



*The  
Marcham  
Society*

**JUNE 2023  
Volume 6, Issue 6**

# Newsletter

**Oxfordshire Past** will take place at Abingdon Guildhall  
in the Council Chamber and Abbey Rooms

**Saturday**



**17th June**



Information is available on line at : <https://oahs.org.uk/oxpast.php>



## THE MAY MIDWEEK WALK

Eric and Sheila Dunford organised another enjoyable midweek walk on **Thursday 4th May**. Our group met at the *Woodman Inn* in North Leigh. After lunch we looked into North Leigh's interesting church with its high-quality fan vaulting in the Wilcote Chapel and then the route took us through the undulating slopes of the Cotswolds in quiet farming country. The next walk will be at the *Boar's Head*, Ardington on **Thursday 1st June 2023**. Please email Eric in advance for further information: [e.dunford@btinternet.com](mailto:e.dunford@btinternet.com)





# THE BIG MARCHAM WEEKEND

### The Marcham Society Stand





## The Chimney Meadows Wetland Restoration Project



### **The Talk on Monday 22nd May 2023 — a review by Judith Haworth**

'Chimney Meadows Nature Reserve' by the river Thames is part of the Upper Thames Living Landscape and a special haven for animals such as otters, bats and harvest mice, insects such as dragonflies and butterflies, plants and birds such as kingfishers and curlews. Lisa Lane of Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust (BBOWT) gave us a fascinating insight into its enhancement and management, with a host of interesting plans, diagrams and photographs.

Lisa told us how former farmland, once poor in wildlife, has been transformed by spreading (by muck spreader!) green hay cut from wildlife rich areas of the Reserve. Cowslips soon bloomed and in a few years there was a measurable increase in plant and invertebrate life. The meadows are managed by hay cutting, followed by grazing by Beulah and Hebridean sheep and Dexter cattle.

Following acquisition of land by Duxford Old River, BBOWT obtained funding of about £2m and recently completed a complex engineering project, to create a fish pass and a new, meandering water course. As a result, for the first time since the 1800's fish can now access spawning grounds upriver from Duxford; nine species have been recorded. The new water course both alleviates flooding, by allowing water to be retained on the flood plain and provides habitat for water birds, which congregate in large numbers in the winter.

For more information on the project see the link below, There will also be a guided walk led by Lisa round the Reserve on Tuesday 20th June 2023 (*see page 5 for details*).

<https://www.bbowl.org.uk/chimney-meadows-wetland-restoration-and-fish-passage-project>

## Guided Walk planned for Tuesday 20th June

**1 Barn owl**  
Look for these silent hunters flying over field margins at dawn and dusk. In summer, when they're feeding chicks, they can be seen during the day.

**2 House martins**  
House martins perform aerobic displays over the meadows in summer, snatching tiny insects on the wing to feed hungry chicks.

**3 Lapwing**  
In winter, flocks of thousands of lapwing gather on the wet meadows. Listen for their "pee-wit, wit, wit-eeze, wit" call.

**4 Curlew**  
In spring listen for the bubbling call of a curlew. They lay their eggs in the long grass hidden from predators.

**5 Cowslip**  
The meadows are speckled with the nodding heads of thousands of delicate yellow cowslips in late April/early May.

**6 Roe deer**  
Roe deer are most active at dawn and dusk and can often be spotted grazing in the meadows.

**7 Otter**  
The peaceful meanders of the old river are a natural playground for otters. Spot their droppings (spraint) near the Thames Path.

**8 Banded demoiselle**  
Clouds of banded demoiselles flank the river bank in summer. Look for the distinctive "fingerprint" on the males' wings.

**KEY:** P Car park ★ You are here ●●● Public footpath ●●● Permissive path ||||| Boardwalk ●●● Bridleway  
 Wetland Pasture Meadow Woodland Scrub Bird hides Picnic area You can help look after wildlife and livestock by keeping your dog on a short lead at all times. Much of the site is a sensitive conservation area. Please keep to the footpaths.

### Guided tour of Chimney Meadows Wetland Restoration Project on Tuesday 20th June 10-1pm

The walk will be guided by Lisa Lane over flat, but rough, tussocky terrain across 5 large fields, plus half hour walk to get there. Please note, it could be flooded so bring wellies in case and wear long trousers. Pollen levels may be high as well. It is an exposed site so suncream, sunhat and water are required. Once we start the walk there won't be a chance to cut it short as a locked gate is involved.

We will finish about 1pm and plan to follow up with a lunch at the Trout Inn at Tadpole bridge on the Thames on our way home.

*If you would like to sign up please contact Shirley Eccles and pay £5 cash or pay online to :  
 "The Marcham Society" Sort code: 09-01-54 Account: 72461087  
 Give your surname as a reference plus the code "CHIM"  
 (or send a cheque payable to 'The Marcham Society' to the Treasurer,  
 11 The Farthings, Marcham, OX13 6QD)*



## FUTURE DATES AND EVENTS

**Publicity below from MAD News.**  
Information is also published on Facebook, on the website and updates are also sent to members by email.

[www.marchamsociety.org.uk](http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk)



The  
**Marcham  
Society**

**Monday 26th June**  
**7.15 for 7.45pm**  
**Main Hall**  
**Marcham Centre**

### The Two William Morris of Oxfordshire

*Marie-Louise Kerr*

Marie-Louise's background is in Ancient History and as a museum curator. She has over 15 years' experience in the heritage sector, looking after museum collections and developing exhibitions around the country. These have included archaeology, history of science and textiles collections as well as military and social history artefacts. She set up her Curator Without Museum talks business when she was between collections, but she is now Curator at West Berkshire Museum.



William Morris  
(Frederick Watts, 1870)



William Morris  
(Reginald H Lewis, 1937  
*after Philip de László*)

Marie-Louise has always loved sharing the stories she discovers in her work and with her talk on 'Two William Morrises of Oxfordshire', she looks at the lives of the artist William Morris and William Morris, 1st Viscount Nuffield. She will compare and contrast their early lives, their businesses and their personal lives as well as their legacies.

**Upcoming Events (please check with the organiser)**

- Thursday, 1st June: Marcham Society Midweek Walk – for more details contact [e.dunford@btinternet.com](mailto:e.dunford@btinternet.com) 01865 391439

For more information contact [membership@marchamsociety.org.uk](mailto:membership@marchamsociety.org.uk)

**[www.marchamsociety.org.uk](http://www.marchamsociety.org.uk)**  
**Facebook: marchamsociety**

### Programme 2022-23

*Unless otherwise notified, meetings will be held at 7.45 pm in the Main Hall of the Marcham Centre*

**Thursday 1st June 2023**

Mid-week Walk at 12.30 pm (*see below*)

**Saturday 17th June 2023**

OXFORDSHIRE PAST  
(Abingdon Guildhall) (*see on page 1*)

**Tuesday 20th June 2023 at 10 am**

Guided Walk in Chimney Meadows Nature Reserve by Lisa Lane (*see page 4 & 5*)

**Monday 26th June 2023**

'The Two William Morrises of Oxfordshire' by Marie-Louise Kerr (*see on the left*)

**Thursday 13th July 2023**

Mid-week Walk at 12.30 pm

**Saturday 15th July 2023 - evening**

SUMMER BARBECUE  
(*details to be announced shortly*)

The next Midweek Walk is planned for  
**Thursday 1st June 2023**  
starting at the *Boar's Head*, Church Street,  
Ardington, OX12 8QA



<http://www.tbhardington.co.uk>  
Please email Eric in advance to book:  
[e.dunford@btinternet.com](mailto:e.dunford@btinternet.com)