



# Up the Creek

## HBSC Newsletter

### **Editorial: Edward Skinner, Publicity officer.**

Welcome to the second edition of the HBSC newsletter and thanks to all the contributors who made our first edition a success. Please keep your articles coming, tell us about your adventures or mishaps, cooking recipes or jokes. If you want to clear out some of your unused sailing equipment or are looking for a crew, send an advert.

Although the weather has not been great so far this year, unlike last year's lock down its good to be sailing again and hopefully we can get back to normality, free of COVID restrictions during 2021.

The committee was very pleased with the number of members who volunteered to help meet and greet prospective new club members. It's absolutely vital for the future of the club that we attract new members, making them feel welcome from day one. I joined HBSC thanks to Tony Everitt and Malcom Cross who I worked with at the time. They invited me and my family to attend a family week where we had a great time, so joining seemed a good idea. I have stayed a member because other members made me and my then young family feel welcome and at home, including us in activities. Kenny Batt would always tell you a joke. Ron Laurie and Mark Batt willingly gave help and tips on improving your sailing, Bob Knights would invite you out on his cruiser and the ladies were always welcome in his hot tub. The Chumly brothers and Lenny Coxall would tell you about the good old days over a pint with Les in the bar.

To be successful as a club we need to be inclusive of all types of water activities. Find out what our prospective and new members want and where possible support this. Dave Islin has already run a successful training day with the help of Annabel Laurie and others. Training was given on the support boats, dinghies and wind surfing. During the year we hope to run more of these sessions aimed at improving on the water skills, whilst also building an inclusive social atmosphere. This will require some of our more experienced sailors to come forward and pass on some of their knowledge, please do so. Let us know what sort of things you would like to cover; my personal Achilles heel is starting a race well. The club has purchased some windsurfing equipment, which is ideal for learning or improve your skills (see the windsurfing report and contact Tony Everitt if you are interested). It would be great if our canoeists could organise a couple of mass canoeing sessions, come on someone step forward. I might even try joining the swimmers from the jetty in the summer (but wearing a wet suit).

I will also advertise on the WhatsApp group some mid-week social sails when the weather and tides are good. Anyone can do this if you're going out post it and others may join you, it's much more fun with company and safer to have some back up.

On an experimental basis we are going to try 2 or 3 mid-week summer evening openings of the club house. We have selected late tides so people can go out on the water if they want too. The bar will be open and we could probably organise some take away food for those interested. The first date will be 16<sup>th</sup> June HT 17:16, other possible dates are 30<sup>th</sup> June and 15<sup>th</sup> July, we will send out a group email confirming these dates.

Thanks to Tony Everitt who spent a lot of time smartening up our website. Have a look, it contains lots of useful information. [www.harlow-blackwater-sailing-club.com](http://www.harlow-blackwater-sailing-club.com)

Let's all make 2021 a great year at HBSC!

Please send articles to: [edwardaskinner@outlook.com](mailto:edwardaskinner@outlook.com)

## Cup Race results 2021

**Lawling Tankard:** Equal first Jack Mills – Laser and Paul Grey – Kestrel

**Easter Pursuit Race:** Neil Clark - Laser

See the website for further results, racing dates and times. Information is also posted on the H(B)SC Dinghies WhatsApp group.

## CRUISER SECTION:

**Rod Martin, Cruiser secretary**



The launching of our cruisers has been late again this year with some members deciding not to launch this year due to the uncertainty of if they can be used.

For those who have launched the BJRC has a full programme of 'Day Long Offshore Racing' starting on the 2<sup>nd</sup> may

There is also a Cruiser Racing series for on 'One Tide' racing in the main river with races lasting 2 hours. This series is designed to introduce cruiser owners and crews to the joys of cruiser racing which although different is as exciting as dinghy racing.

For the rest it looks as if Marinas will be open to visitors from the 17<sup>th</sup> may, so some East Coast cruising looks possible.

Our moorings have all been updated over the winter and we have a number available to let. We also have 2 moorings available for visitors; it is also possible to moor alongside the jetty by prior arrangement.

Only 6 boats were launched last year and restrictions meant that only families could sail together and many marinas were closed, however, Harlow boats visited –

Brightlingsea, Shotley, Ipswich and Aldborough.

We are all hoping for more cruising and cruiser racing this year

## THE NATURE OF LOCKDOWN:

**John Wilmott**

How do you turn a bluebell into a redbell?

