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Summer 2018

WPA News 106 (2018)

World Pheasant Association

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WPA

news

The International Newsletter of the World Pheasant Association

Number 106 Summer 2018



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Registered Charity No 271203

FRONT COVER:

The front cover depicts a male Tibetan partridge from Sichuan province, China and was photographed by Mikaël Abts. Mikaël undertook a pheasant photography tour throughout China and captured some fantastic images. An article on Mikaël's tour, with photos is featured on pages 8 - 10.

REAR COVER:

The rear cover photos were taken at our charity clay shoot at Compton Manor. This annual event is hosted by our fundraising committee and includes a day filled with clay shooting, prizes for the best gun and teams, a delicious lunch and an auction. More photos and details of the event this year are featured on pages 12-13.

Patrons

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The Viscount Ridley DL
The Duke of Northumberland
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**MEMBERSHIP
RATES**

	UK	Non-UK
Individual	£ 30	£ 35
Junior	£ 15	£ 17.50
Family	£ 60	£ 70
Corporate	£ 120	£ 120
Supported	£ 30	£ 30
Life Membership, single payment	£ 600	£ 700

DIARY DATES

WPA Germany 40th Anniversary Convention, Walsrode	31 August- 2 September 2018
WPA AGM & Convention Chester Zoo	8 September 2018
ECBG in Brno & Olomouc Czech Republic	12-14 October 2018
Scottish Open Day at Fenton Barns	3 November 2018
CBAG Avicultural Weekend	9 February 2019
Compton Manor Charity Clay Shoot	10 May 2019
Dunkeld Charity Clay Shoot	18 May 2019
Golden Pheasant Club	12 July 2019

More details on events can be found on the WPA website
www.pheasant.org/news.asp or contact the office on office@pheasant.org

Copy Dates

The next issue of WPA News will be produced in December 2018. Articles, stories, letters and adverts for consideration for publication should be with the Office by the end of October 2018.

Articles printed in WPA News may not necessarily represent the views of the World Pheasant Association

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NOTES FROM THE CHAIRMAN



I sincerely hope that all our breeder members are having a productive season.

One member called me recently to advise us that he was preparing his will and that he proposed to donate all his birds to WPA. I thought I would share my answer with our membership as others may be thinking along similar lines.

WPA does not own birds, as this would compete with our members. My suggestion was that in the case of a member's demise the surviving spouse or executor should contact WPA seeking a visit from a member who in turn would be able to recommend a sensible re-housing programme, particularly when rare or endangered birds are on site. Proceeds may then be given to WPA. This would prevent the involvement of a dealer who would offer to clear the collection in a few days for his or her own profit.

In April, ECBG met in Poland and had a most productive get together, the highlight of which to me was the participation of five Hungarians led by Dezső Naszáli. It is our intention to formalise WPA Hungary at our meeting in the Czech Republic on the 12th October. Jiri Mrnka has formulated a very interesting programme in the Brno region so if members wish to join us, please contact Barbara Ingman at the office.

Any member who wishes to join WPA Germany in Walsrode on the 31st August to 2nd September will be made most welcome and join us all in celebrating WPA Germany's 40th birthday. Some original members will be present and we are promised an excellent weekend of reminiscences!

I would like to flag up a cautionary word of advice raised by BIAZA (British & Irish Association of Zoos and Aquarists). There is a move in Europe to publish a 'positive list' of birds and animals that are allowed to be kept in captivity. If applied in the UK this could have a very detrimental effect on all of our avicultural activities.

The body known as EARS (European Alliance of Rescue Centres and Sanctuaries) are contacting zoos requesting information regarding their facilities and animals held. At present we are unsure where this information is to be used.

As I write (3rd July) I can confirm that this past weekend, WPA put on their now familiar layout at the GWCT Game Fair at Scone Fair in Perthshire. Not only was the weather at its 'Scottish' best but we were crowned when we were awarded 'Best stand for 2018' and we received a presentation of a painting of a pair of grey partridges by Justin Prigmore.

As you can imagine members and volunteers were overwhelmed by this award and after the announcement was made on the tannoy system we continued to enjoy a footfall of around 400 per hour at peak times of the day. I would like to thank all of those involved and invite them to join us again next year. A report on the game fair and photos can be found on page 21.

This message would not be complete without mention of our Fundraising Committee, whose sterling efforts have yet again allowed us to continue our conservation work. I cannot express how much this means to WPA.

Keith Chalmers-Watson 3/7/18



Below: WPA winning best stand
Photo Richard Playfair

STUDBOOK HOLDER UPDATE

Malayan crestless fireback (ESB) Marcin Chrapowicki

Cabot's tragopan (ESB) Veronika Zahradníčková

Contact details can be found on the WPA website

ESB = European studbook

NOTICE**43rd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF
THE WORLD PHEASANT ASSOCIATION**

to be held on Saturday 8th September at 10:00 in the Lecture Theatre, Chester Zoo, Morston Road, Upton-by-Chester, Upton, Chester, CH2 1EU
Attendance to the AGM is free*

AGENDA

1. Agreement of the Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 9th September 2017.
2. Receive and consider the Report from Council on the past year.
3. Receive and consider the Accounts for the year 2017-18.
4. Election and re-election of officers and members of council - the following have agreed to stand, all have the backing of Council:
 - (a) As Officers and Trustees:
 - Keith Chalmers-Watson, as Chairman
 - Stuart Wilson, as Vice Chairman
 - Jon Riley, as Treasurer (for the coming year)
 - (b) As trustees:
 - Paul North (co-opt for a year)
 - (c) Election and re-election of Vice Presidents:
 - Council propose that Heiner Jacken is re-elected
5. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner:
 - Richard Alsept
6. Changing the World Pheasant Association to a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO)

It is proposed to change WPA to a CIO from an unincorporated charity. This will provide a number of benefits, in particular to limit Trustee's personal liability.

7. Any other business

*If as a paid-up member of the Association you wish to attend the AGM and no other part of the Convention programme, we will make no charge, but please send your name in to the WPA Administrator by 1 September, so that the necessary arrangements can be made.

WPA AGM AND CONVENTION**Chester Zoo****Saturday 8 September - Sunday 9 September****Barbara Ingman**

WPA's Annual General meeting and Convention will be held at Chester Zoo on Saturday 8 September 2018 and you are invited to join us for, what I am sure will be, an extremely interesting and enjoyable day. On Saturday morning the lecture subjects vary from turkeys to maleos. Dr Simon Dowell, the Science Director has kindly arranged for WPA to have our meeting here and a highlight will be a guided tour of the Zoo on Saturday afternoon.

Due to the generosity of Chester Zoo we have also been able to keep costs to a minimum. The whole day costs £35 which includes entry to the Zoo, use of the Lecture Theatre, morning tea/coffee and lunch.

The Convention dinner will be held in the Hallmark Hotel which is close to the rail station in Chester and the three course meal costs £30.

Saturday 8 September - Chester Zoo

09:30 for 10:00 Registration & coffee

10:00 - 10:30 WPA 43rd Annual General Meeting

10:30 - 12:30 Talks:

Galliforme conservation at Chester and around the world: The work of the IUCN Galliformes Specialist Group.

Can the pheasant learn from the turkey?

The Next WPA International Symposium in Vietnam, September 2019

A Summary of recent and present research programmes supported by WPA

WCS Maleo project in Sulawesi, Indonesia

12:30 – 13:30 Lunch

13:30 onwards Tour of Chester Zoo

13:30 – 16:30 Scientific Advisory Committee meeting (members are welcome to attend as observers)

19:00 for 19:30 Three course dinner at the Hallmark Hotel

Sunday 9 September - RSPB Dee Estuary Nature Reserve, Burton Mere Wetlands

You are also invited to join us for an informal visit to the RSPB Dee Estuary Nature Reserve, Burton Mere Wetlands, Puddington Lane, Burton, Neston CH64 5SF on Sunday morning at 10:30. The entrance fee is £4 per person.

The Nature Reserve is only 10km from Chester city centre. The gateway to the Dee Estuary reserve, Burton Mere Wetlands straddles the border between England and Wales with a mosaic of freshwater wetland habitats, mixed farmland and woodland. The area is bursting with wildlife, hosting avocets, egrets, harriers, noisy redshanks, swallows and swifts.

Light refreshments are available at the Reserve but some members will be having lunch in the Wheatsheaf Pub, Neston Road, South Wirral, CH64 4AP at 12:30.

Booking

Please complete the booking form (available on the website or from the WPA office) and either email to Barbara (office@pheasant.org.uk) or post to Middle, Ninebanks, Hexham, NE47 8DL by 24 August 2018 together with your payment.

PHEASANTS ON FACEBOOK

Jonathan Pointer

It was chance conversation with a prominent American pheasant breeder that first prompted me to join Facebook. During a talk on pheasant husbandry he said, "Oh you should look at my Facebook page, I post all my images there". For years I'd avoided Facebook, looking no further than the misleading name and not appreciating the vast collective pool of fellow pheasant-obsessed users and the speciality pheasant groups therein.

I joined that same day and after looking over my friends page and I stumbled across my first pheasant group - Phasianus, a group specializing in true pheasants. My journey had begun. New groups were then suggested to me, I had not known Facebook had special interest groups. Tragopans, peacock pheasants, junglefowl - all of the pheasants were represented and not only that, many other fellow pheasant keepers from a broad international audience were there. Within a month I was suddenly very well connected!

