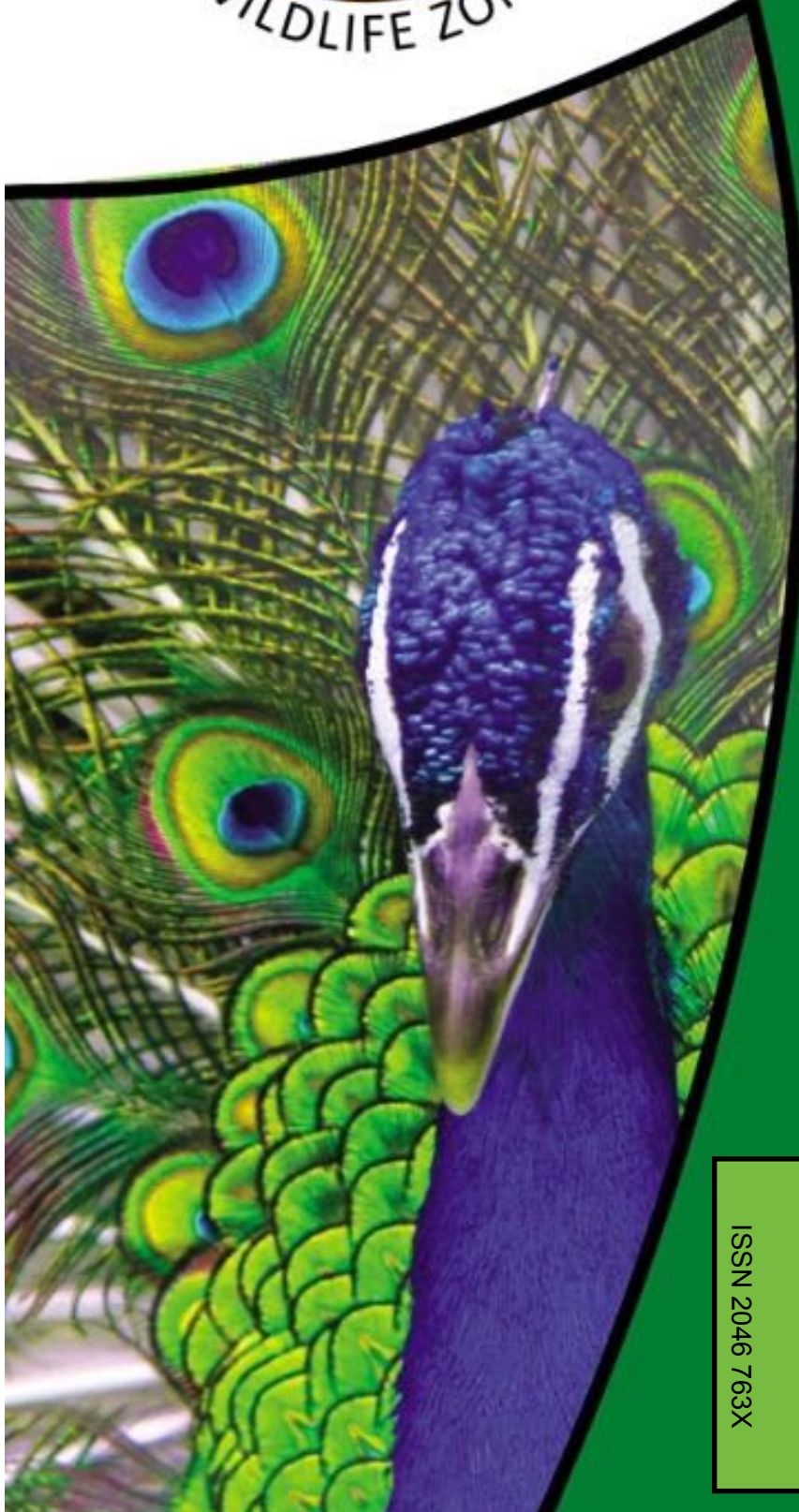


The Bimonthly Newsletter by the
Foundation of Endangered Species



The Wildlife Zone



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NEWS

BEACH-CLEANING.

