

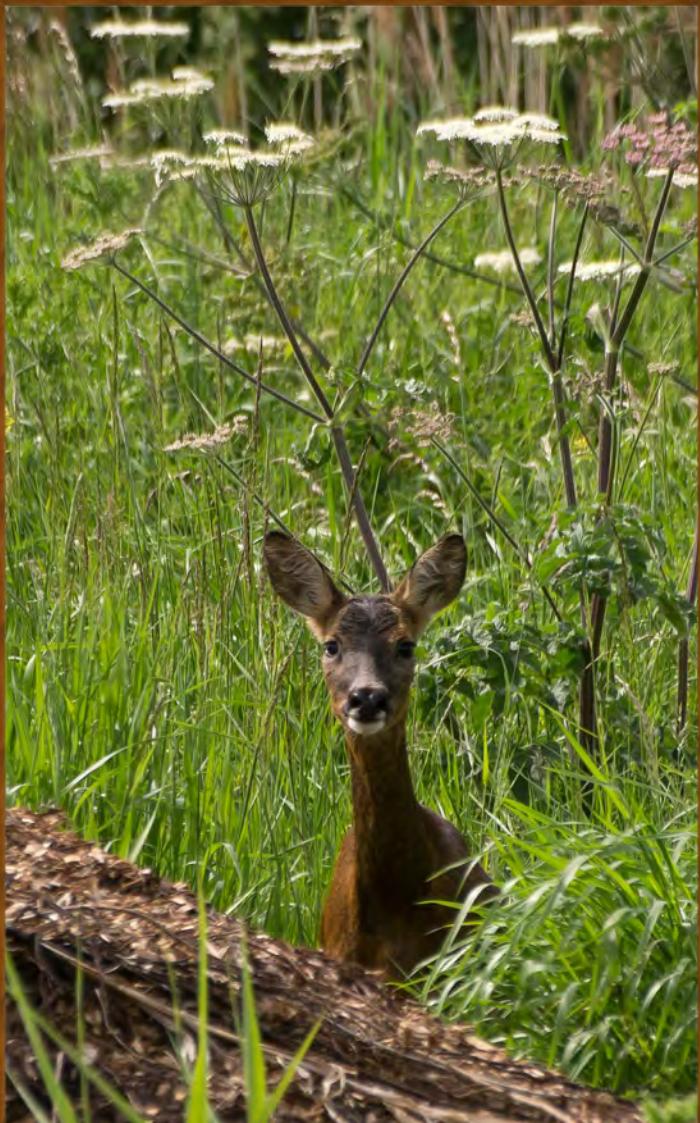
DOUBLE NINE

THE POCKLINGTON CANAL AMENITY SOCIETY
MAGAZINE



October 2021

Issue 123



PCAS welcomes wildlife naturalist Chris Bosworth to the magazine. One of Chris's stunning images is seen here. The image was taken near Walbut Bridge on the opposite side to the towpath.

Editorial

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Welcome to your October 2021 issue of Double Nine! 2021 has certainly been a difficult year for PCAS with the restrictions slowly being lifted.

Steve Ashby has managed to run many pre-booked trips with New Horizons which has given us some much needed income.

Tim has now got the 2022 calendar in stock. This is a limited edition so please make sure that you order your copy early, as they will sell out fast.

Our weed cutting boat has been working above Thornton lock, alongside CRT contractors. CRT have also now repaired bridge No6. PCAS are still awaiting a start date for the restoration of Sandhill lock.

By the time that you read this the PCAS roadshow will be back in action after 18 months in hibernation. We will be out and about giving visual presentations and spreading the word about the canal. This month we are delighted to welcome three new contributors to the magazine.

Thank you for your continued support.

Malcolm Slater
Editor.

Front Cover: Our new weed boat alongside the CRT contractor (Rothens) sharing Thornton Lock. The boats were working together on the canal during September.

Rear Cover: PCAS tripboat New Horizons has been very busy running pre-booked trips after restrictions were eased.
The boat is seen leaving bridge seven with a group on the 20th June.

