

Bats in the Orchard: 2006 survey results discussed.

Twelve of the eighteen volunteers who had taken part in the bat survey in the Community Orchard during the summer of 2006, met with Shirley Thompson, of the Kent Bat Group, on 16th February, to discuss results. As for 2005, pairs of volunteers, armed with variable wavelength detector boxes, had completed two set 'circuits' of the orchard just after sunset every Wednesday. The detector boxes converted the normally inaudible noise emissions of the bats to a definite 'flutter'. Each detection or sighting had been recorded, with the position marked on a map. Weather conditions and temperature were also noted.

[Click here to view the survey data for 2006](#)

The collated results were similar to the previous year. Total numbers of bat 'detections' (199) were only eleven more than the previous year, and once again the 'soprano' pipistrelle, emitting at 55kHz, was the predominant species. Activity increased with air temperature (no bat flew below 11 degrees Celsius), and relatively more bats were detected on calm evenings. As with the previous year, there tended to be more activity in the northern (Toll Lane) side of the orchard. In both years bat numbers peaked after fruit ripening, but it was not clear if this was due to the attraction of insects (bats' prey), or the higher temperature.

A larger species of bat, often detected near the Lyn valley end of the orchard (20kHz emission), Shirley judged probably to be the noctule, *Nyctalus noctula*.

Shirley mentioned that a third pipistrelle, *Nathusius' pipistrelle*, was probably also present in the orchard.

During the discussion, detections outside the orchard were plotted on a map of Lynsted village.. These had occurred along Mill Lane, near the duck pond, around the church, and along the hedge on the parish boundary beyond 'Four Acres'. Graham Low, a neighbour of volunteers Myra and Len Scott in Lynsted Street, was able to 'play back' a recording of a bat that roosted in his house. Unlike pipstrelles, this bat flew very close to the ground or walls of buildings. Shirley concluded that it was a Daubenton's, *Myotis daubentoni* - probably feeding on insects above the surface of the nearby pond.

It was decided not to repeat the weekly surveys during 2007. Instead, Shirley would lead a 'bat walk', in the vicinity of the village. This was tentatively set for the evening of Tuesday 22nd May. Watch out for further details.

All are welcome to come and learn about the only flying mammals! We could do with more volunteers, so please contact us through info@lynsted-orchard.org.uk.

Bob Baxter

Report on Blossom Day

Sunday 29 April 2007

After so much wonderful hot weather all through April, it was very disappointing that Blossom Day was such a dull, chilly day but fortunately the blossom was still in place and the Orchard looked as beautiful as ever. The Sittingbourne Wind Ensemble arrived in the Orchard just before 12 to set up under the trees and our visitors arrived by car and by foot with picnics, tables and chairs. The music began, wine bottles were opened and children were soon running in and out of the cherry trees. Before long Lynsted School, with their usual skill and enthusiasm, began their maypole dancing. Next year we are hoping to have an adult team!

Cllr Tom English, Chairman of the Parish Council, gave out certificates to 3 members of Lynsted youth club, Oliver Savage, Callum Wareham and Rebecca Sidney, who completed a 2-day film-making course, funded by the Orchard Project.

The Orchard Group was delighted that they were able to have the new interpretation panels in place in time for Blossom Day. If you have not yet seen them, come along to Cherry Day on 22 July (advertised in this newsletter). The funding we have received from the Local Heritage Initiative runs out in August and we are planning to have a very special Cherry Day, to be opened by the Mayor of Swale, to celebrate the success of the project.

We would like to thank Pip and Sue Neaves once again for allowing us to use their Orchard. Thanks are also due to Sittingbourne Wind Ensemble for their wonderful, atmospheric music and to the children and staff of Lynsted and Norton School for entertaining us with their dancing.

Julie Barrett
Orchard Group



The Attwood family try out the viewing step at a new interpretation board.



Parish Council Chairman Tom English presents a certificate for completing the Orchard Group's Video-Filming and Editing Course to Rebecca Sidney. Fellow certificate-holder Oliver Savage looks on.



A family enjoying their picnic under the trees.



Children of Lynsted and Norton School weave their maypole magic (as parents stabilise the pole).

Sittingbourne Wind Ensemble in full swing.

Cherry Day 2007

This year the Orchard Group was determined to mark the end of our project funding with a very special Cherry Day and organised a bumper event – Morris Men, live music, cream teas, barbecue, beer tent and craft stalls plus our recipe competition, which revealed how many talented cooks we have in our community.

Following a very wet weekend we were amazed that Sunday afternoon saw clear skies and sunshine. The Mayor arrived promptly at 12 o'clock and the live music, provided by our own local band, the Daltons, was soon echoing across the Orchard.

At 1 o'clock David Pitchford, owner and head chef at Read's Restaurant, arrived to judge our competition and was impressed with the very high standard of cooking amongst our entries. The results were as follows:

1st	Lizzie Spilman; Summer Fruit Jelly
2nd	Marlene Disney; Gooseberry Shortcake
3rd	Sue Neaves; Cherry & White Chocolate Mousse with Cherry Syrup

Children's Section

1st	Tabitha Bennett; Kent Summer Mess
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Specially commended; Toby Price; Beetroot Soup with feta cheese

The winning recipe will appear in Lis's cookery column in this newsletter.

Over 150 people attended the event, which is more than we have had at any Orchard event so far. People had travelled from as far afield as Chichester and Bognor Regis to be there and everyone commented on the wonderful relaxing atmosphere.

We are grateful once again for Gavin MacLennan's very informative tours of the Orchard and were pleased to find that there were still several different varieties of cherries left for people to pick. The Morris Men excelled themselves with their dancing and gave a useful introductory talk before each set.

All in all it was a very successful community event and we managed to make a small profit to continue our events over the next year.

Our thanks are due to Pip and Sue Neaves for allowing us to use the Orchard for such a memorable occasion.

Julie Barrett
Park Farm Cherry Orchard Group

Installation of the Interpretation panels



En route for Australia: Tom English, John Disney and Frank Champion dig one of the holes



Interpretation boards on Community Events, Cherry Growing and Orchard Wildlife duly installed next to the Sculptured Seat



Frank Champion and Bob Baxter with the Welcome Board installed near the main entrance

The boards and frames were produced by Angel Design of Lydd, the pictorial material being based on artwork by senior art students at Fulston Manor School.