to Bangsbo museum, gave us the opportunity to come up with our own stories, inspired by the artefacts and paintings in the museum. Everyone had their own take on things. Performances ranged from a man searching for his lost brothers in World War One, to a founding member of the Danish green party and to the oak planks of a late Viking-age ship speaking. These stories were not true, or necessarily based on the provenance of the exhibits, but that didn’t matter. They were stories.

Our final day took us to the reserve of Lille Vildmose, southwest of Aalborg, which is the largest remaining raised peat bog in the northwest of Europe. As well as exploring the site, with wildlife that includes wild boar, moose and cranes, we also got to sit in on a children’s group run by ranger Camilla Jensen. She had created a space where the children could explore and work out what objects they were looking at. She had a goal in mind of what they should learn from the exercise, but getting them from A to B could take them to points C, D, E, F, G as well, depending on what they suggested and asked. They were learning, but not being lectured.

At the end of those three days, I understood that nature interpretation could encompass a range of methods and topics. We need to find ways of bringing people and nature together, inspiring others to protect nature and create the conditions that allow it to flourish. We can do this by telling stories. Another motto of Bo’s was that “Good stories are everywhere”. He is right. They are in the forests, lakes, mountains and deserts of my European and Israeli colleagues’ homes, as they are in the rivers, canals, woods and grassland sites that me and my UK colleagues help to manage and improve.

Photos courtesy of Ellie Shenk, Wiebke Bomas (ERF) and Lucia Ursu (Retezat National Park Administration).



Ellie Shenk



Simon Christiansen, ranger, showing us a robin that had just been caught and ringed



Participants from Germany, Portugal, Iceland, Finland, UK, Romania, Israel, Norway, Albania with Bo Storm (Naturvejleder ranger)



Storytelling inside a Stone Age burial mound with Bo Storm

GORDON MILLER

2 August 1941-
27 May 2023

Honorary President
- Countryside
Management
Association

It is with a very heavy heart and great sorrow that the Countryside Management Association announces the passing of Gordon Miller on Saturday 27 May 2023, after a long, courageous battle with Parkinson's disease.

Our deep and most sincere condolences to his family and friends.

As many of you will know, Gordon was not only the Honorary President of the CMA but also one of the founders of the IRF in 1992 and its first President.

CMA members join in sadness and reflection with the many hundreds of rangers around the world who knew Gordon as their good friend.



Supporting local communities near to Bwindi Impenetrable NP, Uganda.



Presenting the Governor of the Kivu region in DRC an IRF label badge in recognition of his support for rangers there. Gordon is wearing a shirt especially made by a ranger's wife, from local material reserved only for much revered individuals.

OUR DEEP AND MOST SINCERE CONDOLENCES TO HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS.



Honorary guest at the Portuguese Annual Conference, Sagres, February 2020.



This ranger wore his smart dress uniform as he knew he was meeting Gordon.



Presenting the Gordon Miller Award owl trophy ('Barney') to Alan Preece in 2017, for exceptional work on what was to become a National Nature Reserve, near Dudley.

Gordon Miller's life has been one devoted to the protection of the global environment, its fauna and flora and in the defence of the world's special places. When he was 15 and still at school (1956), Gordon volunteered as a youth warden in the Peak District National Park in Derbyshire, qualifying as a 'cadet warden' in 1960. He then took a post as a part-time warden and eventually joined the park staff as a full-time warden in 1969 remaining with the National Park until his retirement in 2001. In the 1970s, the title 'warden' changed to 'ranger' in the UK and in addition to his 'day job' as a ranger, Gordon assisted in the development of many pioneering ranger training courses at Losehill Hall, in England.

In 1969 Gordon became a member of the Association of National Park and Countryside Rangers, later the Association of Countryside Rangers, then the Countryside Management Association, becoming its chairman in 1982. It was during his chairmanship that *Ranger* magazine was launched in 1984.