Content on Facebook is both visual and written and it's fascinating to read and see which birds (and the sheer variety) that many private breeders keep. Many of the groups are active forums and if you need a bird or have a medical problem and need some advice from experienced breeders then help is only a keyboard stroke away.

The World Pheasant Association is prominent on Facebook with several thousand followers; the page regularly posts pictures and videos as well as posts of the conservation work and the meetings and trips available through WPA. Long term, I think it will prove a useful, new member recruiting ground, especially with a younger audience.

A few noteworthy pheasant groups for new Facebook users:

World Pheasant Association, WPA - Deutschland, WPA CZ-SK, Tragopans, Starhawk (tragopans), Jungle Fowl Breeders, Phasianus (true pheasants), Pheasant Breeders of Europe, Pheasant Breeders, Crossopotilon (eared pheasants), Chrysolophus (ruffed pheasants), Lophura (firebacks), Syrmaticus (long-tailed pheasants), Monals and many more!



WPA Facebook page

MINUTES OF THE 42nd ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF THE WORLD PHEASANT ASSOCIATION

held on Saturday 9th September 2017 at 13:30 at Michaël van Duijnhoven's residence,
Arnhem, the Netherlands



Present: Keith Chalmers-Watson (Chairman) and 18 Members of the Association

1. Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Saturday 2 September 2016

It was agreed unanimously that these minutes be signed as a true and correct record of the meeting.

2. Report from Council for the year 2016/17

I believe this is the first time in our history that WPA has held their AGM in mainland Europe.

In 2017, we are holding our AGM and convention at Arnhem in Holland in conjunction with WPA Benelux and WPA Germany. Both WPA Council and ECBG will also meet whilst we are in Arnhem.

I am able to report a development situation within EAZA to accept private breeders via ECBG and our focus groups. Both organisations bring much contribution to pheasant conservation breeding particularly where good husbandry practices such as ringing and record keeping are properly carried out.

Our Scientific Advisory Committee has evaluated and approved projects in Greece, Pakistan, Australia, Nepal and of course Vietnam - the home of our flagship project the Edwards's Pheasant Reintroduction Project.

I know we are all delighted that Mrs Pham Tuan Anh, the President of Viet Nature, will join us in Arnhem. Viet Nature is the champion organisation within Vietnam which has been given the responsibility for coordinating the return of Edwards's Pheasants to the wild. WPA has already committed very significant funds towards establishing the first breeding aviaries for the reintroduction programme.

Later this year we shall have a reprint of the 'Pheasants of the World' poster which should be widely distributed in schools and other institutions. Since it was created in the early days of WPA, several new species have been created and two have also been removed, so we currently have a total of 52 pheasant species. We are delighted that the artist for the original poster, Esdaile Hudson, has agreed to paint the missing species in the same style as the earlier ones.

Happily, we are still supported valiantly by our Fund-Raising Committee who are continually coming up with new ideas to keep WPA going in such a sound financial position. Our very grateful thanks to them all.

Finally, I hope as many members as possible will come to the CBAG meeting on Saturday 3 February at Cotswold Wildlife Park.

Additionally, please try to bring another interested party, relation or friend to this meeting. Always remember we breeders of game birds are an ever-dwindling number.

Keith Chalmers-Watson, WPA Chairman

3. Accounts for the year 2016/17

It was carried unanimously that the Accounts for the year ended 30 April 2017 be adopted.

4. Election and re-election of members of Council

Council proposed that the following, who had agreed to stand as officers and trustees, be elected:

Keith Chalmers-Watson, as Chairman

Stuart Wilson, as Vice Chairman

Jon Riley, as Treasurer (for the coming year)

Brian Bertram, for a further term of 3 years

Ian Clark, Laura Gardner and Laura Owens for a term of three years

Nigel Hester and Susie Walker-Munro for a second term of three years

These were carried unanimously.

5. Election and re-election of Vice Presidents

Council proposed that the following be re-elected:

Richard Carden Alain Hennache John Corder Robin Marston

Tim Lovel Mark Baker Manfred Prasch (Austria) Professor Roger J Wheeler OBE, FRSE Professor Zhang Zhengwang

All were deemed elected as per rule 9) f) of WPA's constitution.

6. Appointment of Independent Financial Examiner

Council proposed that the following, who had agreed to stand, be elected: Richard Alsept

This was carried unanimously.

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Jon Riley

Financial review for year ending 30 April 2018

This was another successful financial year for the charity. Total income was £117,787. This compares to total income in the previous year of £170,893 because in 2017 there had been an increase in income from the Sixth WPA International Symposium on Galliformes. Income from membership was flat at £12,409 (2017: £12,423) whilst income from fundraising activities reduced slightly to £64,386 (2017: £66,624). Charity clay shoots continue to be the main source of income for our conservation work. Expenditure for the year was £116,608, compared to £157,521 in 2017, with the decrease, again, because of organising the Sixth WPA International Symposium on Galliformes in China. WPA spent £87,844 on charitable activities over the twelve months. This included £47,762 (2017: £36,138) invested in field-based activities or conservation genetics research.

The various field projects supported by us were:

Pipar, Nepal

Laxman Poudyal completed a six-month survey of Galliforme populations in Pipar and Santel in the Annapurna Conservation Area, Nepal. WPA continues to fund teachers' salaries and on-going maintenance and improvements around the schools in this area.

Conservation of Sulawesi's Mascot Bird – The Maleo *Macrocephalon maleo*

WPA completed its three-year funding of £6,500/year to support a long-term Wildlife Conservation Society initiative on the island of Sulawesi, Indonesia. This is enabling the ongoing protection of four maleo nesting sites in the Bogani landscape; three of them (Tambun, Muara Pusian, and Hungayono) within the protected area of Bogani Nani Wartabone National Park and one beach nesting ground at Tanjung Binerean, Mataindo Village. WPA funding is supporting daily monitoring of maleo breeding behaviour by local guardians and park rangers, and the regular clearing of invasive vegetation. Since protection efforts supported by WPA started almost 2,500 chicks have been released into the wild.

Edwards's pheasant *Lophura edwardsi*

Our Vice President John Corder continued to liaise with the Vietnamese Edwards's Pheasant Committee, co-ordinated by VietNature in Vietnam. Funds have been set aside to provide WPA expertise and support to a captive breeding and reintroduction programme. The birds would be bred and reared in captivity in Vietnam for several generations until they were suitable for reintroduction.

Tragopan survey at the boundary between Myanmar and Yunnan, China

Dr Wang Nan conducted a survey of Blyth's Tragopan *Tragopan blythii* along the boundary area between Myanmar and China with support of a £6,000 grant from WPA and support from James Goodhart.

Black-necked pheasant *Phasianus colchicus colchicus* in Nestos, Greece

This was the second of a five-year partnership project to conserve the last remaining population of purebred wild pheasants in Europe. WPA worked with the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, UK to support KOMAT, based in Greece, to raise the profile of its conservation work and support field-based work.

Globally Threatened Pheasants in Machiara National Park, Azad Kashmir, Pakistan: Monitoring and Conservation Initiative.

Machiara National Park is one of the most important sites for threatened pheasants like cheer pheasant *Catreus wallichii*, western tragopan *Tragopan melanocephalus* and other Himalayan pheasants. This study confirmed the presence of cheer pheasant from the park area and a seemingly still healthy population of western tragopan is surviving despite high human impact. WPA supported this project with a £2,400 grant.

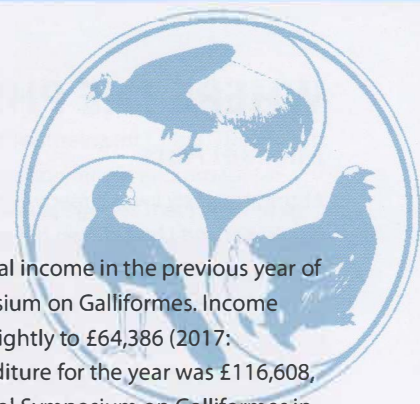
Survey and conservation awareness of cheer pheasant *Catreus wallichii* in Bajura District of Nepal

Supported by a £3,000 grant from WPA the research found a population of cheer pheasant in the Bajura district although anthropogenic threats pose a threat to the survival of this species. Recommendations included a conservation campaign, livelihood uplift programme and long term monitoring.

Projek Tambun: a community project for the conservation of the megapode on Mantanani Island, Sabah, Malaysia.

A small grant of £1,100 helped the project to develop community-based conservation practices to safeguard the island population of the threatened Philippine scrubfowl or Burung Tambun *Megapodius cumingi*.