Double Nine is published in February - June - October by the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

Copy Date February 2022 Issue

Closing date for articles and reports for the October 2021 issue is the **30th December 2021**. Submissions received after this date may be held over until the next available issue.

Opinions expressed in this magazine is not necessarily those of the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society, its Chairman or Committee.

Chairmans Report

Ahead with Caution

Although lockdown largely came to an end some months ago, the activities of the Pocklington Canal Amenity Society remained at a relatively low level during the summer months. This was mostly because of the uncertainty about possible resurgence in variant strains of the virus. The society was cautious about organising events that might have to be cancelled, or draw the level of support that is expected.

New Horizons

However, our tripboat, New Horizons, did resume operations part way through the season, with pre-booked trips organised for family or affinity groups. Despite the restrictions, I am happy to report that it has generated significant revenue, although far short of what might have been expected in a normal season. I would like to thank the boat crews for keeping this valuable activity going.

Working Parties

Working parties have also resumed, although also at a reduced level . Much time has been spent keeping the weed growth in the canal down to more tolerable levels. This task has been made easier since our volunteers have been using a different weed cutting boat. The former weed boat struggled to deal with the weed that grows so vigorously on the Pocklington Canal, and frequently used to break down. So when we had the opportunity to swap it for a different model, we took up the offer with enthusiasm. The new boat has performed better and been more reliable, although keeping weed under control will always be an onerous task. The task has been made easier this year because CRT brought in a contractor to clear the lower stretches.

Low Water Levels

Low water levels due to low rainfall caused of locks on the Pocklington Canal during the latter part of summer. Fortunately, the impact was not to great, as there have been very few visiting boats this year. The trip boat was able to adjust its programme to avoid the use of locks.

Events

We have had no public events this summer, although after a break of a year, our customary November lunch will be going ahead. We are also working on some ideas for next year.

Sandhill Lock

I am sorry to have to report that little progress has been made on our next flagship project, which is the restoration of Sandhill lock. We have been holding regular meetings with CRT, trying to agree the manner in which the works should be carried out, and we had expected that works would start in the late summer. Alas, new issues keep arising, that prevent a start from being made. Although our volunteers have put a lot of work into the preparation of the application for Listed Building consent, this has to be submitted by CRT, and we are still waiting for this to happen. Once submitted to the East Riding of Yorkshire Council, there is a period for consultation, so it could be some time before consent is received. It has been a frustrating time, but we must remain optimistic.

Paul Waddington
Chairman

Donations

The Chairman & Committee wish to thank everyone who has given donations to

Canal Head sales and information

Our sales officer Tim Charlson will be keeping the information and sales shop open for as many weekends as possible throughout the winter months. He will be selling our new 2022 calendar as well as a good selection of books for just a donation to PCAS.



Canal Side Ways

Some images taken along the canal sent to the editor by members



Hagg Bridge by John Lundie



Looking towards Church Bridge by Chris Bosworth



Photograph by Andrew Philipson



Photograph by John Dickins

Working Party Report

The newly acquired weed cutting boat was checked over for safety features & with a few minor additions/alterations was issued with a boat safety certificate & licensed with CRT. It was decided to keep the name Sheila Nix, after our dear departed.

Most of the “summer” was spent repairing embankments, topping up those which had sunk & painting/staining bridges and benches, starting from East Cottingwith & working our way up the canal.

In mid June we took delivery of a bespoke work boat from Goole boathouse, courtesy of our chairman. This having only been used for pottering about the marina needs some extensive features adding for use on the canal (side safety rails etc) & has kept or three of us interestingly busy since its arrival.

Our weed clearance, meanwhile, began in earnest as our boat crew became more familiar with its operation & was complimented by the arrival of a CRT Contractor weed boat, of the same make & design as ours. This turned out to be a great bonus for us as our crew have been practising alongside him & learning a great deal about how to make best use of the equipment. The operations were slightly curtailed by the collapse of No6 swingbridge bridge bearing pintle, rendering it temporarily un-operable and laterally the lack of water entering the canal, causing a stoppage at Thornton lock and above. But these thankfully have all now been resolved & weed cutting has progressed as far as the Bielby arm.