Gordon became Honorary President of the CMA in 2016 and, as a tribute to Gordon, the Association presents the Gordon Miller Award annually for the most deserving project, initiative or innovative practice that has made an outstanding contribution to countryside/urban greenspace management.

During 1991, in discussion with rangers from Scotland and the United States, Gordon was instrumental in developing the idea of an International Ranger Federation (IRF). On 31 July 1992, along with representatives from the Scottish Countryside Ranger Association (SCRA) and the Association of National Park Rangers (ANPR, USA), the accord was signed at Losehill Hall, Peak District National Park, that was the founding of the IRF. Gordon became the first President. 31 July is now known and celebrated as World Ranger Day.

In 1995 he officially opened the First World Ranger Congress with the raising of IRF's flag in Zakopane, Poland. It was a watershed moment in the history of the ranger profession. Further World Ranger Congresses followed under Gordon's guidance, in Costa Rica, South Africa, Australia, Scotland as well as in Bolivia, Tanzania, the USA and Nepal.

After stepping down as IRF President in 2000, Gordon became its first Executive Director, furthering the cause of rangers such as at the 2002 IUCN World Parks Congress in Durban.

At the EUROPARC conference in Sweden in September 2009, Gordon was presented with the Alfred Toepfer award "for his significant contribution to nature protection in Europe by inspiring, encouraging and coordinating the work of ranger services".

During his retirement Gordon continued to champion the role played by rangers and the ranger profession at every opportunity. His wide network of ranger colleagues and friends around the world meant that he was never far away from a friendly face.

Gordon's immense enthusiasm, inspiration, passion, and unswerving support for rangers around the world will always be remembered by many thousands of rangers across every continent. His innovative vision that rangers could come together from all corners of the globe to exchange their knowledge and experience, lives on in the International Ranger Federation today. The many life-long friendships and mutual support between rangers worldwide is testament to his dedication and commitment to bringing rangers together. Anyone who met Gordon will also know that he was an absolute true gentleman; a selfless, kind and generous soul who was never happier than when chatting with ranger colleagues from across the planet. Gordon was a pioneer for rangers. He saw his vision for a 'worldwide family of rangers' come to fruition. His passing will be felt with immense sadness across the world.

Thank you Gordon for a lifetime of dedication to the ranger profession, both here and internationally. Thank you also for being the figurehead and ambassador for the CMA. It has been our utmost honour to have you at the helm of the CMA.

You touched the lives of so many rangers and will always be remembered as our champion, our strongest supporter, our best friend.

RIP Gordon Miller.

With thanks to Colin Dilcock, an ex-ranger and close friend of Gordon, for some of the photos and to Roger Cole, our Honorary Vice President, for much of the detail in this tribute.

Some personal memories from our members

From Mat Roberts

I first met Gordon at an ACR conference in Dawlish, I think. It was at the time when the hot debate was over the name change from Association of Countryside Rangers to CMA. At the time, I was some sort of countryside access project officer and fully in support of the change. Gordon was not and over breakfast gave one of the most reasoned and convincing arguments for the title 'ranger' I have ever heard. So much so that I changed my mind, a view that I still hold dear today. The world would definitely be a better place with more rangers in it.

Gordon worked tirelessly towards that objective. From the first signing of the tripartite Losehill Hall agreement with SCRA and ANPR to seeing him in his element at World Ranger Congresses in Costa Rica and South Africa.

The skills he learnt as a Peak District National Park Ranger were never more apparent when you saw him talking to rangers from other countries listening to their issues, offering support and if needed advice

As part of an IRF delegation, Gordon visited a memorial to fallen rangers in the troubled eastern region of the Democratic Republic of Congo, 2004.



but always putting the role of the ranger at the heart of the solution. A gifted diplomat and negotiator who learnt his craft dealing with farmers, landowners, walkers and conservationists. The world of rangers is a better place for his time in it.