Pick a single bluebell on a long stalk, find a nest of wood ants, and bash them with the flower to wind them up. As the ants attack the petals they spray formic acid, which turns the alkaline blue flower to a bright fuchsia pink.

Like many club members, I've spent a lot of lockdown over the past year exploring the countryside of Essex, not able to take to the water very often let alone the pub. I've walked around several dozen woods I never visited before and crossed countless fields and meadows.

One of the rewards has been spotting wildlife and learning a bit more about what I'm seeing. Blame Attenborough.

My first mission was to teach myself more about trees, armed with a pocket book and an app. Where previously I could only identify the obvious species such as oak, I can now tell the difference between a sycamore and a maple by looking at their leaves and recognise an alder from its mini pine-cones. Finding a wild-service tree and a tulip tree caused mini-excitement.

Next I turned to butterflies and it turned out to be a good year for the flutterers.

Tons of peacocks, plenty of gatekeepers, small heaths and speckled woods, the odd



red admiral and a solitary marbled white. I tried to get better at identifying birds but they either don't keep still long enough or they're too hidden among the foliage. A bit of glue on the branches may help next time. Among the usual suspects, I did manage to confidently list long-tailed tits, turnstones, willow warblers and peregrine falcons, plus lots of different wildfowl by the dam at Hanningfield Reservoir – and, unusually, an egret wandering in woodland. Just-hatched moorhen chicks – smaller than a golf ball – were another treat. I heard loads of chiff-chaffs (a distinctive song) but I'm not sure I ever actually saw one. No kingfishers made an appearance, though I did see two in 2019. Here are a few of my favourite 'sightings', beginning with the wood ants. These are much larger than the ones that invade your patio. They build nests of small twigs that can be more than 4ft tall and 10ft wide, a seething mass of insects. There's a couple in my local Norsey Woods but the best place is the Danbury Ridge complex of woods, where there are at least 100 nests. With each containing between 200,000 and 500,000 ants, that means the population in these woods alone is a minimum of 20 million – probably a lot more.

Flying around a 'secret' nature reserve I discovered near Danbury were what looked like bright red bees. Turned out they were cardinal beetles, which are not uncommon according to my wildlife books but I'm not sure I've ever seen them before.

The best place to get close to deer is South Weald, where they are quite used to humans, but it's more fun to 'hunt' them around Mill Green near Ingatestone. There are several hundred here, in four or five herds, mainly of the fallow variety (the spotted, Bambi-style ones). I got to know where they hung out, though they can still be elusive, and it's hard to get close without spooking them.

Occasional roe and muntjac deer appeared at various places around the county.

Another surprise near Mill Green, deep in a large but little-visited wood, was a huge mass of rhododendrons, in full bloom last May. Quite a spectacle.



Fishing in a small lake near Mountnessing, what looked like an eel swam past beneath my rod-tip, but it had its head out of the water. It was a grass snake, the first one I've seen in years. I also spotted a slow-worm sunbathing on a path at Margareting – I've not seen one since I was a kid.

Near Hanningfield, a large black furry creature dashed by along a stream. It was a mink, which are supposed to be common in the wild but another first for me. Bank voles, a little weasel and a cute wood mouse (or it could have been a field vole) were others that went into the memory.

Perhaps my favourite nature experience was in Cooperas Wood on the south bank of the Stour near Harwich. Along a path I heard a loud popping noise – then another, and another. The gorse bushes were exploding! When the seed pods warm up in the sun, they burst and twirl to the ground. These were going off like fireworks, with a pop every second or two – a sound like hailstones hitting leaves.

As I write this, the wood anemones are gradually being replaced by the bluebells in my local forest (hence the experiment with the ants' nest). The sun is out, the birds are chirping and the foxes are waking me up at night by having sex in my front garden. After a long, boring winter, I find I don't mind.

Now our creek is available again, perhaps I will add to my growing wildlife catalogue. A shark? Now, that would be something...