We can only weed cut until the end of October but then we should have been able to really clear the navigable stretch ready for the start, hopefully, of a full season of boat rips next year, fingers crossed.

Richard Harker. Working Party organiser



Left:
PCAS working parties have been busy throughout the Summer painting and staining both seats and locks from East Cottingwith up to Canal Head.



Above: Working party volunteers painting the gate beams at Top Lock.

Below: PCAS volunteers painting the upper gates at Top Lock. Our skiff was needed in order to gain full access to the gates from the water.





This page: The PCAS weed cutting boat above Thornton lock with CRT contractors Rothens of Atherstone, Warwickshire on the 14th September. Tim Charlson and Tony Fenech were tasked to clear the cut weed, on what was a very wet day with several heavy rain showers.





Above: Working party volunteers cut and trim back the vegetation on the lane down to the Melbourne Arm on the 13th July.

Below: PCAS Chairman Paul Waddington and Working Party organiser Richard Harker examining the gates at Coates lock. The section of canal between the Bielby Arm and Coates lock was extensively dredged in 2017. Immediately above the lock is a winding hole which would allow boats to turn. It seems at present that there is a small problem with the lower gates at Coates which if rectified will allow another section of the canal to be opened.





This page: The PCAS working party now have a new workboat. The boat has come from the Goole Boathouse Marina. Richard and his team have now fitted safety rails to the new boat, which should prove very useful working on the canal.



PCAS Annual Dinner 2021

LOOKING FORWARD TO MEETING YOU ALL AGAIN AT OUR

ANNUAL DINNER

TO BE HELD AT THE OAKS, AUGHTON, YO42 4PW

SUNDAY 28TH NOVEMBER 2021

12.30PM

MENU

STARTERS

Breaded Brie, homemade chutney & leaves

Thai Fishcake serviced with sweet chilli glaze

Creamy Garlic Mushrooms on toasted Brioche with Parma ham crisp

MAIN COURSE

Roast Pork served with Traditional Sunday Trimmings

Breast of Chicken wrapped in Parma ham in a mushroom and Tarragon sauce with roast potatoes

Parmesan Crushed Cod served with lemon dill sauce and new potatoes

Mozarella & Mediterranean Vegetable Tart served with dressed leaves

SWEETS

Cherry Bakewell Tart with Vanilla Ice Cream

Iced Lemon Parfait served with caramelised oranges

Homemade Treacle Sponge served with custard

£24.00 per head

Please book contact Debbie Smith

dejaysmith@btinternet.com

Contact detail: Debbie Smith. 69 Percy Road Pocklington. YO42 2LZ

Late Summer on the Pocklington Canal

The breeding season has now drawn to a close and the year is slowly melting into a warm and pleasant autumn. Wildlife along the canal is now “making hay while the sun shines”, with residents stocking up for winter and our summer visitors gorging on insects. Swallows and house martins are still visible hawking the skies, and young chiffchaffs and the last remaining whitethroats can be seen chasing around the hedgerows.

Late August saw the pair of spotted flycatchers produce a second brood from their nest on the building at Melbourne arm. It looked like they fledged two young, together with at least one from their first brood. Although this species is known to second brood, it is not common and I have never witnessed it before. It may have been a response to a poor first attempt or encouragement from the extending warm conditions. Despite all this exhausting and continued effort, they were all gone within days, probably to the coast before the long journey back to Africa for the winter.

As residents, Jays can now be seen and heard flying back and forth with beaks of acorns. Their raucous shrieks giving them away in tree tops and small woods along the canal. The acorns are buried in the ground for later retrieval when other food is scarce. While Jays have good memories and can find their cache, they bury so many that science is now finding the Jay to be a habitat engineer. Recent studies in newly created woodland in Cambridgeshire have shown that Jays are responsible for half the number of Oak trees present.