I now work in the corporate world and every day use the leadership, negotiating and foresight skills that I learnt as a ranger and countryside manager. Gordon would probably never have stepped over to the 'dark side' of business as he was a genuinely committed and admirable public servant but he would have thrived if he had.

From Chris Harris

I believe I was part of the very first Gordon Miller Award presentation as Chair of Coed Y Bont and

member of the CMA and came third and highly commended. I did meet Gordon and I am very sad to hear that he has passed away with Parkinsons. My eldest sister was diagnosed at 46 (now 63) and my brother was diagnosed last year at 58. My thoughts and condolences are with his family and the respect of all the work and time he put aside for countryside management and conservation in general.

From Chris Baines

I was very sad to hear the news of Gordon's passing. The success of small but effective organisations such as the CMA always depends on the enthusiastic commitment of a few passionate individuals. Gordon fitted that description perfectly.

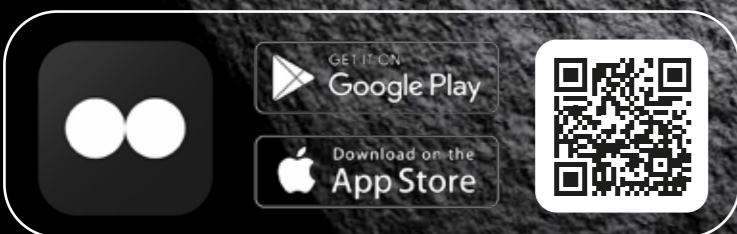
You can add your personal memories of Gordon on this dedicated site: gordonthewarden.muchloved.com

The App designed for Rangers, by Rangers

A free online community connecting Rangers around the world, for social interaction, knowledge exchange and training



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2023 Training Support Initiative

As we reported in the last issue of *Ranger*, we now offer a Study Day assistance scheme to support members who wish to host a Study Day event. A total of £1,000 has been earmarked to be made available to our Regional Coordinators to apply for to help cover costs of putting on Study Days and training events throughout 2023. This is to encourage more training events to take place, especially following the Covid pandemic.

Study Days are typically hosted by a CMA member who is willing to share their experience. There is often a focus on a specific subject or project. A visit to view and discuss a range of issues and features at a site is also a common format. As well as the opportunity to learn new approaches and share best practice, members also appreciate the opportunity to meet other attendees, catch up with old friends and enjoy a sense of fellowship among other countryside managers. Study days are normally free to CMA members.

Training Days differ from Study Days in that the focus is usually on developing specific skills (e.g. identification skills) or areas of understanding in a more formal way. An external trainer or expert often leads the event and the events are often arranged in partnership with other organisations. Training events sometimes have a charge to cover costs although this is usually at a reduced rate for CMA members.

Here's a reminder of the eligibility, conditions and application process

- The Regional Coordinators from each region may apply for up to £200 funding towards expenses arising from the provision of a training or Study Day in their region in 2023. These
- expenses are most likely to relate to the hire of a trainer or venue, or provision of light refreshments, but could include other costs subject to approval of the CMA Board.
- Proposed events should have a positive effect on CMA membership and activity in the region. All funding will be subject to approval in advance by the CMA Board using the form (available from admin@countrySIDmanagement.org.uk).
- If funding is agreed, the usual processes and forms for organising and notifying Study Days must be adhered to as provided on the Member's Area of the CMA website. All expense claims must be processed using the expenses claim form provided also provided in the members area on the of the CMA website, and be evidenced by invoices/receipts. Invoices can be paid directly by CMA admin – please contact CMA admin in advance to discuss.
- It is expected that funded events will be free to members. The usual requirement for non-members to pay at least £40 more than members for attending CMA events may be waived in the interests of encouraging non-members to attend and engage with the CMA.
- Applications must be received by email at least six weeks before the event in order to allow time for the Board to determine the application and, if successful, for the event to be adequately promoted.
- If there is no Regional Coordinator in post, a member based in that region may apply for this funding for a training or study day they wish to organise.
- These conditions above are not set in stone and the Board is open to imaginative suggestions which go above or beyond what has been outlined above!