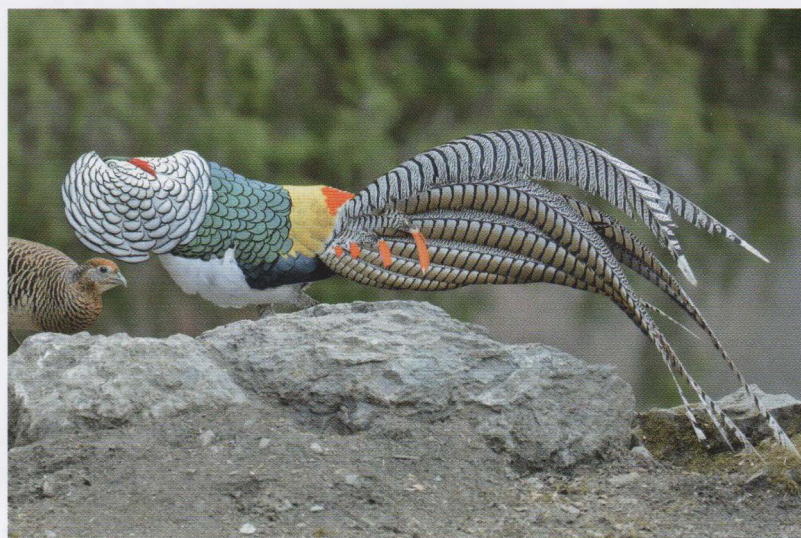
At the end of the year the charity's total reserves were £180,703 (2017: £176,051) and general (unrestricted) reserves were £130,993 (2017: £118,329). The level of general reserves exceeds the minimum reserve requirement set by Trustees, of £80,000 or two years' running costs of the charity. With the strength of reserves and continuing good fundraising performance, Trustees are considering a variety of new conservation projects, in particular an on-going commitment to support work on the critically endangered Edwards's pheasant in Vietnam. This is testament to the current financial health of the Charity.



WHERE THE PHEASANTS CRY ON A MOUNTAIN HIGH!

Michaël Abts

At the age of six I was already enthusiastic about pheasants and I had eleven different species in captivity. Now, 22 years later, my passion has brought me further and further and I have made many private trips to observe and photograph many pearls of the Phasianidae family in their natural habitats. From the colorful Malay crested fireback in Peninsular Malaysia to my holy grail on earth, the Lady Amherst's pheasant in China. After all that traveling and building friendships and partnerships with local protectors and organizations, I am now labeled as 'the Pheasant King' in China. In the past, I invested a lot of energy and time in seeing these enigmatic birds in the wild. Without any exception, I was always lucky to succeed in my targets. How difficult it is often for many birdwatchers to admire pheasants in the wild, I had the advantage that Mother Nature was very favourable to me. I hope she will continue to help me with my adventures in the future. With this first article in the WPA, I would like to take you in tow through my experiences of the last China trip.



Display with female - Lady Amherst's pheasant - Kangding (Tibet) - Sichuan
Photo: Michaël Abts

During March-April 2018 I enjoyed the most beautiful ecological harmony in the world. I organized a photo tour for six people through the central part of China. I was the tourleader and my best Chinese contact Sissi was the tourguide. The best team ever. Passion overload! After that trip I went on a private tour for several pheasants in the southeast of the country. There are thousands of birdwatchers and photographers dreaming about the things that I saw in China. We had a unique and breathtaking experience with the Lady Amherst's pheasant, golden pheasant, white eared pheasant, blood pheasant, Chinese monal, common pheasant, Tibetan partridge, buff-throated partridge, Chinese bamboo partridge and the Tibetan snowcock. My private trip was also successful! I saw and photographed silver pheasant, Cabot's tragopan, Elliot's pheasant, Reeve's pheasant and also a cute family of white-necklaced partridges. This time I visited four different provinces for my favorite feathers.



Two male buff-throated partridge
Photo: Michaël Abts

Even though China is the fourth largest country on our planet, it is very special how each pheasant species is bound to a specific altitude. If I take the target species of the group tour in central China as an example, you notice great contrasts between the occurrence of all sorts of species. I visited the provinces of Sichuan and Shaanxi for the following species. The highest point I visited was located at a height of 4225m. The buff-throated partridge feels at home on the open areas high in the Tibetan mountains. Tree growth is no longer intense at this height and coniferous trees are distributed and are significantly smaller in size. Stubby grasses, dwarf shrubs and mosses take the upper hand here. Among the more forested gorges, it is mainly searching for the glorious Chinese monals. You will also find blood pheasants here, but they can be seen from about 3500m. At this somewhat lower level, white

eared pheasants and Tibetan partridges can be found in fascinating wide river valleys where the conifers are more mixed with deciduous trees. Then at lower altitudes you will find my favourites in the list, the ruffed pheasants, including the Lady Amherst's pheasant at an altitude of 2650m and the golden pheasant around 715m. For the Lady Amherst's pheasant you still stay on the steep mountain slopes in the Tibetan prefecture. Spruces are present, but it is mainly birch, willow and many shrubs that give atmosphere to the landscape. The golden pheasant, together with the common pheasant and the Chinese bamboo partridges, are typical creatures of the warm lowland. Near the many colorful fields it is crazy to see 'the feathered Chinese gold' foraging.

After two domestic flights, two long train rides, many hours in the car and wonderful climbing through Sichuan and Shaanxi, the participants went back home and I went towards the hot southeast. Several areas in the provinces of Fujian and Henan were on the program. Below I introduce the observed pheasants to you.



Foraging - Elliot's pheasant - Fujian
Photo: Michaël Abts

A boldly marked boy!

Elliot's pheasants are endemic to Southeastern China. They live in broadleaf forests and also in mixed coniferous and broadleaf forests. This was one of the least stable species that I wanted to photograph during my private trip. After two days without any sign of his presence, I had one last chance before I made another domestic flight. During that third morning I saw several white-rumped munia's and a female Cabot's tragopan. At 06:00 I was already in full concentration and would leave around 09:10. It was the moment of truth! Time was getting on... The moment came that I didn't believe anymore in this target species. My Chinese guide was in contact with the driver and kept him informed about the situation. The driver proposed to stay another fifteen minutes, but would have to drive over the ground like a torpedo to get our flight. Why not? Let's try. Pheasants are important in my life. It is hard to believe, but exactly at 09:25 when I just

started packing my tripod, a pair of Elliot's pheasants appeared! Ten minutes of true viewing pleasure! Tears of joy began to run down my face. I was really amazed by this fantastic encounter. I was lucky again! I saw this pair in Fujian province at the altitude of 985m in the middle of a bamboo forest.

A plump ground-dwelling friend with a lovely Orchid bouquet.

The Cabot's tragopan is also an endemic pheasant species of China. They live in subtropical, evergreen broadleaved forest, in mixed deciduous-coniferous forest and open areas above the tree-line. Like the other tragopans, the Cabot's tragopan is highly arboreal in the breeding season. Current evidence suggests a major decline since 1980. There are only 42 places in China where this tragopan still occurs. Unfortunately, the only hard figures that are known about this species are from the wildlife survey of China. There were about 9300 individuals in the wild during the period 1995-2000. The next count in 2012 indicated that at most 5000 birds remain! The Cabot's tragopan faces many threats such as habitat destruction (development of urban areas, roads and railways) associated with agricultural activities. Also illegal hunting for food still



Foraging - Cabot's tragopan - Fujian
Photo: Michaël Abts

occurs in some places. Since 1983, about half of the nests have been destroyed by natural predators that have increased considerably in numbers. Typical examples of predators are the Eurasian jay and leopard cats. Furthermore, the progressive replacement of natural evergreen broadleaved forests with conifer plantations and bamboo is now a major problem for this species. This is because the Cabot's tragopan nests on natural platforms such as forks between branches, which are lacking in most conifer species. We cannot see into the future but I don't dare to immediately think about the numbers in 2030. It is a true world species and I am happy that I have been able to study it in the wild and photograph a couple, even the display of a dominant male.

My Highness... A majestic bird of 210 cm long!

Reeve's pheasants are associated with wooded and hilly areas in the central and eastern part of China. I saw this amazing creature in a colorful landscape with Chinese firs (*Cunninghamia lanceolata*) and many flowering tung-oil trees (*Vernicia fordii*). The enormously long, barred tail and the pattered black-and-white head are very typical for the males. On this photo you can see the display of an excited male. He will approach the female slowly while erecting the contour feathers and walking in a rather stiff-legged manner.



Left: Foraging - Reeve's pheasant - Henan
Photo: Michaël Abts

A natural black and white portrait.

There are many subspecies of the silver pheasant in the wild, as well as crosses with Kalij pheasants. I went looking for this feathered friend in one of the most northeastern edges of the range where no hybrids occur because of the absence of the Kalij. Three adult males and a female appeared on the scene. It was a rocky valley amidst mixed forests and narrow creeks. In short, it was a real fairy tale when I saw the first colorful feathers. It was a coming and going of four individuals where there was extensive foraging, displaying and fighting. The most incredible moment was seeing a silver pheasant male with a family of white-necked partridges. Seeing and photographing both species at a distance of two meters is truly unique! The four recently hatched chicks stole the show and the parents kept a close eye on their offspring. A very endearing experience!



*Silver pheasant with a family of white-necked partridges - Fujian
Photo: Michaël Abts*



*Above: Pair - Chinese bamboo partridges - Shaanxi
Below: Male - blood pheasant - Pamuling - Sichuan
Photo: Michaël Abts*

After another few weeks through an incredibly beautiful country I came face to face with fifteen different pheasants. What David Attenborough has ever done with the imaging of many birds of paradise, I would like to obtain this for the equally enigmatic world of pheasants. Their appearance and behavior are, in my opinion, of the same level. After many adventures I have been able to study a considerable number of members of this family. Hopefully this impression of some highlights through my past trip has made you happy. I would like to thank the WPA for their cooperation. They do wonderful work in the protection of these special birds on earth.

I am a Belgian ambassador for my Chinese contacts and you can request guided photography trips through me. If you are interested or have some questions you can contact me by means of the following e-mail address abtsmichael@hotmail.com.