Regular canal-side walkers continue to glimpse the occasional otter in the canal, although things are quietening down as the young become less playful, making them more difficult to see, and begin to look for their own territories further afield.

One extremely pleasant surprise occurred at the end of July, when watching families of swallows feeding over fields, a crash in the bank-side reeds behind me revealed a bittern rising up and away down the canal to the reed bed at Thornton Lock. Bitterns (a species of brown heron), are still rare breeding birds in the UK and, despite continued population expansion, they remain Amber listed (species deemed of conservation concern). This is surely a good sign as Bitterns looking to set up new territories may find conditions near the canal viable habitat. It's still a long shot, but sight of one of these rare birds can only be a positive thing and a hope for future visitors.

Neil Cooper, Bird Recorder for Melbourne & Thornton Ings NR

Bird Life along the Canal

Photographs by Cris Bosworth



Spotted Fly Catcher



White Throat



Tree Creeper



Great White Egret (Rare) 2021

Membership Matters

Roger Bromley, Membership Secretary

Thanks to all of you who are renewing subscriptions by standing order. It is so much easier to run the database in this way. If you do not yet have a standing order our bank details are as follows:-

Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

Sort Code 40-37-01

Account number 20674451

Please remember to let me know if your address, email or telephone number changes. We will only contact you with information relevant to your membership and all emails are sent BCC.

Terrapins in the Pocklington Canal

Terrapins are small turtles that live in fresh and brackish water. There are fossil records of the European Pond Terrapin from the UK but these animals died out as the climate cooled. In recent times, non-native terrapins kept as pets have been released into the wild. Since terrapins are quite long lived it is possible that they might breed in the UK if the climate was to warm up sufficiently. We therefore considered it worthwhile to assess the current and historical status of terrapins in East Yorkshire.

The terrapins found in ponds, lakes and canals in the UK are reported to be mostly either the Red-eared Terrapin or its close relative the Yellow-bellied Slider (both are native to southern parts of North America). These two terrapins, like some others kept as pets, have yellow stripes on their head and neck. The Red-eared Terrapin however can be identified by a red mark behind each eye.

Typically, terrapins in the UK emerge from hibernation from March onwards, and they may be active until early October. In ponds and lakes, terrapins are most often seen as they bask on logs out of the water on sunny days, often in small groups. It would be interesting to know where Pocklington Canal terrapins like to bask.

Terrapins are thought to have been present in Pocklington Canal since the 1980s. Most reports have been of single individuals, although several have been seen in the past along the Bielby Arm and between Coates Lock and Sandhill Lock. Our most recent record is of a terrapin spotted in 2020 between Bielby Swing Bridge and Walbut Lock. A number of people have apparently seen a terrapin along this stretch of canal, which has very little reed and waterweed growth; it would be good to receive details of these sightings (approximate date and number seen). There are also reported sightings from the Melbourne stretch (possibly in the 1980s), near Hagg Bridge (c. 2002) and at Silburn Lock (c. 2011).

We are very grateful for the records of terrapins posted on the PCAS Facebook page in August in response to our request for details of sightings. Any further records from the canal or elsewhere in East Yorkshire would be much appreciated. We would particularly welcome sightings from the current year, reports of two or more individuals seen together, and any behavioural observations such feeding or basking, and interactions between individuals or with other wildlife on the canal. Please send records, including details of where and when, to Africa at a.gomez@hull.ac.uk. If you can provide a photograph so much the better.

We intend to publish our findings in *The Naturalist*, the journal of the Yorkshire Naturalists' Union.

Thank you,

Richard Shillaker and Africa Gómez

Hull Natural History Society

Terrapins in the Pocklington Canal



Left:

A terrapin which was found in the Pocklington canal in the 1960's.
Photograph PCAS Archives

Lower Left:

A Yellow - bellied Slider, Melton Village pond.
Photograph by Richard Shillaker

Lower right:

Red-eared Terrapin, Pickering Park Hull.
Photograph by Africa Gomez



Below: New Horizons was able to run several pre-booked trips in the early summer travelling down the canal and passing through Gardham lock to turn before bridge six became defective.