Good countryside management knowledge and skills?

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WORLD RANGER DAY 2023



While 31 July may seem a way off, please do not forget this is World Ranger Day. This is a great opportunity to celebrate the work of rangers both where you operate and also across the planet. Many CMA members hold events at their work sites on this day to celebrate rangers through displays and activities, even if it's a special 'Meet a Ranger' day engaging with your visitors, young and old, to explain the work of rangers both here and abroad.

The International Ranger Federation usually channels the celebrations through a theme each year; 2023 will focus on the 30x30 challenge so this offers a good opportunity to promote what you're doing, and what perhaps local communities might do, to encourage our precious wildlife to thrive.

31 July is, of course, also the day to commemorate those who have lost their lives in the line of duty over the past year. Sadly, many additional names have been added to the list for this year, with recent incidents in Tanzania, Ivory Coast and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The IRF will be releasing the Roll of Honour and a statement from the IRF President in July that you can use at any events you organise. We will alert you when the downloads are available.

In the meantime, good luck in organising your celebratory event this year and please do send in photos! It doesn't need to be anything complicated; perhaps re-name a popular walk for one day to promote the day or maybe prepare a simple A5 flyer to hand to all your visitors on 31 July, promoting the work of rangers and directing them to the CMA and/or IRF websites.

Here are some images from last year's World Ranger Day to get you in the mood!



NEWS FROM OUR GEORGIAN TWINS

In honour of the lead up to World Ranger Day, we've got a series of articles from our twinned ranger association in Georgia. It's always heartening to learn from others around the world doing similar work, and to see the overlap between our work and theirs, despite the different habitats.

A FARMER RANGER FROM THE CAUCASUS MOUNTAINS

Local farmer Joni Phadiauri is from the mountainous village Akhaltsikhe, Georgia. Even though he is not a ranger by profession, he is a great supporter of the Kazbegi National Park.

Joni observes the facts taking place in particularly inaccessible areas of high mountains. He transforms very important information to the park administration about the floods, avalanches, landslides, reptiles, animals and fish. In this way, he provides a great help to the national park. He spotted a Caucasian viper on the ridge, which drew attention with its length – about 150 cm. He often records turs in especially inaccessible places that is a great help for biodiversity monitoring of the area.

Moreover, Joni uploads very interesting and beautiful photos and videos to his Facebook and Youtube pages where he introduces people to his beautiful region.

In 2022, Caucasus Nature Fund (CNF) established the awards for the rangers. Joni was nominated for the award of Giorgi Arabuli by the park administration. This award is for members of local communities that distinguish themselves for support of protected areas and their biodiversity. Joni was the first person to receive this award that has become an incentive for the other locals.





BADGES ACROSS BORDERS – A JOURNEY FROM THE UK TO GEORGIA

Chloe

Rangers love to swap badges and the ERF congress in Albania was the perfect place. I wasn't able to collect our National Trust badges before I left so I couldn't offer an exchange. When I got home, as a bit of fun and to test how our new strong international network links were working, I thought I'd see if I could get a badge from the UK all the way to Georgia by rangers, passing hand to hand, through the friends and contacts I'd made.

In January, a trip to Berlin felt like the ideal opportunity to kick start the journey so I bought the badges with me. I'd hoped to meet up with German ranger Milena but unfortunately train strikes stopped us. Not to be put off, we made a plan to leave them behind the bar of one of her friends, to be picked up later – it all felt very James Bond.

Then I just had to wait and wonder...

Maia

When Chloe shared the idea of sending out badges, I was a little sceptical about how doable it would be. European Ranger Network WhatsApp group members were very engaged and supportive. On 16 March, Milena Krelling posted that the badges were handed to Mario Schmid, a Bavarian ranger. I asked Mario to hand them out to Michael Grossman, his colleague as I was going to meet him in Germany.