Sunday 18th April was Easter Sunday, and what a spectacle it was with Councillor West, the Mayor of Brighton in attendance. After collecting a good representative of rubbish on the beach, we had a very nice meal afterwards. We talked about a lot of issues in the world of conservation as well as about our Beach-Cleaning book which is due for publication in 2018.

The future beach-cleaning dates for this year are;

Sunday 18th June

Sunday 24th September.

We would like to say thank you to all of the volunteers who enjoyed the weekend with us, and for those who have already booked up for the final two events of this year.

PUBLICATIONS

The Tottenham Hotspur book is being lined up for publication for Christmas – despite being ‘Blazing June’! Whilst this is a farcical piece of timing to many of us, it is still how the world of publishing works. Although the subject of the book is football and not natural history, the profits will be going to FES, so by all means solve a Christmas problem, if you have one, by buying a copy. Details will be given later in another edition of the Newsletter.

EXPEDITIONS.

In early June FES are making an exploratory expedition to the Pyrenean Principality of Andorra. It is our first time there and should yield some interesting results, especially with its flora. The small nation’s biodiversity comes from its exciting habitats and changeable climates. This gives the conditions for diversity including many unusual and rare mountain plants and flowers. We will keep you informed about how things go in the break later in the year.

In August or September another expedition is planned for a few weeks in Northern Ireland where we will complete our monitoring of randomly chosen beaches throughout the British Isles. Previous FES expeditions monitored beaches in the Mawdach Estuary in North Wales, the Pembrokeshire Coast and the West Coast of Scotland with the Isle of Skye.

CHARITY ITEMS

We now have items available on the internet, such as these cuddly toys selling on eBay. They are all logged together, so to have a look at them, click the link “[in aid of FES](#)” and it should bring them up. They are a mixture of new and pre-owned and are good for all kinds of presents.



MY ORWELLIAN WALKS

Every time I march along the River Frays and Alder glade nature reserve, I think about one of the 20th century's greatest writers, George Orwell and what went through his mind when he walked here in 1933. I wondered if he freed his mind from his Inner Critic and his constant negative thinking which many people carry around as baggage. Or did he gain inspiration from nature as he allowed his genius to develop?

I have been the nature reserve warden for Broadwater and the Alder glade for some years and love fulfilling my duties monitoring these sites. Despite ill health I have recently made regular sojourns along the River Frays, through the Alder glade, onto the Grand Union Canal and looped up with the River Colne.

I am fascinated with animals and birds in the way that Orwell was reputed to have been. I'm sure he would have heard and enjoyed the trilling melodies of songbirds and cast his eyes on luxuriously patterned butterflies as he strolled along the Frays and its nearby natural areas. However he would not have witnessed the present day squawking of Ring Necked Parakeets that were hidden above me in the canopy, only to appear a few moments later.

Perhaps the most iconic animal he could have witnessed was the otter. Moreover he would have read Henry Williamson's best seller, *Tarka the Otter* and known about the behavioural patterns of this beautiful creature. I suspect that otters probably disappeared from the interlinking Colne Valley waterways as they did in so many other places during the 1950s because of man-made agricultural chemicals which had been flushed into rivers, polluting them.*



I've been an otter monitor on the nearby River Chess for nearly 10 years without seeing any signs of returning individuals. However there have been signs of them passing through the Colne Valley. So the Foundation for Endangered Species decided to build a number of otter holts on the River Colne to entice local otters make a home and raise their families. I believe that in the near future an adult pair will create a home in either a natural den of tree roots or in one of the Foundation's substitute man made holts.

However conservation was not the most important issue in the 1930s: instead many in society had preoccupations with totalitarian ideals, fascism and communism. Perhaps that is why Orwell's love of nature did not feature as much in his writings as it could have done, either as a journalist or author. I wonder that if he was alive today, whether he would still have had the same agenda? Or would he write about climate change and all of its inter-related causes and consequences? It is an intriguing conjecture because this topic is the most important problem facing the planet and its natural systems today, and Orwell was an expert chronicler of the world's biggest current issues...