A new species of Damselfly on the Pocklington Canal

Most visitors to the canal will be familiar with Damselflies, the smaller cousins of Dragonflies, that flit amongst the bank-side vegetation and over the water surface during the summer months .Six species have been recorded regularly at many locations along the canal in recent years. These are Common Blue, Azure, Blue-tailed, Large Red and Red-Eyed Damselflies, and Banded Demoiselle. A seventh species Emerald Damselfly, has been recorded a few times over the last ten years.

But now the canal has an eighth species of Damselfly. In September 2021 I found two specimens of Willow Emerald Damselfly in (appropriately) willow bushes overhanging the canal just below East Cottingwith lock.

Willow Emerald is widespread across continental Europe but started to appear in small numbers in the UK in the early years of this century. Since then it has spread north and west from its first strong hold in east Suffolk to reach many parts of south- east England by 2017. In the last four years there has been a rapid spread north through Lincolnshire, and first Yorkshire sightings were in the Hull area in 2019. Since then numerous records have been received along the Humber from South Cave to Spurn and up the East coast as far as Scarborough. Willow Emeralds prefer standing or slow-flowing water with overhanging trees so it was only a matter of time before they were detected further inland.

Knowing that the canal was a likely habit, I searched in vain 2020 but was successful this year. I only saw two, possibly three, specimens and they were all resting on the tips of willow branches on the far bank. My photographs were of poor quality as the damselflies were so far away, so the illustrations are of an individual taken in Hull by Dr. Africa Gomez, a fellow dragonfly enthusiast.

Both Emerald and Willow Emerald are, as the name suggests, green in colour but the main features that distinguish Willow Emerald from Emerald can be clearly seen in the image. The key feature is the short forward-projecting dark green spur on the side of the thorax. This is absent in Common Emerald. Other important features are the “wing spots” which are pale with a darker outline in Willow Emerald, but dark overall in Emerald. These features are not always easy to see however the newly emerged individuals of both species may have pale wing spots.

Another way of looking for evidence that Willow Emerald is present is to look for the distinctive “ladder like” scars left when the females lay their eggs

Into the willow shoots. The scarring is often easy to spot during winter after the leaves have fallen.

We are always keen to receive records of any species of Damsel or Dragonfly. If you see Damselflies along the canal, especially suspected Willow Emeralds, please consider sending a record to the online wildlife recording site or directly to me. The essential information is “what, where and when”, and if possible a photographs.

Martin Roberts

British Dragonfly Society, County Recorder for South-East Yorkshire



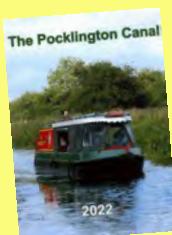
Above : Willow Emerald Male Damselfly.



Above: Scarring caused by egg-laying on willow twig

PCAS 2022 Calendar Available Now!

13 full - colour pages with images of the Pocklington canal



Canal & River Trust News



Above: The CRT Balsam Bash Saturdays were held over the Summer months. Volunteers worked between Melbourne Arm and Church Bridge.

CRT contractors have been busy trimming the grass along the towpath.





Above: Vistors to the canal helping to open swingbridge No6.

Below: The bridge had stuck open due to an engineering issue. CRT quickly helped to free the tripboat.





Above & Left: Three images showing the damaged bearing and the semi-collapse of swingbridge No6. The bridge is now in full working order.



Left:
CRT staff working on the culvert at Melbourne Arm. The bridge above was found to be structurally unsound and has been replaced.

Correction



Andrew Phillipson has provided more information about the paddle-wheel weedcutting boat which was featured in our last issue.