Me and Michael met in a meeting in the Black Forest (Schwarzwald) and the badges were handed over to me. I returned to Georgia. Gee, the badges have reached the final destination safely!

Although we could have posted them, there is still something special about face-to-face contact, having a chat and arranging to meet. Now we know it works, perhaps we will be more ambitious – pass on equipment, deliver a training day, incorporate into a World Ranger Day activity. See how strong our network is – like mycorrhizal fungi reaching wide and making us stronger.

Our international coordinator, Chloe Bradbrooke's Georgian counterpart, Maia Tsignadze, wrote a poem which was entered into The Rialto Nature and Place Poetry Competition (Britain). An amazing feat, given that English is her second language.

It is spring

The thrill of spring will awaken the violets ... Ding-dong-ding!

Almonds will explode in white; the rain will make clouds heavy – It is spring!

Primroses will lie close in the breeze and cling,

The rain will make all wet; the wind will make me sing.

Slowly and steadily, the green will be sneaked in wood,

Baby swallow will get used to the sunlight and search for food.

The blue sky will be darkened, the warm moon will get full,

The stream will reflect the sunrays, a rainbow will appear soon.

Snow will melt down from the hills and get mixed with the stream,

The chicken will break the egg out and get used to life beam.

How wonderful is spring! Nature yells hello!

The sun knows best that the narcissi are fine and yellow,

Hug me my Spring, I want to breathe with you,

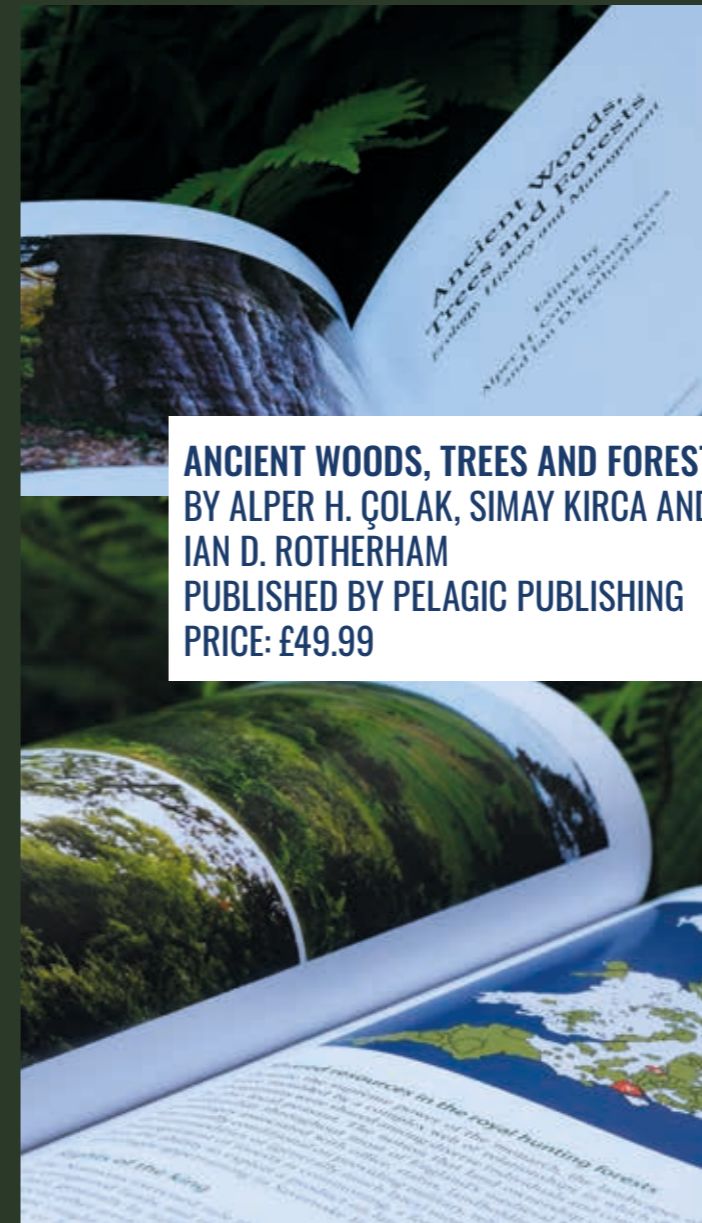
Is there anything in the world more sacred than the burning fallow dew?