It was in one of my springtime walks when I was lucky enough to catch a glimpse of a brown rat off its guard and unaware of me. She (for some reason I thought it was a female) swam from the far side of the river towards me. As I approached unnoticed, the rat climbed onto the near bank and began to preen herself. I enjoyed the fleeting moment, left her alone and walked on.

When I returned to the spot two hours later it dawned on me that it was adjacent to the site where both Orwell and I were once teachers. He taught here when it was originally a grammar school, and many years later, I taught in the Frays Adult Education Centre. As I approached, the rat re-emerged and noticed me, either by sight, smell or by hearing the unavoidable milling and crunching sounds which the soles of my shoes had made as I strode along the gravelly path.

I saw her nibbling a blade of grass grasped with both of her front paws whilst squatting on her haunches, rather like the squirrels at the Millstream Fork wildlife garden. She fixed her stare onto me: twitched no muscles, suspended all movement and froze like a photograph.

I retreated to make her feel safe so that I could capture a few pictures of her. I only just managed it because within seconds she swam off across the river towards the thick ground cover on the far side, leaving an ever increasing V shaped wake of ripples on the water behind her. As she did so, some of the soft, grey brown fur of her back remained visible above the river's surface; but all too soon she had vanished from view, leaving no trace of her presence.

Within a few minutes I met up with a friend who also regularly walks the reserve. He told me about badgers that forage in the Alder glade twilight. I'm sure that these badgers are not just marauding individuals but consist of family groups of a brock, bitch and cub that make up a sett. One day I hope I can catch a glimpse of these wonderful animals with their distinctive black and white striped faces.

As my sojourn came to an end, my mind returned to George Orwell on his 80th anniversary of being here. I wondered about what he gained from his walks and how he wrote his early version of *Down and Out in Paris and London*. I wanted to figure these out if possible and draw parallels for myself and other writers. I imagined that if I and other scribes could use the same techniques, then it may give us some sort of framework to become successful in a much smaller way, for we would be standing on the shoulders of a giant...

*My friend David Chaffe, author of *Stormforce, An Otter's Tale*, campaigned against this pollution



Malbun, Liechtenstein

"Will we see flowers like this or even the Chamois in Andorra?"

UNITED NATIONS DAYS AND DATES

These are the relevant United Nations Days for wildlife and the environment for 2017. If you have any ideas about the following or how we can mark the occasions, please let us have your views. Thank you.

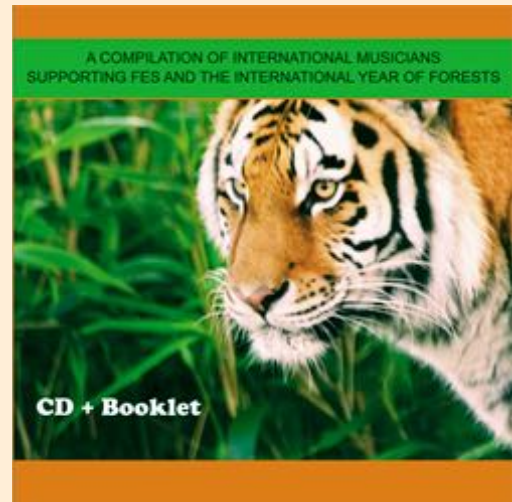
Thursday 8th June World oceans day

Tuesday 24th October United Nations Day.



FES and the Wildlife Zone have published a musical CD which is a compilation of good quality popular music. There is also an educational booklet that complements the music and explains FES aims, objectives as well as explaining some of the things that the charity has accomplished

Special price of £6.99
NRP £10.99



All pictures are available to purchase in high quality prints from our website

Further copies of the Wildlife Zone Newsletter can be bought at the DAY 1 Convenience Store, Oxford Road, New Denham, Buckinghamshire. Otherwise you can purchase them from the registered office directly, together with back numbers.

The Wildlife Zone Newsletter is also on display at Uxbridge Library, and is deposited at the British Library Archive Department where they can be read freely.

**The Wildlife Zone is the supportive charity and is the publishing arm of the
Foundation for Endangered Species**



FOUNDATION FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES REGISTERED OFFICE

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