

EUCAN NEWSLETTER



La Brenne

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Reported by: Nicola Shearer

In this special edition of the EuCAN Newsletter, our roving reporter Nicola Shearer tells us about her recent volunteer trip to La Brenne in France.



Whilst searching the internet for voluntary jobs within wildlife conservation as an alternative to my corporate life as a Human Resources Manager for a global advertising company I stumbled across the details for the Leonardo Project. I read about it briefly but couldn't access the site. I figured it was probably too good to be true anyway. A few months later I came across it again, this time able to access it and get a bit excited. Could it really be that there was a funded project out there to allow me to spend two weeks in a European location gaining valuable conservation experience? Apparently so.

The European Conservation Action Network was established in 2007 by The Kingcombe Trust, a charity based at The Kingcombe Centre in west Dorset, dedicated to conservation and environmental education [Reg. Charity No. 1054758], in association with the Dorset Branch of Butterfly Conservation. The project is funded through the Leonardo da Vinci section of the European Union Lifelong Learning Programme and has partners in France, Hungary, the Czech Republic, Belgium, Poland and Romania.

So, I emailed Nigel Spring immediately and very quickly got the reply that I had been accepted to go to La Brenne in central France in October. I told my friend Amy about it and she signed up too for the same trip. Amy shares a similar passion for the outdoors, wildlife and camping as I do.

Before we knew it we were on our way to Dorset for the preparation weekend in June. As a novice in the world of conservation I was slightly nervous about feeling out of my depth with all these specialists. I needn't have worried – everyone was very friendly and we had a fabulous weekend of sunshine, butterfly monitoring, moth trapping, bird ringing, bat walking and amazing cakes and flapjacks that would clog your arteries on sight. The Kingcombe

Centre [pictured below] was a beautiful location and we all had a fabulous time getting to know everyone and find out who was going on what trip. I was also given the opportunity to undergo the brushcutter training, which I was very keen to do. The training itself was good and I was keen to get started with the cutting. We cut some very nice patches in the long grass in the field behind the centre. And so, it was a sad farewell from Dorchester South and the peaceful countryside and back to London.



Many months later, one October morning I left my house in deepest, darkest Essex and travelled into London with an exceptionally large bag, an exceptionally large shoulder bag and a rather scrappy Sainsbury's reuseable bag containing my wellies. I met Amy at the bar in Waterloo Station. In our typical fashion we were far too early for the train, so we had a beer, bought some snacks in M&S and then headed for the 16.05 to Southampton Airport Parkway. Conveniently, the refreshments trolley came along so we had another cheeky wee beer – well, we were surrounded by a stag party! Upon arrival at Southampton we were way too early for the minibus so we popped over the road to the arrivals hall [actually more like a room] at the airport and propped up the bar there for about an hour.

We headed back to the station and hovered about for a while, looking out for a minibus with a crazy-haired butterfly boffin at the helm. Unbeknown to us the minibus and everyone else on the trip was on the other side of the tracks! We were eventually united. We drove the short distance to Portsmouth Harbour for dinner at the Bridge Tavern. Val and I were both having the fish pie and had been looking forward to it all day. And it didn't disappoint. So filling and tasty that I couldn't manage a pudding. That would be the last

time on this trip that I didn't manage a pudding! After dinner we embarked the Mont St. Michel of Brittany Ferries. Amy and I were sharing a cabin which was good. The cabins were very bijoux and I am glad there weren't 4 of us in the room like the boys had. I say "boys", I could change it to "men" but after two weeks with them I think "boys" is most appropriate. Anyway, the night was disturbed for them by the snoring twosome that turned out to be Trevor and Roger. Poor Gary didn't get a wink of sleep and Tom injured himself on the fire sprinkler trying to get out of the top bunk. Amy and I barely slept – a combination of excitement and of the bow thrusters creating such a juddering sensation that it was impossible to sleep.

At what felt like the crack of dawn the ship's radio awoke us to tell us we would be docking shortly and to get ready for disembarkation. It was ridiculously early and still pitch black outside. We piled into the minibus and started on the road south to La Brenne. We stopped for breakfast at Sées which was a lovely old little town [below].