Love me Spring! Embroider fields in emerald colour,

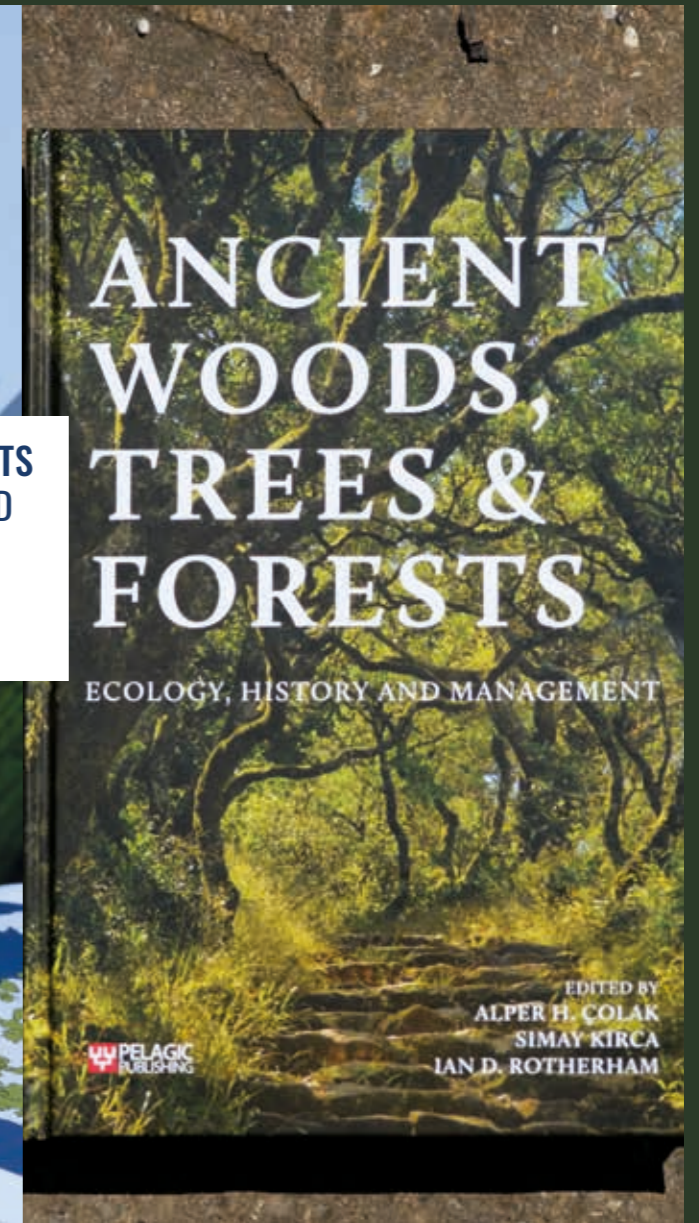
Furnish with flowers the meadows' parlor.

Shine and take the winter off a white glove!

Fold me in your wings and hug me – the host of love!



ANCIENT WOODS, TREES AND FORESTS
BY ALPER H. ÇOLAK, SIMAY KIRCA AND
IAN D. ROTHERHAM
PUBLISHED BY PELAGIC PUBLISHING
PRICE: £49.99



BOOK REVIEW

Over the past thousand years, forest cover across the globe has declined dramatically. And even those remaining primeval forests unreachable by humans are impacted by climate change and other environmental issues. This comprehensive and wide-reaching book offers practical techniques and robust science to support the effective conservation of ancient trees and forests.