CHARITY CLAY SHOOT

Keith Howman

Dunkeld Charity Clay Shoot

The 19 May was a day of perfect weather for WPA's fundraising clay shoot at Dunkeld but it was also unfortunately Prince Harry's wedding day. Only unfortunately because it affected the turn out, particularly of our normally strong members of ladies. Nevertheless, it was a most enjoyable day with guns commenting on the excellence of the layout.

We had new caterers who also provided the marquee, and both were excellent and contributed to the enjoyment of the day. Our incorrigible auctioneer David Leggat kept the audience in fits of laughter whilst extracting a record sum from them. Over £5000 was raised for WPA. All in all, a very successful day.



*The spacious marquee
Photo: Jean Howman*



*Chris Smith (right), one of the pool shoot winners, and Clarke Taylor (left)
Photo: Jean Howman*



Nicola Simpson gave a short talk on the work of Countryside Learning Scotland

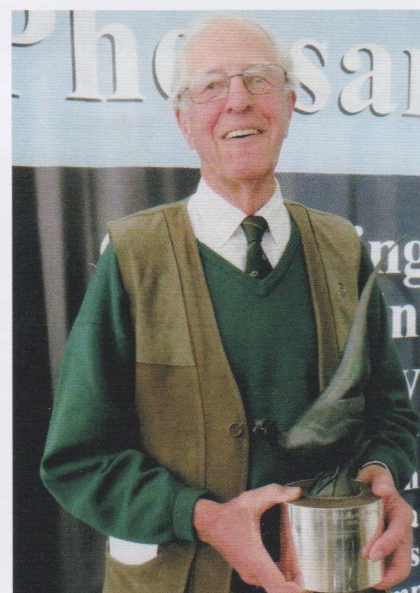
Photo: Jean Howman



*Amanda Nissen was top lady gun.
Photo: Jean Howman*



*Chris Smith was joint top gun with John Archibald.
Photo: Jean Howman*



*John Archibald (aged 84) was joint top gun with Chris Smith. John is holding the Black-necked Pheasant Trophy
Photo: Jean Howman*



Top team "The Presidents Club"
John Archibald, Grant Buchanan, Neale Campbell and Des Seenan
Photo: Jean Howman



The "Tidy Butts" team, winners of the flush
Diedre Stewart, Abders Nissen, Amanda Nissen and Fiona Laird
Photo: Jean Howman

Compton Manor Charity Clay Shoot

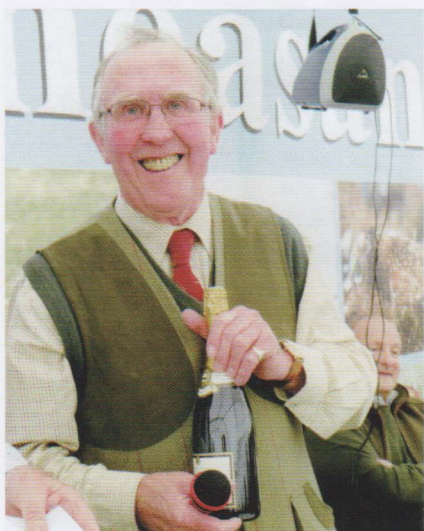
This WPA fundraising event just gets better and better. Helped by great weather and a great turn out, everyone seemed to enjoy themselves whilst raising considerable funds for WPA in general and the Black-necked Pheasant Project in particular. Over £17,500 was raised for WPA on the day, including the proceeds from the recent online auction for WPA. A generous cheque for £1858 from Brights Seeds, from their sale of Pheasant and Finch cover crop mixture, boosted the day's funds.

Mike Vesey, our brilliant auctioneer, kept the party entertained whilst gently relieving the unwary of their money. Very appropriately he won the sweepstake prize of four bottles of champagne for estimating the number of clays that would be shot on the day. These he shared with his team so at least he left with three friends.

It was a great pleasure to welcome three Editors to the day, Jonathan Young (Editor of The Field), Patrick Galbraith (Editor of The Shooting Times) and Matt Clark (Editor of The Sporting Gun). They were able to hear an excellent short talk on the Black-necked Pheasant Project by Dr Roger Draycott who had just returned from Nestos in Greece. It was a great day.



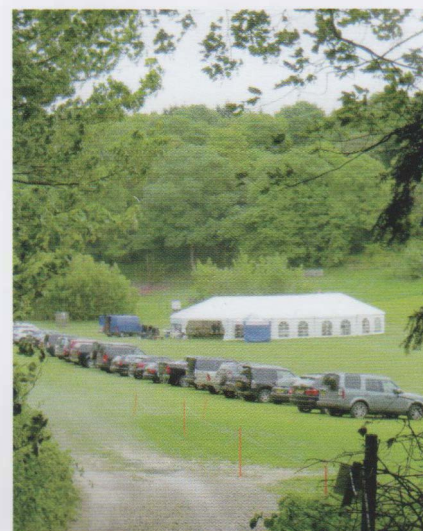
Above: Longwood Shoot team, winners, with Jeannie, whose husband runs the shoot
Left: A full house.
Photos: Jean Howman



Mike Vesey, our brilliant auctioneer and winner of the sweepstake prize
Photo: Jean Howman



Brian Bertram gives an excellent summary of recent WPA activities and projects
Photo: Jean Howman



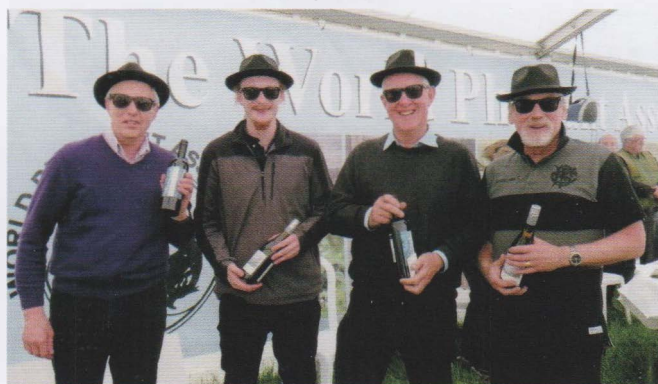
The lovely setting for the Compton Manor Charity Shoot
Photo: Jean Howman



Jeannie Packham (right) was the second lady
Photo: Jean Howman



Ben Dalfeer of Brights Seeds presenting a cheque for £1858 to Keith Howman
Photo: Jean Howman



Best named (and dressed!) team, the Blues Brothers
Photo: Jean Howman



The Ashmere Amazons
Photo: Keith Howman

EUROPEAN CONSERVATION BREEDING GROUP EVENT IN CZECH REPUBLIC

Friday 12 - Sunday 14 October 2018

Provisional Programme

Friday 12 October

ECBG meeting 09:00 - 12:00 (13:00) at Brno Zoo

Guided tour of Brno Zoo after lunch.

Saturday 13 October

International Exotic Birds Exhibition in Olomouc - 250 species of birds from around the world in one place. It is an exhibition not only dedicated to the presentation of exotic birds, but at the same time it expands and enhances the general public's awareness of the state of ecology on Earth. WPA CZ-SK will have an exhibition of Galliformes. Some lectures are also planned for Saturday. Olomouc is 88 km from Brno.

Sunday 14 October

The programme is still in the planning stage, but possibilities include visiting the zoo and botanic garden in Olomouc, Zoo Zlín, and visit private breeders.

A visit to Kromeriz is planned. Kromeriz was declared the most beautiful historical city in the Czech Republic in 1997, and a year later the Archbishop's Castle, together with the Flower and Undercastle Garden, was listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

WPA CZ-SK invites you for this interesting program, excellent Czech cuisine and beer.

Foreign participants can arrive on Thursday evening or Friday morning and the whole event ends on Sunday afternoon. Our host from the WPA Czech Republic, George Mrnka will book accommodation for participants. Please let Barbara know (office@pheasant.org.uk, 01434 345526) if you would like to come as soon as possible. If you need further details, please don't hesitate to contact the office.

You can fly direct to Brno from London Stanstead or travel via Prague, 225km, or Vienna 160km. Transport for a limited number of guests is possible from Prague and from Brno airports.

PRESENCE/ABSENCE SURVEY AND CONSERVATION AWARENESS OF CHEER PHEASANT IN BAJURA DISTRICT OF NEPAL

Hari Basnet, Ganga Shah and Govinda Rana

Introduction

Cheer pheasant *Catreus wallichii* is a relict, monotypic species of the genus *Catreus* (Del Hoyo et al. 1994) and order Galliformes. It is an endemic species of the Himalayas (Grimmett et al. 1998) restricted within a narrow belt from northeast Pakistan, through northern India to the Kaligandaki Valley in Western Nepal (Delacour 1977, Ali & Ripley 1998). The cheer pheasant's small population is naturally fragmented as it lives in successional habitats that are patchy in distribution. The global population of cheer is estimated to be 2,000-2,700 mature individuals (BirdLife International 2017) whilst the Nepal population is estimated to be less than 1,000 birds (Inskipp et al. 2016). This species is categorized as Vulnerable (IUCN 2016), included under Appendix I of CITES and is one of nine protected birds of Nepal listed in the National Parks and Wildlife Conservation Act 2029 (NPWC 1973). It has been recently assessed as Endangered (based on the criteria A2acd and C2a (I)) (Inskipp et al. 2016) in Nepal. Cheer favours open forest

with some grass cover and rocky crags, very precipitous terrain with scrub, tall grasses and stunted trees, and craggy hillsides supporting scrub and stunted trees (Singh et al. 2011). It breeds during the spring season (late April-early June) (Ali & Ripley 1983) when it gives sporadic and irregular calls throughout the day, but especially at dawn.