There was a market being set up so we all had a wander around the market and the town centre whilst being deafened by the church bells which went on for what seemed like an eternity – certainly no long-lies for the locals there. Then we had croissants and coffee in a little café. Being in the minibus was a bit like being back on a school trip and was a trip down memory lane that I enjoyed. There was an interesting selection of music played on the CD player – more about that later, but we enjoyed a sing-a-long to some classic 'driving' tunes. Lunch was a picnic [the first of many] in a bandstand in a town called Beaulieu Les Loches, just south of the Loire. Again, we stretched our legs round the town which was full of lovely old buildings and churches. We had a look round the church where they were preparing for a concert that night. One of the best wildlife sightings of the entire trip, for me anyway, happened whilst we were stopped in Beaulieu – the beautiful and amazing hummingbird hawkmoth [*Macroglossum stellarum*]. It's just like a hummingbird, but a moth! It

was absolutely incredible to see it floating effortlessly round the flowers on the bandstand.



A RELAXING WEEKEND IN LA BRENNE

We arrived at Mézières en Brenne in the afternoon. We got the keys to our room in the gîte and unpacked our stuff. Amy and I were sharing a 4-bedded room so we both opted for the top bunk each and proceeded to spread our clothes, toiletries and bits and bobs across the room. The accommodation was really good – we had a couple of loos and showers per floor and it was clean and Nigel and Kathy had brought everything we really needed.

Once we had settled in we took a trip to La Chérine Reserve for a quick visit and to do a spot of bird watching from the hides. This was the opportunity I had been waiting for to get my new binoculars out. My very first pair! It took me a while to get used to them and the focusing of them but on their first outing I saw something I hadn't expected to see from a hide looking out over a lake – a mammal. To my delight we saw about five coypu [*Myocastor coypus*]. Mammals hold a particular interest for me and it was very exciting to watch these animals swimming across the lake. We also watched them playing on the bank and feeding. The mammal count for the day continued with sightings of a red stag [*Cervus elephus*] and a couple of wild boar [*Sus scrofa*] from the minibus. I was very pleased to see so many mammals as I had thought the chances were slim.

That night we had a quick beer sitting outside the local pub in the town square and then we ate in Mézières at the Hotel Au Boeuf Couronné [a.k.a. Bernard's]. Tony Williams joined us – he was our host from the LPO [La Ligue our la Protection des Oiseaux] at La Maison de la Nature et de la Réserve. We enjoyed a dinner of goat's cheese, zander – a delicious fish, and gateaux. After dinner we stopped off at the pub again for a night cap.

After our first breakfast together in the gîte, we gathered our binoculars, cameras and associated paraphernalia and piled into the minibus to set off for the day. We revisited La Maison de la Nature and it was quite a foggy morning. We saw lots of frogs in the ponds near the hide, and upon returning from a poorly visible lake the frogs were all croaking as we approached. Once we started crossing the walkway across the pond they stopped, but they were all still visible in the water and on the lily pads.



We then travelled to La Maison du Parc and had a picnic lunch. By this time the mist had cleared and the sun was shining. We had a walk round the lake and some of the group saw a tree frog [*Hyla arborea*] and a green lizard [*Lacerta viridis*]. I saw a Comma butterfly [*Polyommatus icarus*], which was new to me. We saw a tree with a couple of woodpecker holes pecked in it, at which point Sarah taught us the 'Woodpecker Song'. Unfortunately, I cannot do it justice on paper, but it was catchy and I think I'll remember it forever more! We then trooped off to visit the lakes at Foucault where we saw more coypu and several species of bird, including:

- Great Egret [*Casmerodius albus*]
- Common Snipe [*Gallinago gallinago*]
- Black headed gull [*Larus ridibundus*]
- Little Grebe [*Tachybaptus ruficollis*]
- Great Crested Grebe [*Podiceps cristatus*]
- Tufted Duck [*Aythya fuligula*]
- Grey Heron [*Ardea cinerea*]
- Eurasian Coot [*Fulica atra*]
- Common Moorhen [*Gallinula chloropus*]
- Northern Lapwing [*Vanellus vanellus*]

We also found a smooth snake [*Coronilla austriaca*] which apparently is a very rare creature for La Brenne. Unfortunately, it had been squished by a car and was dead when we found it.

After a busy day of wildlife spotting we retreated to the gîte to freshen up and then Nigel drove us to the neighbouring village of La Gabrière where we dined on gizzards - an acquired taste [acquired well by Trevor], steak with a lovely vegetable souffle, a selection of cheeses and then Tarte Tatin with ice-cream, washed down with a lovely red wine. Many of us thought we'd never be able to eat again... how wrong we were!