Although some may consider ancient woodlands 'untouched' by humans, this is of course not true. For millennia, people across the world have managed the land and influenced its ecology. In fact, 'ancient woodland' is generally defined as "land that has been continuously wooded for hundreds of years".

Understanding how best to manage and conserve our ancient forests requires a multidisciplinary approach and the

contributors to this book certainly cover many bases. Major authorities in the field, such as the late Oliver Rackham, Frans Vera, Elisabeth Johans and Jill Butler, offer their expertise in helping us understand and foster a greater understanding of the connections relating to ancient trees and woodlands. And to offer techniques to ensure their conservation and sustainability.

The book covers a range of topics, including essays on the archaeology of trees, their cultural heritage, using pollen data to assess landscape structure, and the protection of coppice woods from trespassers. It is highly illustrated throughout with high-quality photographs (including such gems as a photograph of clog block makers in the woods, to one of the 'King of Limbs', a giant oak tree in Savername), maps and figures, plus each chapter is fully referenced.

By understanding the ecology, history, archaeology and biodiversity of woodlands and forests across the globe, we can begin to understand how best to conserve them for future generations.

CMA SPOTLIGHT

You may remember a mention of the National Lottery Heritage Fund in the last edition in terms of the CMA applying for some funding. The Board has now heard back from the NLHF and we have an online meeting set up to discuss ideas in more detail. Slowly, slowly, but it is all good progress. Hopefully we can offer more news in the next *Ranger*.

One of the key ambitions set out in the CMA's initial submission to the NHLF is the development of comprehensive ranger training across the land from a basic ranger training course for newcomers to the sector, to more specialised courses for those

who have been in post for a while – all of course, tied into CMA Accreditation and the competencies within it.

On the note of training, the last one we have was for the 2 June in Devon looking at the amazing wildlife on a particular farm – sounds fab too. Study Days such as this are relatively easy to organise; all you really need is a room for people to meet and perhaps hear from yourself about your site first. Then it's a walk round your area or site, chatting informally about various issues you may have and answering any questions. It can be a great learning experience for both you and those attending; 'a problem shared...' and all that.

The CMA is also offering funding support for these study or training days during 2023, in case you might need a bit of finance to assist with setting up one of these days for member colleagues. See the article on page 19.

CAN YOU HELP CMA BATTLE CLIMATE CHANGE?

CMA has committed to reducing its emissions by 50% by 2025 and to become neutral by 2030. This is no mean feat especially as we are providing more and more study days to share good practice around the regions.

The climate sub-group is helping to monitor our emissions, investigate ways to reduce these and promote good practice across the industry.

This small group wants to achieve more but the members, like everyone, are limited by the amount of volunteer time they can put in. However, more hands make lighter work! They meet every couple of months on Teams in the early evening to update and coordinate work. Can you help? If so please contact Alan Preece at treasurer@countysidemangement.org.uk

1
All volunteers of ERF member organisations can submit one photo per person or group

2
The person submitting the photo must secure all publication rights for the ERF before submission

3
Submitted photos should be accompanied by the photographer's name, a description of the content and details of the organisation involved

4
The photo must represent volunteer activity! How it does this is up to the photographer. Creativity will earn extra points in the evaluation

5
The photo must be sent via entry form bit.ly/3L1LzYW by 13.10.2023 according to the conditions listed. The winners will be announced on Volunteer Day, 05.12.2023

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One ERF T-shirt each

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VOLUNTEERING IS IN MY NATURE
1st European Ranger Federation Photo Contest for Volunteers

Volunteering with Israel Nature and Parks Authority ©Dafna Ben Nun

INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Plans are well underway for the 10th World Ranger Congress in France, 7–11 October 2024. It is a way off as yet but now is the time to start planning ahead or saving up, or both! It may be an idea to think about whether you wish to attend or not earlier, rather than later. The CMA will ensure you know when registration opens but since the World Ranger Congress in Nepal, five years will have passed and there is already great interest building around the world to attend this next one so don't miss out, as places may book up quickly.