Although a number of studies have been conducted on cheer in Nepal most of them have only concentrated in a few areas around Kali Gandaki valley, Dhorpatan Hunting area and Rara National Park. Based on the project completed in 2016 (funded by Oriental Bird Club), cheer pheasant was present in the district in April 2016, and short informative news of the cheer (one-minute news in Nepali language) was broadcast for a month in two local F.M. stations in Bajura district (Project supported by Oriental Bird Club). Based on local responses, the preliminary survey was carried out in nine different locations where six locations confirmed the species presence. Dawn call counts were carried out in five confirmed locations to estimate the population status, which is estimated to be 7.77 birds/km². The result shows that survey area was one of the important habitats of cheer in Nepal. Anthropogenic threats are luring of captive cheer, wildfire, gunshot, trapping, collection of eggs and chicks, and natural predator, such as large-billed crow, golden jackal and yellow-throated martin, posing great threat to the survival of species existence in the study area. The area lies outside the protected area and cheer still survive there under high anthropogenic pressure. If the seed of conservation awareness is given to local people and concerned bodies, the area will be one of the best sites of cheer habitat in Nepal and globally.



Cheer habitat at Badimalika Municipality



Conservation Awareness Programme

Project Objectives

To conduct conservation awareness through:

- Radio programmes
- Raising conservation awareness among local people, school students and concern stakeholders in Badimalika Municipality and cheer present Village Development Committees (VDCs).

To collect baseline information on the cheer status, distribution and threats from within the five VDCs of Bajura district.

Study Area

The study will be carried out in Bajura district, which is one of the remote districts in Seti zone of far-western Nepal. The presence/absence survey will be carried out in highest potential habitat of Cheer (reported by local people in last survey) in Dahakot, Pandusain, Rugin, Kolti and Bichchya VDCs, whereas

conservation awareness will be targeted in Martadi, Juwada and Budhiganga VDC (recently declared as Badimalika Municipality), which lies outside the protected area of Nepal.

Results

The radio programme "Hamra panchhi, Hamra sampada" "our bird, our heritage" was broadcast from Bajura FM in Nepali language. The thirty-minute programme was designed with a five-minute introduction, five-minute content reading, followed by a five-minute interview with local people and local leaders and a thirteen-minute expert interview or bird related documentary. To finish, a different call and interesting facts about the bird were presented and a question was asked to the audience with two prizes available.

A community meeting was held in Martadi Municipality on 8 June 2017 during which 28 people participated in the meeting. Similarly, 61 people participated in the community meeting at Juwada VDC on 9 June 2017. Local leaders, CFUG's, school executive committee as local women, attended the programme. Conservation education materials (poster and t-shirt) were distributed in the meeting. The meeting focused on the threats identified in the previous survey and their role in its



Stakeholder meeting at district headquarter



Class awareness programme

Juwada VDC and Shree Nepal Rastriya Secondary School, Jandanga, Budiganga VDC. Class awareness about the cheer and the role of students in wildlife conservation was talked about. At the end of each class every student was provided with a poster and requested to spread the message of cheer conservation in their family community. The class awareness programme was followed by school outreach activities (art and essay competition).

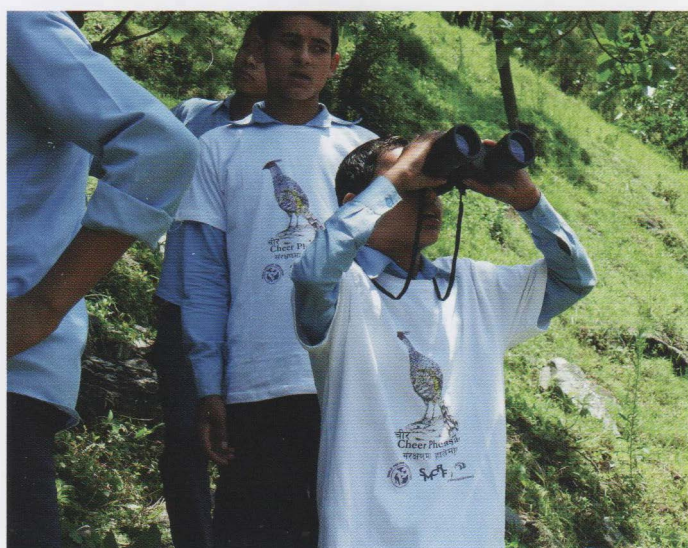
Conservation promotional material in the form of t-shirts, digital banners, cheer poster and a hoarding board were prepared to promote cheer conservation.

Habitat suitability prediction was carried out using 47 geo-referenced points. Based on habitat suitability and consultation with local knowledgeable people, presence/absence of cheer was carried out in five VDCs. Two calls were heard from the Rumdi village ward no. 9 of Bichhaya VDC and a single call was heard from the Quri village ward no. 9 of Rugin VDC. Although most of the locals confirm the presence of cheer in the Dahakot area, we didn't record any calls from the location. Based on the news collected during the radio programme, cheer is still found in Rajali, Pinalekh, Paurakhi areas of Badimalika municipality. Dogadi

conservation from local level. Furthermore, the researcher highlighted a few examples of how pheasant based eco-tourism can help their livelihood if they can conserve the species.

The stakeholder meeting mainly focused on conservation of cheer through local initiation and developing the area as a cheer conservation site to attract the national and international bird lover. Furthermore, discussion was carried out on how to minimize the threats of pheasant species as martadi hotspots bushmeat in the Bajura.

"Our Responsibility in Cheer Conservation" class awareness programme was conducted at Malika Higher Secondary School located in the Martadi Bajura, Jalpadevi Secondary School,

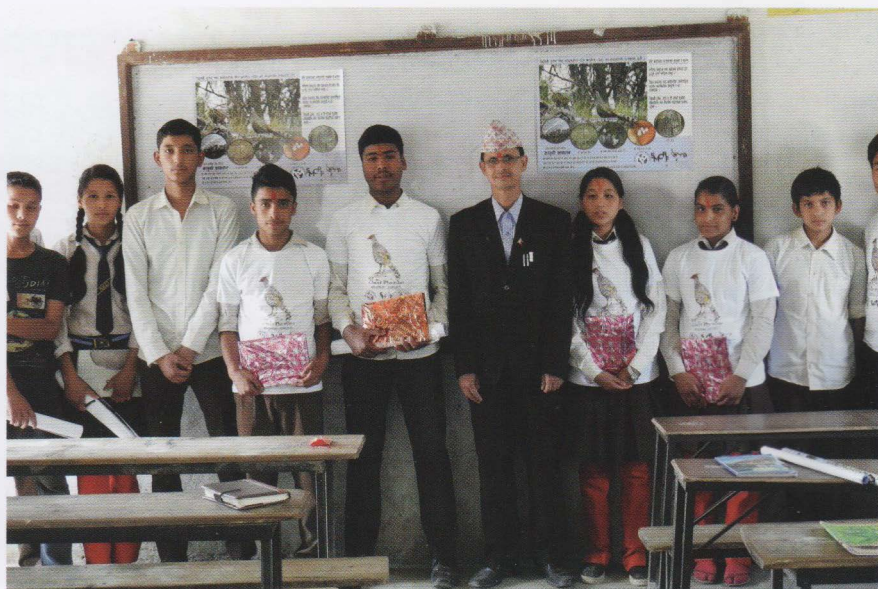


School outreach programme

Ilek of Dogadi VDCs and Gaumul of Chhatara VDC are considered good habitat for the cheer pheasant within the Bajura District.

Conclusion

Interviews with local people and our science-based research confirm the presence of cheer pheasant in most of the Bajura district, but due to anthropogenic stresses the species is extirpated from some of the areas. The species, once widespread around the Bajura forest, is now restricted to higher elevations and big patches of forest. Capacity building on pheasant monitoring technique, the conservation campaign, and the livelihood uplift programme, as well long-term monitoring and ecological study of cheer in Bajura is recommended.



Essay competition winner at Malika secondary school

PHEASANT PARASITES

Ian Clark

Analysis of over 300 post-mortems on pheasant chicks in 2017 showed that 34%, over a third, died from *Coccidiosis* infections. A further 20%, a fifth, died from *Hexamita*. In other words, half of all pheasant chick deaths were caused by these two easily treatable conditions.

The speed with which these parasites can spread and multiply is frightening, a single coccidiosis organism can produce up to half a million eggs during its life cycle as it passes through the gut of a bird. The natural immune system of the birds can handle a certain level of them, but there are limits beyond which illness and death will result.

In natural conditions, if a bird picks up a single parasite egg, it will be relatively unaffected and eventually the parasite will die off, but it will have produced half million eggs (oocytes) before it died, and these oocytes will all have been excreted in the birds' droppings. In the wild, a bird is free to roam, and unlikely to pick up any of these oocytes as droppings will be widely scattered.

In an aviary however, those half million eggs are all still lying there and obviously the chances of a bird picking up one or many are hugely increased. In suitable conditions the oocytes can lie dormant for weeks or months and they can quickly build up in your birds to a serious level.

Anything that weakens the birds' immune systems can allow parasites to take over, and stress of any kind does this. Overcrowding, the stress of being caught to close-ring, extreme weather, even lack of drinking water for a period, all weaken the immune system. Young chicks are particularly vulnerable as their immune systems are not fully developed and their 'good' gut bacteria will not yet be well established.