AN INTRODUCTION TO BLACKTHORN

The first day of work! Up at 7.30am and down for a breakfast of croissant with delicious jam [apricot and lavender], fruit juice and tea. We headed off the La Maison de la Nature for 9am and had a chat with Tony. We all introduced ourselves and explained a bit about why we were on the trip and Tony told us about the reserve and the work they were doing. Then we headed out to La Touche to start work. We met Joël there who gave us instructions for the day. Joël is responsible for this area. The day was spent using loppers, bow saws, billhooks and brushcutters to clear the smaller trees and scrub along the track at the edge of the lake. Kathy helped me to learn to identify elm and dogwood. Lunch was a picnic on the edge of the farm at the lake, accompanied by a black dog with a penchant for fetching stones. Whilst we were having lunch we saw a very large Violet Carpenter Bee [*Xylocopa violacea*]. Then back to work. At 4pm we downed tools and had a walk in a nearby field. Then we headed back, via the supermarket, to clean up. Nigel popped back to Chérine to put the moth trap out so that we could look at it the following morning. We had a night in with the first of the chefs preparing the first of many magnificent feasts for the rest of us.

The next day we stopped at the moth trap on the way to work. We had managed to trap a multitude of moths and some other beasties as well. My favourites were the Great Silver Diving Beetle and the Merveis du Jour moth [*Dichonia aprilina*] [below].



We spent the day at La Touche clearing more blackthorn bushes. I was using the brushcutter for the first time since my training in June. It was quite daunting to use it on such hardy scrub but Kathy gave me some good pointers and off I went. We started three small fires to burn all the scrub we had cut down and spent the latter part of the afternoon ensuring everything we had cut was loaded on to one of the fires. I was exhausted at the end of my session. We saw a muskrat [*Ondatra zibethicus*] at the edge of one of the lakes on the way back. Tuesday evening was spent playing Boggle [Tom won] and eating a fabulous dinner of sausages and risotto, drinking a few beers at the gîte whilst Amy set to work making Julian's birthday card for the next day.

Julian's birthday – and his photography was about to go digital. No more the whirring of rewinding film in the bird hide. Think of the stealth wildlife opportunities!



Armed with Julian and his new camera we clambered aboard the minibus and made our way to La Touche again. Once again the crazy stone-chasing farm dog was there to welcome us. Today was a bit different – we split into groups to do different jobs. Our group went into a woodland area to clear an area of small oak trees to improve the habitat for Snake's Head Fritillaries. The trees we cut down were cut into logs and we stacked these between two trees to make a log pile. With the tops of trees, branches and dead wood we thickened the hedge line to make a natural barrier between the woodland and the adjacent field. We continued after lunch and by the time we finished we had made a lovely woodland clearing and log pile [below]. The creation of this log pile would lead to me showing an odd interest in other log piles that we were to see over the next week or so – comparing size, neatness and design!

Very impressive log pile!



THE BUTTERFLIES OF LA BRENNE

Tony Williams from the LPO kindly took us through a presentation of butterflies and La Brenne one day. Tony gave us an overview of the differences in butterfly numbers between the UK and France. We have 57 types of breeding butterflies in the UK, but in France there are 250 and 99 of those are in La Brenne. Butterflies which have become quite rare in the UK are still quite common in France, such as the Camberwell Beauty and Large Copper. Some of the reasons for their decline in the UK have been loss of habitat, the use of too many pesticides, including the use of slug pellets in British gardens. We learned about the Alcon Blue which only lays its eggs on one type of flower – Marsh Gentian. All butterflies are particular about where they lay their eggs so individual species of flowers are critical to the butterflies existence. The Alcon Blue has an unusual life cycle in that the eggs are taken by ants to an anthill where they become caterpillars and are fed by the ants. It is believed that the caterpillars emit a substance which excites the ants and this prompts them to look after the caterpillars as though they were their own larvae. The caterpillars pupate within the ant nest and when they emerge as the Alcon Blue butterfly they leave the nest. It is therefore essential that Marsh Gentian is able to thrive.