## **Another great recipe: Jackie's Mackerel and Horseradish Fishcakes**

### **INGREDIENTS**

700g potatoes, chopped into equal size chunks  
3-4 tbsp creamed horseradish  
Finely grated zest of 1 lemon plus half the juice  
1 spring onion, finely chopped  
50g fresh parsley, finely chopped  
230g smoked mackerel fillets, skin removed, flaked into large pieces  
1 large egg  
70g of dried breadcrumbs mixed with 40g rolled oats (optional, can use just breadcrumbs)  
Olive oil for frying  
100g reduced fat creme fraiche

### **METHOD**

Cook potatoes until tender, drain and then mash until smooth.  
Stir in horseradish, lemon zest, half the parsley, spring onion with a pinch of salt and pepper until well combined.  
Gently stir in the mackerel, trying not to break up too much.  
Form the mixture into 6-8 fishcakes.  
Mix the creme fraiche with remaining parsley and the lemon juice.  
Lightly beat the egg, dip each fishcake in the egg and coat with the breadcrumb's mixture.  
Heat olive oil in a frying pan on medium-high heat and fry fishcakes for 3-4 minutes each side.  
Transfer to a baking tray and bake for 15 minutes on 190°C/170°C fan/ gas 5 or until crisp, golden and heated through. (This step is optional and you can serve straight from frying pan if fried a bit longer on a medium heat).  
Serve fishcakes with the creme fraiche mixture.  
A mixed salad makes a good accompaniment.

## **HBSC Clubs history:**

Our thanks must go to our club pioneers who had the foresight to purchase the club grounds in 1960 and devote their time to the building our clubhouse.



The following article appeared in the **Harlow Citizen 10 May 1963.**

### **'Yachtsmen build their headquarters'**

In these days of the welfare state and mass social security it is refreshing to meet a band of men who with very little money, but plenty of enthusiasm are trying to create something that will give pleasure to many. Harlow Sailing Club who have their sailing headquarters at Maylandsea on the River Blackwater, have been using a derelict Rhine barge as their clubhouse, but this unfortunately is falling rapidly into decay. Although aware of the problems involved, it was decided to build a new clubhouse ashore. With very limited funds at their disposal the committee eventually chose an ex-Army hut which was once used as an officer's mess.

Helped by a sympathetic haulage contractor, the club members dismantled and transported the building to Maylandsea: the whole operation was completed in a weekend.

After prolonged negotiations with Maldon Rural District council, permission to erect the hut was given last autumn and the operation started immediately. Due to the very severe winter, however, work, which is only done on Sundays, is very much behind



## Issue 2: Harlow (Blackwater) sailing club, North Drive, Maylandsea

schedule. But despite this, the building is beginning to take shape - 21 supporting pillars on concrete foundations have been built and drainage and other services have been provided.

Many difficulties and snags have arisen; many have been overcome and no doubt many more will arise. Probably the best example of this is the planning authority's refusal to accept the original roof. The club have now to find a further £250 for a roof that will comply with the regulations. However, Mr Frank Rumney the commodore is a determined man and backed by an equally determined band of helpers, will find a way over their difficulty.

Soon the new clubhouse will be completed - the proud achievement of men who devoted a great deal of their spare time to provide the first-class amenities for themselves and their families.

**Kenny says:** If it's raining in Sweden you must have your headlights on. How am I meant to know it's raining in Sweden?

### Windsurfing Report: Tony Everitt

This winter and spring have been cold with icy northerly and easterly winds. Undeterred, a few hardy Club members have continued windsurfing through the winter dressed as grey seals. Photo shows Mike Bryant modelling his 'Hannibal Lecter look' whilst remaining Covid secure. Now the weather and water are warming up, expect to see more Club windsurfers emerging from

winter hibernation.



Martin Cross and myself ran a windsurfing training session a few weeks ago using the newly acquired Club windsurfing equipment. We have an on-land simulator which helps with teaching the basics before venturing onto the water and the equipment is beginner friendly (nice big stable boards and light rigs). Both members who attended the training did extremely well and are keen to continue.

The Club windsurfing equipment is currently stored in the old Cadet Hut and can be used by any member. If you need help with getting started, training or rigging the equipment then please contact Martin and myself through the Club e-mail ([hbsccommittee@gmail.com](mailto:hbsccommittee@gmail.com)) and we will be glad to help you.

Hoping for a windy and sunny year

### Club Defibrillator

The Club has purchased an automated external defibrillator (AED) which has been installed in the entrance lobby, between the doors for the race box and Gent's toilet.

**For an unconscious patient NOT breathing normally.**

**Anyone can use the defibrillator. No training is necessary.**

The AED is fully automated with voice prompts and visual icons. There is a one-piece pad that makes positioning easy on the patient and it has built in CPR feedback to ensure that CPR is effective. **The AED will measure heart rhythm and will only provide a shock if an abnormal rhythm is detected.**



Please send articles to: [edwardaskinner@outlook.com](mailto:edwardaskinner@outlook.com)