It can be helpful to boost those good bacteria by giving chicks probiotics (such as Biacton) in their drinking water from day one.

Put simply, this quickly boosts the numbers of 'good' bacteria and helps crowd out those which would be harmful. Chicks also benefit from the addition of electrolytes (such as Actiz or Solulite) for the first week, again this helps boost their immune system and allows them to cope better with parasites and infections.

Neither *Coccidiosis* nor *Hexamita* need be fatal, both can be treated with Flubenvet or a similar treatment if caught in time. Neither are present in the chick when it hatches, they can only be picked up from contaminated food or water in the environment.

It can be difficult to spot the early signs, especially in young chicks, but if you see one or more which seem to be falling behind the rest, either in growth or behaviour, visit your vet and get him to prescribe the correct treatment for you. Not all vets specialise in avian problems, so it could be useful to visit yours and have a chat about the problems you are likely to have, to give him or her time to do some homework! In particular, watch out for blood in the droppings, or yellow foam droppings, both indicators of a serious problem with these intestinal parasites. Speed of treatment is vital, by the time you see those problems with the droppings it will probably be too late to save the chick that made them, but it may be possible to treat the rest of the batch in time.

Finally, remember that these parasites are widespread in the environment, up to one third of corvids carry them naturally, as do many other wild birds. It would be impossible in practice to prevent a bird from becoming infected at some stage in its life, as mice or sparrows (or even your feet!) could easily carry the oocytes into almost anywhere, so it makes sense to worm your birds regularly so that the build up of parasites is always kept to a safe level, especially just before breeding and before the start of the moult, both times of natural stress.

STUDENT VISIT

Ian Clark

At the CBAG Annual General Meeting in the Cotswolds this year, we were delighted to see some younger faces, two from Harewood House collection and one from Newcastle City Zoo. Their enthusiasm and commitment was obvious, so WPA decided to provide a bit of encouragement. We arranged for them all to travel up to Scotland in April for a weekend tour of some of the Scottish Collections.

The timing was designed to allow them to see the collections at one of the busiest times of year, with birds breeding, eggs being incubated, and chicks hatching. Alas, the weather conspired against us, and due to the long and miserable winter everything was three weeks behind schedule so very few chicks had hatched.

The first port of call was the Allandoo Pheasantry, situated at almost the furthest southwest point in Scotland and set among the rolling Galloway hills.

Zoe Hunter, one of the owners of the pheasantry, kindly gave up several hours of her time to show the team around the extensive aviaries, sharing her personal experience of breeding the many species of pheasants in the collection, and finishing off with a hands-on demonstration of incubation and egg-candling which was first-class.



Hannah Ahern, Charles Illing and Hazel Bell with Zoe Hunter from the Allandoo Pheasantry (left to right)
Photo: Ian Clark

In the afternoon, they spent several hours at my own much smaller collection, although since it is smaller we were able to go into more detail on some of the points which interested the group, particularly the importance of purity in our captive stocks and the work going on to achieve this. I'm sure it was a great culture shock for them after Allandoo, as I prefer to use parent rearing or bantams rather than incubators and everything is on a much smaller scale.



The young team at Fenton Barns with Keith Chalmers-Watson (left) and Stewart Henderson (right)
Photo: Ian Clark

On the second day, we visited Keith Chalmers-Watson's extensive collection at Fenton Barns where Keith and his new birdkeeper Stewart Henderson again gave up several hours of their time showing us around behind the scenes and giving an insight into the difficulties experienced with the less common species.

We were all particularly impressed by the new system being trialled for breeding capercaillie and blackgame for release, where the breeding birds are separated from human contact by one-way glass so they rarely see humans and don't become imprinted.

All three found the experience extremely rewarding, in many different ways, as they each have different challenges in their own collections.

Despite the challenges of getting the logistics to work, it was a great pleasure to be able to help arrange the visit, and I suspect that this will be the first of many such events WPA arranges in the future to encourage our younger members and beginners.

SYRMATICUS FOCUS GROUP

At the 2018 CBAG meeting at the Cotswolds, it was agreed to set up a Focus Group to concentrate on the Syrmaticus species, which are not currently covered by any focus group despite being very common in our collections.

There was a small informal group doing some work on copper pheasants and the members of that group have decided that it would be more practical for coppers to be dealt with by the main group in future.

Ian Clark will Chair the new Syrmaticus Group and he can be contacted on netherholm@hotmail.com by anyone who has an interest in the work of the group.

PHEASANTS AND VICTORIA'S NAVY

P. J. McDermott

Research into the history of Queen Victoria's Royal Navy encounters with some unusual cargo

An observer gazing out casually to sea from Gosport in the spring of 1870 would probably have been rather struck by the venerable appearance of the vessel then seen on a heading to approach its anchorage in Portsmouth. She was the old line-of-battle ship HMS Rodney, a two-decker, 70-gun launched in 1833, modernised with engines and updated gunnery but still essentially of a style Nelson would have recognised, now returning after three years on the China Station where she had been flagship of Vice Admiral Henry Keppel.

Among the several hundred men of her crew were two particularly vivid characters: the Canadian, William Hall, the first black man to win a Victoria Cross, and his shipmate the young seaman Thomas Herbert (whose Royal Navy career this writer has been researching).

Herbert's spell in Rodney had been eventful, cruising the dangerous waters of the Far East, calling at Vladivostok, and patrolling much of the hostile coastlines of China and Japan before returning across the Indian Ocean and the turbulent Atlantic. Many of his adventures he summarised in a modest account written years afterwards when in retirement.

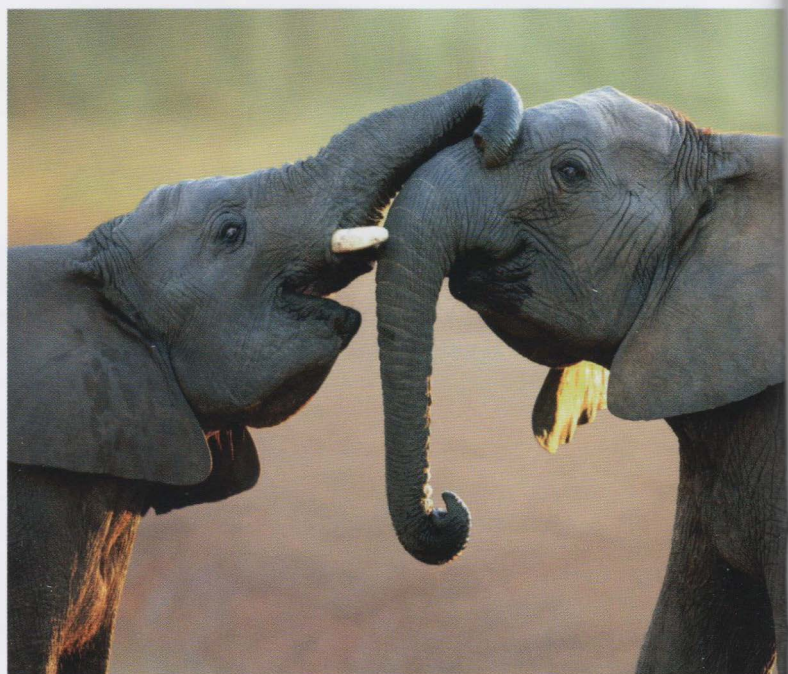
Yet what seems to have stuck in his mind about this particular stage of the voyage home, apart from the rats galloping rampant aboard and the distinct shortage of eatable food, was the extraordinary range of informal cargo Herbert describes. Amongst the many oddities aboard Rodney "which resembled a farmyard" were two bears, two deer, two wild cats, several pigs, numerous dogs he identifies as "Japanese poodles", green turtles destined for the galley, a 10-ton Chinese idol and an immense ironwood dining table bound for the residence of the then Prince of Wales. Calling at Java, the crew further bought themselves a total of five hundred monkeys, though this number steadily reduced as the bears ate one each for breakfast daily while others jumped over the side. One met its end at Herbert's own hands, or rather hand: "One of the big spider monkeys almost cost me my life," Herbert recalled. "It was a very dark, rainy night and we were bracing the yards round when something got in the block and I was sent up to see what was the matter. I climbed out on the yard in the dark and put my hand out to feel the block, but one of the monkeys had his leg jammed in it and as I touched it he caught my hand with his teeth causing me to let go my hold with fright. One of us had to go and it was Mr. Jacko who went overboard."

But of the most interest to this readership will be the glorious "gold and silver pheasants" Herbert mentions. The golden pheasants (*Chrysolophus pictus*) and their silver cousins (*Lophura nycthemara*) Herbert saw had been fashionable status symbols on the country estates of the rich since the early decades of the 18th Century, the golden in particular prized for its spectacular plumage and its exotic origins in the distant mountains of western China, these lovely creatures forming another facet of the mania for Chinoiserie in all its aspects which characterised England in those flamboyant years. Populations of this vivid if reclusive bird

are to be found now, it seems, across the globe, from the conifer woodlands of Norfolk's Brecklands to the Falkland Islands.

The silver, too, is an exquisite bird and like the golden it has its origins in far-off Asia, in China's southern mountains. The energetic Ulsterman, Sir Hans Sloane (d.1753), the sometime Royal physician, President of the Royal Society, a keen naturalist and collector whose "cabinet of curiosities" became the foundation of the British Museum and London's Natural History Museum, was the first to breed the silver pheasant successfully in captivity, in the early 18th Century according to Jean Delacour's "Pheasants of the World", but thought the Golden Pheasant was first bred in England at much about the same time, the fancier concerned is unknown, alas. At the period Herbert encountered them aboard, attempts were being started to introduce such birds to the Western Highlands of Scotland, a project which came to nothing in the long run.