As mentioned on page 20–21, Ranger Line of Duty Death notifications close for this year at the end of May with June set aside for the compilation of the Roll of Honour, map and causes of loss and other publicity materials ready for release ready for World Ranger Day, 31 July.

The Universal Ranger Support Alliance (URSA) has continued its work alongside the IRF completing work on a new set of global ranger competencies, welfare standards for rangers and social safeguards. In addition, there will soon be a survey coming round to you all, to help the IRF compile crucial data for its regular 'State of the Ranger' report.

The European Ranger Federation (ERF) has also been offering several different training sessions of late. You are all members of ERF of course and could take advantage of these. Some are in-person training days involving travel but there have also been online webinars so do keep an eye on www.europeanrangers.org.



Participants needed for study on wooded habitats and land management

We would like to hear from you if:

- You are 18 or over.
- You own or manage land in Kent, East and West Sussex, Surrey or Hampshire with a property of at least 1 hectare.
- You do not need to have woodland or trees on your property.
- We want to hear any opinions you may have!

What you will be asked to do:

- An interview over video call or in person with the researcher.

This should take no more than an hour

For more information email:

sa2034@kent.ac.uk

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NEW MEMBERS

The CMA is pleased to welcome the following new members*:

EAST MIDLANDS:

George Smith – Student Member

GREATER LONDON:

Tom Oliver – Member

Louise Dennis – Student Member

NORTH EAST:

Timothy Cassidy-Phelan – Student Member

NORTH WEST:

Ryan Chip – Student Member

Alice Couch – Student Member

SOUTH EAST:

Spike Brooker – Member

Steve Crosby – Member

George Dixon – Member

Dee Durham – Member

David Elliott – Member

Sarah Fisk – Member

Boyce Jeffery – Member

Ed Mitchell – Member

Matt Nicholls – Member

Andrew Norris – Member

Lucy Partridge – Member

Christ Smout – Member

Nathan Taylor – Member

Elaine Brindley – Student Member

Vicki Matin – Student Member

Aleksandra Olejnik – Student Member

Nicholas Sinclair – Student Member

Lydia Winthorpe – Student Member

SOUTH WEST:

Catherine Shellswell – Principal Member

Sam Benham – Member

Ian Finch – Member

Robert Curtis – Member

Jen Gardner – Member

Jonathan Gardner – Member

James Drew – Member

Sara King – Member

Ali Steele – Supporter Member

William Bond – Student Member

Hannah Metcalfe – Student Member

Rachael Wells – Student Member

WALES:

Graham Berry – Member

Vitor Evora – Member

Sasha Taylor – Member

James Ellis – Student Member

WEST MIDLANDS:

William Davis – Member

Brad Hollington – Member

Jack Bradshaw – Student Member

Laura Mo – Student Member

Timothy Pyne – Student Member

YORKSHIRE & HUMBERSIDE:

Andrew Kearsey – Member

The CMA are delighted that the following, having joined as Student Members are now Members of the CMA:

Jasmine Ely (South West)

Ben Morgan-Brown (South West)

The CMA would also like to welcome back:

Thomas Day (Member) – East of England

Jo Maddox (Member) – Greater London

Thomas Carmona (Member) – South East

Hannah Graves (Member) – South East

Keith Steggall (Member) – South West

Jack Tavinor (Student Member) – South West

Loretta Waters (Member) – South West

Congratulations to the following on achieving their accreditation:

Catherine Shellswell PCMA

Jess Coatesworth PrCMA

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*Membership applications processed by 31 May 2023

Summer 2023

Ranger

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CsideMA



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