There are advantages and disadvantages of monitoring butterfly numbers. We learnt that butterflies serve as a good bio indicator of environmental changes. Butterfly populations react quickly to such changes. This is why an awareness of butterfly numbers is so important. Counting butterflies may provide the first evidence of change. Sometimes, however, they may react to changes in their habitat which aren't particularly important. It is also impossible to show the inter-annual variations in population sizes. Also, the weather conditions can have great effects on numbers on the day. Clearly a lot to consider when conducting butterfly surveys.

SAVING THE ALCON BLUE [*Phengaris alcon*]

Thursday - a new work location today for us – Étang Purais. This time we were cutting blackthorn and dog weed which had regrown since the previous year. This area was a site for the Marsh Gentian [*Gentiana pneumonanthe*] flowers which the Alcon Blue favours to lay its eggs on. After a busy day brushcutting, lopping, sawing and burning we returned home to get ready for our French lesson with Tony's wife Michelle. The main topic for our lesson was la vie quotidienne – everyday life. We went out for dinner that night to Vendœvres, a neighbouring village. A very strange empty restaurant with a dusty old piano – but we ate well and had a good time.

The following day we all returned to Étang Purais with Joël to continue clearing the scrub. We had the best lunch of the week with baked potatoes done in the fire. It was a tremendous feeling of achievement when it was all cleared and burnt, coupled with the fact that it was Friday and the weekend beckoned. It was, therefore, an elated group of new friends that sprung into the minibus ready for dinner and a nice cold beer / glass of wine. It was at this point that Nigel treated us to one of his Polish Turbo Folk CDs. A new cult following was immediately born and Zakopower's 'Galop' became the tune of the trip. The carefree attitude continued with a trip to the bar, a wine tasting with dinner, and a final trip to the bar until closing time. There was a lot of laughter and competition in the pool tournament.

21° RANDONNEE D'AUTOMNE



We were up earlier than usual this morning as we were taking part in the Autumn Randonnée. This involves following a designated route either on foot, by bike or on horseback. We had all hired bikes from the tourist office next door, with the exception of Val and Julian who were going on foot. We gathered for breakfast in the town hall and then we set off. The main stage of

the randonnée was 35 km long with two optional extras of 18 and 20 km respectively. There were refreshment stops along the way some just with water but others with filled baguettes, meat, and fruit, home made cider and wine! These refreshments breaks perked us all up for the next stage but nothing prepared us for just how painful the hard plastic bicycle saddles would become over the course of the day. We were cycling off road as well as on and the saddles were not built for comfort. We stopped for lunch beside another beautiful lake and then peddled off again for the last leg. Four hardy souls did the extra bit at the end but the remainder of us headed for home, hopeful that one day we would recover and be able to walk again. A total of 53km cycled by most of us and 72km by the hardcore group. A map of the route can be seen below:



The evening was passed with a light supper, and a lot of moaning and groaning.

SCRUB BASHING & CRANE SPOTTING

The group I was in worked in one of Tony's transect field where we were brushcutting pockets of scrub. We had a fire but we had to abandon it as it was far too windy. We cut holes in the larger areas of scrub and put our cuttings there instead. That evening we went to see if we could spot any Cranes [*Grus grus*] coming in to roost in the reeds at La Mer Rouge. We saw them appearing slowly in the distance in long wavy black lines and then saw them coming in to land. They really are magnificent birds. We then continued on to Le Blanc, a town further away and ate at La Flambée. We had a fabulous meal there and the ice cream was delicious.



The next day some of us were in a different location – Les Essarts – to clear overgrown scrub but keep a hedge area to provide shelter for the ponds. The ponds were dried out due to the very dry weather in the area. This area is managed by Julian and he was very good at directing us in our work. There was a lot of scrub to clear and we all worked incredibly hard to get as much done as possible with our trusty saws, loppers, brushcutters and Nigel with his chainsaw. I felt I was becoming more skilled using the brushcutter by this stage and was easily taking out the blackthorn and bramble whilst avoiding the tree heather. The bramble was particularly evil that day and there were quite a few war wounds by 4pm.

Some of us managed a visit to the pub for a couple of drinks and a few games of pool before dinner chez nous.