One imagines now that there will be those among a modern readership who will deplore the careless attitudes to wild creatures displayed by Herbert and his contemporaries. Perhaps we would do well to keep in mind that many a young egg-collector of the past has matured into a serious ornithologist and that supreme gift of education, the enquiring mind, can flower into scientific investigation.



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POLAND ECBG REPORT

Ian Clark

The 26th meeting of the WPA European Conservation and Breeding Advisory Group (ECBG) was held at Miechów, in Poland, on 25-26th April 2018.

Organised by Karol Sepielak, the Polish WPA Chairman, and his excellent team the event was centred on the Mercure Hotel, a large modern complex situated in the middle of beautiful Polish countryside, where we were able to see first hand the marked differences between the type of agriculture we have in UK and the Polish equivalent, which still shows a modern version of our long-gone 'strip and rigg' agriculture, perhaps a remnant from the days of USSR influence. The hotel was excellent in every way and provided an ideal base for both the ECBG meeting and the other events arranged for the weekend.

I flew over on the Thursday evening with some of the UK WPA team and, as usual, we got completely lost in the maze of country roads despite (or perhaps because of?) having two different satnavs and an extremely large paper map of Poland in the vehicle. As the light faded we found ourselves on smaller and smaller country roads, even ending up in a field at one point (although to be fair, it was a very nice field!). However, we did eventually find the hotel in time to have a decent sleep to prepare ourselves for the rigours ahead.



*Members attending.
Photo: Paul North*



Members looking through boxes and draws in one of the rooms that was only partially finished.

Photo: Paul North

The ECBG meeting was extremely well attended, with members from almost all of the WPA Chapters present, and we worked steadily through a very full agenda. It was particularly good to see Dezso Naszali and a group of his Hungarian WPA members, with Dezso acting as translator for his friends. In fact, during the meeting, which was largely conducted in English, translations were also provided into Polish by Ryszard Topola and Marcin Chrapowicki, senior members of staff at Krakow Zoo, and it was felt that this was so useful it could usefully be done at all future WPA international meetings. (My apologies to both if I have got the names wrong – there are altogether too many w, y and z letters in Polish for my poor unaccustomed Scottish ears!)

The topics discussed at the meeting were wide-ranging and reflected the vast amount of work which is going on around the world by WPA and our partners on Phaenid conservation. After the formal business of the ECBG meeting was finished we enjoyed a series of presentations and talks, illustrated by photographs and videos, from a number of our own WPA experts.

That evening we were treated to a wonderful barbecue in a beautiful rustic building in the grounds of the Hotel and plied with an abundance of excellent Polish food, and, it has to be said, drink. There appears to be something odd about the glasses in Poland – however much one tries to drain them, they seem to refill as if by magic..... Sincere thanks to the members of WPA Poland for their extremely generous hospitality.

On the Saturday, we were picked up by coach and made our way to the Natural History Museum in Krakow. This fascinating museum is part of the University and is located in ultra-modern buildings on the campus. Despite the buildings being so modern it is undergoing redesign and refurbishment and it was a real eye-opener for us just how much work and time goes into preparing museum exhibits for the public and students. We were



*Members relaxing in the garden with the aviaries in the background
Photo: Paul North*



Mounted Elliot's pheasant
Photo: Ian Clark

fortunate to visit part way through the process, so we were able to view wonderful newly-completed modern displays, a few of the old ones not yet started and a number in progress. In just one room we saw a truly astonishing collection of butterflies and moths, countless thousands of them, in hundreds of specially made drawer cabinets in a room specially air conditioned to preserve the collection for study by students. It really is a wonderful facility and to be able to combine academic research with public interest in such a clever way was truly inspiring.

As an example of how such a facility can be valuable I took a photograph of an Elliot's pheasant which had been taken from the wild around 1890. It has been mounted and I could see that the taxidermist had taken some liberties, for example the tail feathers had been considerably shortened during the mounting process, but the black throat was far wider than we see in our captive birds today and that will give us a clue as to one of the things we should be looking for in our efforts to maintain a stock of pure species in captivity.

From there, we were driven to Kracow Zoo for a brief tour. Although there were not many phaesanids in the zoo collection every exhibit was in top condition, the whole zoo was spotlessly clean with no litter and even on such a hot day there was absolutely no hint of zoo smell anywhere. First class facilities in every way.

After a break for lunch in the city centre in a traditional cafe-style restaurant with traditional Polish food, which was enjoyed by all, we moved to Karol Sepielak's home for the afternoon. Originally there had been plans to visit a very large collection, but they had fallen through for technical reasons and Karol and his family kindly allowed us to spend the afternoon at their home. Once again our hosts had pulled out all the stops on hospitality with a beautiful buffet and yet more of these unusual glasses that seem to keep refilling. Apple juice, I was told. Well, mainly apple juice.....

We spent a lovely afternoon there looking over Karol's collection and beautifully maintained aviaries, talking about birds (of course) and even enjoying an impromptu musical session with Karol's family (and WPA stalwarts) demonstrating considerable musical prowess on guitar, with a strong Beatles influence showing through clearly. Truly our WPA members have hidden talents!

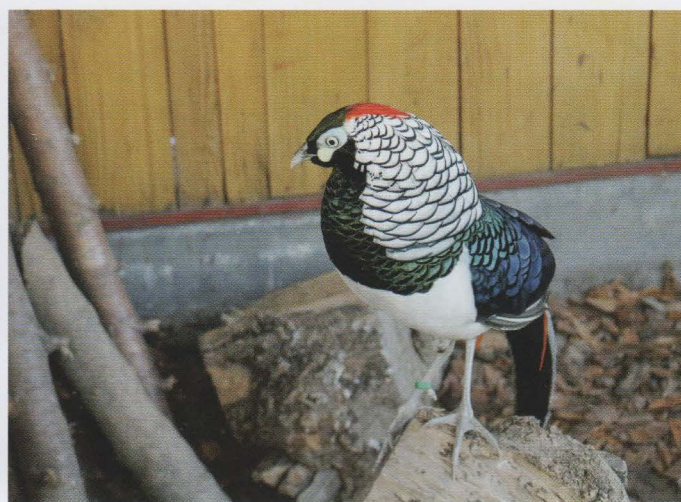
Sincere thanks to Karol, his WPA team and particularly to his whole family who made the whole weekend so enjoyable and relaxed.



Superb drinks and nibbles
Photo: Paul North



Members enjoying a Beatles oldie
Photo: Paul North



Birds in the aviaries
Photo: Paul North

SCOTTISH GAME FAIR 2018

Paul North

The Game & Wildlife Conservation Trust Scotland celebrated 30 years of caring for the countryside at the GWCT Scottish Game Fair held, as in previous years, on the parklands of Scone Palace over the weekend of the 29 June to the 1 July. Their theme this year was Partridges and the central area was all about partridges and their conservation and had something for all, from professional land managers to kids fascinated by nature.



*The stand
Photo: Paul North*

The WPA stand situated towards the main ring end of Gamekeepers Row was large and well appointed with four decorated pheasant pens to the rear leaving ample room for the Quail Hatching display, children's colouring table and sales and display tables. The aims of the Association were displayed on large posters as was a list of projects.



*Getting busy
Photo: Paul North*

The live birds displayed were a pair of Siamese fireback pheasants, mikado pheasants and satyr tragopans, with the fourth pen containing very pretty barbury partridges. All the birds displayed well to their many admiring visitors. The bird display also included an artistically mounted pair of Malay crestless firebacks.

As in previous years, the main attraction for children and parents alike was the hatching of Japanese quail in an AB incubator that, with its large clear top, gave a good view of the chicks emerging. The day olds were then displayed in a wire fronted brooder in which they could be seen eating and drinking and generally doing what day old chicks do.

The stand was well staffed over the three days and included several Council members and excellent young volunteers who were adept at handling the day-old quail so that many children had the opportunity to hold a young bird.



*Watching the quail hatch
Photo: Paul North*

With the help of our members and volunteers our conservation message was once again spread loud and clear and several new members signed up on what was possibly the hottest three-day event that we have ever attended. The effort put in by so many members was rewarded on Saturday when the stand won the 'Best Stand for 2018' and was presented with a painting of a pair of grey partridges by wildlife artist Justin Prigmore.



Above: WPA council members and volunteers

Photo: Richard Playfair

Below: Japanese quail hatching

Photo: Paul North



SCIENCE DIGEST

An introduction to some of the recently published papers on various aspects of galliforme biology gleaned from a range of international journals.

The ecology of Harwood's francolin *Pternistis harwoodi* (Aves: Galliformes: Phasianidae) at Merhabete District, central highlands of Ethiopia: implications for conservation.

Abrha, A.M. and Nigos, H.M. 2017. Journal of Threatened Taxa, 9(9), pp. 10633–10641

Longest sage grouse migratory behavior sustained by intact pathways.

Newton, R.E., Tack, J.D., Carlson, J.C., Matchett, M.R., Fargey, P.J. and Naugle, D.E., 2017. The Journal of Wildlife Management, 81(6), pp.962–972.