The boat was not owned by PCAS but by several members who had found and restored it to working order. The boat ended its days in a scrap yard at Storwood whilst the single cylinder Lister engine was saved and lives on to this day. *Photograph courtesy of Andrew Phillipson.*

Coming Events

Annual Dinner 2021

The PCAS Annual Dinner will be held on the 28th November 2021.

Places are still available.

The Menu can be viewed on page 11 in this issue.

Please contact Debbie Smith with your booking and your choice of menu.

Price £24 pp

Debbie Smith: dejaysmith@btinternet.com

**Debbie Smith 69 Percy Road.
Pocklington. YO42 2LZ**



VALUATION EVENING WITH

CAROLINE HAWLEY

AS SEEN ON TV

FRIDAY 25TH MARCH 2022

**FURTHER DETAILS TO FOLLOW CHECK
OUR WEBSITE FOR UPDATES**

pocklingtoncanalsociety.org

OR CONTACT

Debbie Smith on 01759 306070

A look back through the Archives. Canal Head Vintage Rallies in the 1990's

Compiled by Malcolm Slater

Vintage rallies were always popular at Canal Head in the 1990's.



Above: The Wellington Oak at Canal Head were big supporters of the canal society. These Tetley dray horses were a popular attraction.

Below: The landlords of the Wellington Oak sponsored the small souvenir plaques that were presented to all the exhibitors. Landlords, Derek and Danny received a framed print, presented to them by East Riding Vintage Tractor and Engine Club organisers of the event, Mr Joe Vokes (third from left) and Mr George Benson (far right) on behalf of PCAS.



A look back through the Archives



Above: Members of the East Yorkshire Vintage Tractor & Engine Club who held their monthly meetings in Pocklington helped PCAS with the arrangements for the many vintage displays held at Canal Head.

Below:

The road into Canal Head was still a stone track and awaiting the new tarmac surface.



A look back through the Archives



Above: Vintage cars stand outside the PCAS information point.

Below: Exhibits large and small attended the Easter rallies over many years. This farm rolly (haycart) was displayed by Mr Bernard Blashill of Welwick, North Humberside.



A look back through the Archives



Above: The vintage Wolseley stationary engine was displayed by George & Tracy Benson from York.

Below: Engines both large and small were on display and even the Reliant car is worth a second look.



A look back through the Archives



Above: A ride-on petrol lawn mower.

Below: How many of us as a child has owned a Mamod steam engine? As popular today as they were back in the 1950's.



PCAS sales

Key Rings

Two designs to choose from.

Design No1 features New Horizons on one side and on the other the PCAS logo. Design No2 features Thornton bridge and on the other side is a scene from the canal.

50p each



Waterways concerned with this fixed bridge and the Canal Society took steps out of reinstating the swivelling part of the bridge had to be three times as heavy as possible of taking vehicles weight into account. Making it a much larger and a much stronger than the original.

Biology Department of York University for research purposes.

At the end of the Arm is an old watermill which was used to mill corn until around 1940 but it has now been converted into a residence.



Ballpoint Pen 50p

The Pocklington Canal



PCAS 2022 calendar available now!

We are pleased to announce that the PCAS 2022 calendar is now available! This 13 page limited edition features images from the PCAS archives, many of which have never been published before. Price £7 plus £2 p&p

Remember, every purchase generates income for PCAS restoration funds.

PCAS Sales



Pens 50p



Canal Guide £5



Fridge Magnets £3



Pin Badge £3

Brass Plaques. Head of Navigation.
50th Anniversary. Bicentenary 1818 - 2018.
£7 each



PCAS Mugs
Five Designs Available.
£4 each

Please Note:

Postage and packing to be added to all postal orders.

For details please contact the sales officer,

Tim Charlson 07926 910717 email: tcharlson58@gmail.com

All the above merchandise and selected pre-owned books are available from the Canal Head Information Centre.

The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

Registered Charity 500637
www.pocklingtoncanalsociety.org

Patrons: The Earl of Halifax

Neil Edwards

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The Pocklington Canal Amenity Society

One copy free to paid up members