***** CLASSIFIEDS *** CLASSIFIEDS *****

Looking to learn more about conservation issues on a European scale? Want to gain valuable, practical conservation experience? Why not contact EuCAN and work as a volunteer in Europe on one of several worthwhile projects. Further information can be obtained from www.eucan.org.uk or from Nigel Spring [tel: 00 44 1963 23559 / 00 44 7981 776767 / email: nigelspring@yahoo.co.uk]

EXPLORING THE LOCAL AREA

It was a very wet morning and we were scheduled to have the afternoon off work. We opted to take the morning off instead since it was so wet and go to work in the afternoon if it had dried up a bit. We started the day by looking at the moths which had been trapped the night before and then Tony opened the exhibition at the La Maison de la Nature so we could look around. We perused the gift shop and bought a few postcards etc. Then Nigel drove us to Le Blanc where we drank hot chocolates and coffees in a café and then walked up the hill to the Ecomuseum. Afterwards we stopped off at the supermarket and bought sweets and things for people back home. We had lunch in the gîte and Kathy and Sarah went horse riding for the afternoon. Nigel took the rest of us out birdwatching. We saw quite a lot and I was beginning to get to grips with the field guide and my binoculars.

- Little Egret [*Egretta garzetta*]
- Mallard [*Anas platyrhynchos*]
- Western Marsh Harrier [*Circus aeruginosus*]
- Common Teal [*Anas crecca*]

- Shoveler [*Anas clypeata*]
- Coypu [*Myocastor coypus*]
- Wild Boar [*Sus scrofa*]
- Common Greenshank [*Tringa nebularia*]
- Common Buzzard [*Buteo buteo*]
- Common Snipe [*Gallinago gallinago*]
- Great Crested Grebe [*Podiceps cristatus*]
- Grey Heron [*Ardea cinerea*]
- Eurasian Coot [*Fulica atra*]
- Common Moorhen [*Gallinula chloropus*]
- Northern Lapwing [*Vanellus vanellus*]

It was very cold in the hide despite my numerous layers of clothing. On the way back we spotted a Green Woodpecker in the road. Nigel picked it up, then it flew onto Val's jumper and then on to the verge and once it had composed itself it hopped off.

FISH, MUD AND A BOG CROCODILE

We were up at the usual time today. After getting dressed and having breakfast I found Amy at the bathroom window trying to sneak a photograph of the pigeons roosting outside muttering "I'm going to get those pigeons if it kills me..".

We spent the morning watching the fishing of La Touche and helping where we could. The guys were up to their armpits in the lake pulling in the net, and then lifting all the fish into crates to be weighed and sent off to other lakes or to market. We learnt about the sun perch which were an invasive species and so none of these were put back into the lake. We were impressed by their lunch – 3 baguettes and 3 bottles of red wine.



A true French picnic. Today was a new area for work. Located close to Tony's transect field at Chérine we were working with Eric to clear sallow to open up the area for dragonflies. It was a very boggy, eerie place and it was quite cold and muddy but we were working to encourage the return of a dragonfly which has not been seen since 1991 in the hope that there will be a

sighting soon. After lunch Anne, Gary, Tom, Kathy and I went back to finish the work at Les Essarts which we had started on Tuesday. Tony came along to help. We were cutting back the bramble that hadn't been finished and Gary was like a brushcutting machine along the fence line. We had a couple of fires to burn all the cuttings.

That evening we piled into the minibus and went to La Maison de la Nature for a drinks reception laid on by the Director and the staff. The staff all thanked us for our hard work and we thanked them for the experience and told them what we had enjoyed most about the experience. There was a lot of wine, nibbles and chat in both French and English.

Upon our return to the gîte we had time to go to the pub for a few beers and then we had a fabulous dinner of wild boar stew – cooked by Nigel and Kathy. After dinner we played Boggle – Amy won this time but Nigel was very competitive.

The next day was our last day. Nobody was very enthusiastic about a return to the bog this morning. Tom skipped breakfast. Something was very clearly not right in the world. We started by clearing away previously cut logs, twigs, branches, trees from an adjacent bog site, including a little bog crocodile! [Picture below]



Eric carefully singled out selected trees for removal. We loaded all the cut stuff onto Remi's tractor for removal from the site. They have an important visit to the site coming up so it was crucial that the reserve looked its best. After our mid-morning biscuit break, Anne, Amy, Kathy, Tony and I went back to his transect field to tidy up the remaining bramble islands. Doing this would enable the farmer to plough the field for hay in straight lines if the bushes are trimmed back to accommodate his tractor! At 12 o'clock we downed tools for the last time. Exhausted.