Spatial distribution of display sites of grey peacock-pheasant in relation to micro-habitat and predators during the breeding season.

Thunhikorn, S., Grainger, M.J., McGowan, P.J. and Savini, T., 2018. Avian Research, 9(1), p.17.

Karyotype analysis and sex determination in Australian brush-turkeys (*Alectura lathami*).

Ortega, M.T., Foote, D.J., Nees, N., Erdmann, J.C., Bangs, C.D. and Rosenfeld, C.S., 2017. PloS one, 12(9), p.e0185014.

Reproductive biology of the endangered wattled curassow (*Crax globulosa*; Galliformes: Cracidae) in the Juruá River Basin, Western Brazilian Amazonia.

Leite, G.A., Farias, I.P., Peres, C.A. and Brooks, D.M., 2017. Journal of Natural History, 51(11-12), pp.677–687.

Occupancy, relative abundance, and activity patterns of great curassow (*Crax rubra*) in southeastern Mexico.

Pérez-Irriego, G. and Santos Moreno, A., 2018. Ornithología Neotropical, 28, pp.313–320.

Morphological confirmation of the "Dag" defect in birds: Evidence from Swainson's francolin (*Pternistis swainsonii*).

Soley, J.T. and du Plessis, L., 2018. Animal Reproduction Science, 194, p.e8.

Evaluating the conservation status of the black-fronted francolin *Pternistis atrifrons*.

Gedeon, K., Rödder, D., Zewdie, C. And Töpfer, T., 2017. Bird Conservation International, pp.1–9.

Complete mitochondrial genome of *Chrysolophus pictus* (Galliformes: Phasianidae), a protected and endangered pheasant species of China.

Ren, Z., Liang, Y., Su, X. and Wen, J., 2018. Conservation Genetics Resources, pp.1–4.

The population status of capercaillie *Tetrao urogallus* in Scotland during winter 2015–16.

Wilkinson, N.I., Eaton, M.A., Marshall, G. and Haysom, S., 2018. Bird Study, 65(1), pp.20–35.

AVIAN FLU

Avian influenza (bird flu), a disease of birds, has been identified in wild birds in England in 2018. All poultry keepers should review their biosecurity, sign up for disease alerts, and register their birds with APHA. Keepers must report any unexplained deaths or sickness to their vet. Public Health England advises the risk to public health from H5N8 and H5N6 avian influenza is very low and the Food Standards Agency has said the disease poses no food safety risk for UK consumers. To-date there have been no detections in poultry or kept birds in the UK, therefore the UK's OIE country freedom for Avian Influenza remains unaffected.

Current situation: On Friday 25 May, the Avian Influenza Prevention Zone was lifted across England. All keepers of poultry or captive birds in England should continue to follow good practice on biosecurity. All disease control measures are kept under review based on the latest scientific and veterinary advice.

Information taken from www.gov.uk/government/news/avian-influenza-bird-flu-in-winter-2017-to-2018. For more information visit the government website.

CBAG MEETING 2019

Nigel Hester

PLEASE NOTE the CBAG meeting in February 2019 has changed.

We are now meeting on Saturday 9 February at Sudeley Castle & Gardens, Winchcombe, GL54 5JD.

Refreshment costs £10 per person and include teas, coffees, sandwich buffet lunch and cake.

Full details will be on the WPA website later in the year or contact the office.

The recommended accommodation is:

Tewkesbury Premier Inn: Elmbury Lodge, Shannon Way, Ashchurch, Tewkesbury, GL20 8ND.

08/02/2019 – 10/02/2019. £61.00 saver rate non refundable. Breakfast is in the Brewers Fayre next door - £9.50 per person for all you can eat breakfast buffet with unlimited drinks, smaller options are available. Distance from Premier Inn to Sudeley Castle is 11 miles and travel time is 20 mins.

Attendees can meet at the Brewers Fayre for the Friday night meal.

A suggested alternative to the Premier Inn is Tewkesbury Travelodge (approximately 150 yards from Premier Inn), off Shannon Way, Ashchurch, Tewkesbury, GL20 8ND. 08/02/2019 – 10/02/2019. £66.00 saver rate non refundable. Breakfast is £10 per person per day.

OBITUARY

Stephen Jaques

On the 18 June WPA lost a very good, loyal and supportive member of our organisation. Stephen joined WPA in the late 80's and helped with posters and aviary layouts at many of the CLA Game Fairs at the time. In 1996, WPA had a magnificent stand at Grimsthorpe Park in Lincolnshire. The stand was landscaped by Stephen and won best stand at a very large fair. Richard Jaques, our youngest new member at the time, sold t-shirts for three full days. Almost always accompanied by Kay they regularly attended CBAG meetings and took a great interest in our activities, always making an interesting contribution to our discussions. Stephen specialised in certain species such as Ercles francolins and Himalayan monal, which he bred with great success. Kay and Stephen were always most hospitable on the occasions we visited their home. Our sympathy goes to his wife Kay and family.



Ian Hoggarth

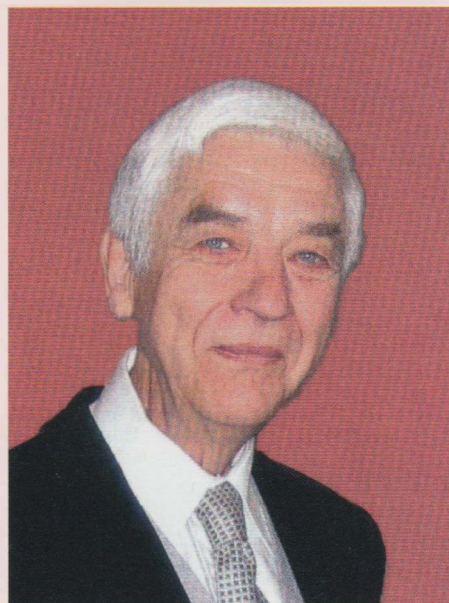
15 May 1943 - 11 May 2018

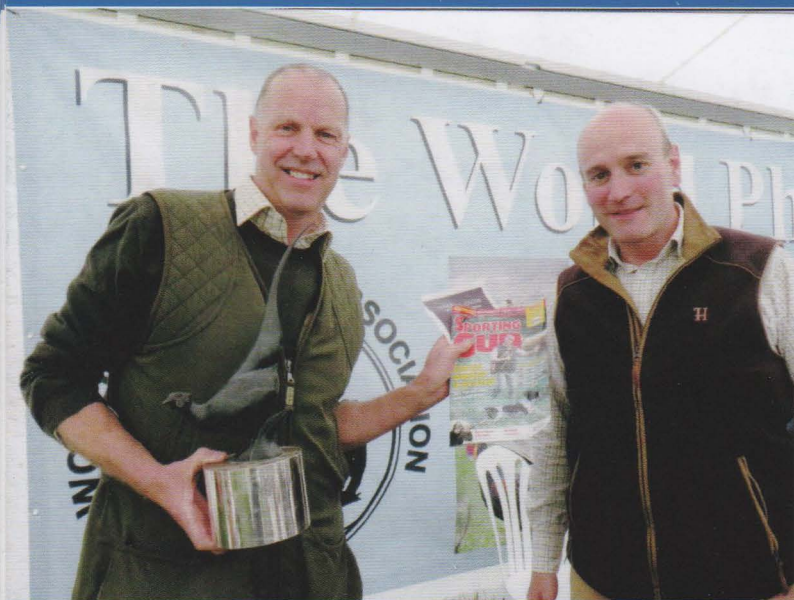
It is with great regret that we have to report the sad news of Ian Hoggarth's death on 11th May. Ian was absolutely vital to WPA's existence for much of his 15 years as WPA Treasurer. As Tim Lovel wrote when Ian retired as our Treasurer in 2012, "Ian's mastery of our finances and wise counsel as a Trustee has been vital in guiding us through difficult times and providing a clear picture of the choices we face. Although the times ahead will be challenging, Ian leaves a very strong legacy and we thank him for his good humoured and clear-sighted contributions which will be very much missed."

Ian was educated at Rugby School and Trinity Hall, Cambridge, which is where he met Helen. He graduated in Engineering, but then chose to qualify as an accountant and went on to work with a number of very well known companies. After retiring, he became increasingly involved in a number of charitable organisations, including WPA - initially as our independent auditor. In his local community at Charlecote, Warwickshire he is perhaps best remembered as helping to raise several hundred thousand pounds to re-roof the local church and rebuild its spire.

He was particularly successful in breeding grey peacock pheasants although a major car accident limited his ability to keep pheasants in recent years.

On Council, his was always the voice of reason and common sense, whilst to members he was invariably encouraging and welcoming. He was a very erudite man who never had a bad word to say about anyone. He will be long remembered for what he helped WPA achieve and our thoughts and condolences go to Helen and Tim. WPA has lost a wonderful, loyal friend.





Compton Manor - Top gun Julian France (left) presented with the black-necked pheasant trophy and subscription to Sporting Gun by Matt Clark, Editor of Sporting Gun. Photo: Jean Howman



Compton Manor - Top Lady Claire Mason (left) with Rosey Northcote-Smith
Photo: Jean Howman



Compton Manor - Top flush team
Photo: Jean Howman



Compton Manor Charity Clay Shoot
Photo: Jean Howman



Compton Manor - Top gun over 80 (90 actually) still going very strong, John Marchington wins again.
Photo: Jean Howman



Compton Manor - The winning team 'The Lonwood Shoot'
Photo: Jean Howman