Back to the gîte for lunch and a quick change then back into the bus for a drive to another goat farm. Having already smelt a goat farm I wasn't entirely excited by

the prospect. The farm buildings were beautiful though and were in the process of being restored. Also on the grounds was a 12th century abbey which we were able to look in. There was a Little Owl nest and we had a look through one of its pellets. Its main diet is beetles so there were lots of shiny, iridescent bits of shell. Got back into the minibus after declining a tour of the cheese making facilities – I had decided that I'd had enough goat's cheese by this point. We drove to Angeles sur l'Angelin which is a small town within a beautiful limestone gorge. We wandered around there taking umpteen pictures of the scenery – although the photographs never do it justice.

We returned to Mézières and got ready for the evening. We took a trip to the pub and then over to Bernard's for dinner. Joël, Tony, Zoe and Julian joined us. Bernard had prepared some of the pike that we had been given from the fishing trip to La Touche. We had a lovely meal of pike mousse [below], chicken with crayfish, and chocolaty, fruity pudding called Coeur de la Brenne.



I was sitting in between Julian and Zoe and Joel and could understand bits of the conversation so it was interesting. After dinner we retired to the pub for the final time. The man in the bar was clearly distraught that he was losing his best customers and so gave us a couple of bottles of champagne on the house. We left the pub in the early hours and bade farewell to the locals.



Amy, Tom and I on the last night at the pub!

RETURN TO BLIGHTY

A grey start to a grey day for returning home. We loaded up the minibus with all our stuff. I felt pretty miserable at the thought of leaving my new friends, France and the work that I loved. We had a picnic Falaise for the final time – this time I managed to avoid any goat's cheese and had a beer instead. The drizzle made for a very British picnic! We had a delicious fruit tart for desert. We made it on to the ferry and it was really quite choppy. There were a few green faces around. Tom, Gary, Penny and I went up to the top of the ship a few times to blow the cobwebs away. It was very windy but a good laugh.



We disembarked and Gary, Trevor and Travelling Ted were picked up by Trevor's family. Next stop Southampton Airport Parkway where Amy and I said goodbye to everyone and Anne and Penny were picked up by friends. Our train rumbled into London and upon getting off the rush of city noise even at midnight was deafening in comparison to the two weeks in the peaceful French countryside. I suddenly felt very out of place.

60 SECOND INTERVIEW: Our girl in the field...

Following her trip to La Brenne we wanted to find out what Nic Shearer had gained from her experiences:

EuCAN Newsletter: What did you hope to gain from taking part on this volunteer placement?

Nic: *I was looking to gain an insight into the type of work carried out by conservation volunteers and to obtain experience in that field.*

EN: What did you learn from the trip?

Nic: *I gained training and experience using a brush cutter, learnt some basic conservation principles, more about the different types of job within the field. I learnt that it is definitely an area I would like to move in to.*

EN: What did you enjoy most about the experience?

Nic: *The feeling of working outdoors was fabulous, feeling the sunshine on my face and being out in the fresh air. There were opportunities to see wildlife every day, all day. I felt enthused and happy.*

EN: How did you feel when the trip was over?

Nic: *Physically exhausted, but elated.*

EN: What do you plan to do now?

Nic: *Well, as part of the contract of the trip we had to complete 2 days voluntary work in the UK. I carried this out with the Essex Wildlife Trust at Langdon Nature Reserve. I have since started to volunteer there on a regular basis. I also intend to return to college to study conservation and environment in 2010.*



A BIG THANK YOU

Without the following people the trip would not have been as much fun, or as informative:

Nigel Spring – a font of all knowledge on butterflies, birds, the local area and red wine; **Kathy Henderson** – a flower and plant aficionado with an enthusiastic approach to life and picnics; **Tony Williams & the staff** at La Brenne – all a delight to work with and a source of valuable information on conservation in the local area; **Val & Julian Bolitho** – keen photographers and naturalists, between them a great deal of knowledge and sense of humour; **Sarah White** – helpful, supportive and game for a laugh; **Gary Ellcome** – brushcutter extraordinaire; **Anne Roberts** – bat-crazy; Penny Smallshire – incredibly passionate about wildlife; **Trevor Phelps** – great fun, corny jokes, petrol-cap destroyer; **Roger Gravestock** – Worzel, rabbit and lizard impersonator with a strong dislike of goat's cheese; **Tom Eves** – Mr. Fish, Borat, hilarious; **Amy Curtis** – a fabulous companion and room-mate – great gal.

THANK YOU EVERYONE! X

