

# The Upper Rother & Dudwell Farmers' Group



## NEWSLETTER – MARCH 2017

### Farmland Bird Identification Workshop 26 January 2017



Fifteen Members of the Farmers' Group on a winters day at Wadhurst Park enjoyed a Farmland Bird Identification workshop led by Peter Thompson of Game Wildlife & Conservation Trust (GWCT). Peter is the Biodiversity Advisor and gave a good insight into the types of birds we could entice back with some simple cropping strategies. We were fortunate enough to see redwings, fieldfare, goldcrest and even a kingfisher during our walk around the estate which has undertaken additional wildflower planting to encourage more birds with amazing results.



The GWCT Farmland Bird Count took place between 3-12 February and inspired the Group to survey their land for birds. We will inform the Group of the results of the Bird Count when they have been finalised.

For more information on farmland bird habitat management:

[www.gwct.org.uk/farming/advice/sustainable-farming/habitat-management/](http://www.gwct.org.uk/farming/advice/sustainable-farming/habitat-management/)

### Turtle Dove Conservation Talk 16 February 2017



East Sussex and Kent remain a stronghold for turtle doves in the South East, despite huge declines in the UK breeding population in recent years. Farmers and landowners hold the key to their revival. Bruce Fowkes, RSPB, gave a talk to the Farmers' Group plus other interested landowners about the dramatic decline of this species and simple and practical measures the Group may be able to take to encourage their population numbers to increase. There are members of the Group who have had turtle doves on their land which is encouraging.

For advice for landowners on turtle dove habitat management: [www.rspb.org.uk/Images/turtledove](http://www.rspb.org.uk/Images/turtledove)

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### Countryside Stewardship Hedgerows and Boundaries Grant

The Hedgerows and Boundaries Grant, individually worth up to £5,000, is designed to help farmers and other land managers improve important farmland boundaries.

The application window for the £5 million scheme closes on 28 April. Farmers can apply for a one-off grant towards the restoration of a range of traditional boundaries including hedgerows.



For more information:

[www.gov.uk/government/news/natural-england-backs-hedges-and-boundaries-for-wildlife-and-people](http://www.gov.uk/government/news/natural-england-backs-hedges-and-boundaries-for-wildlife-and-people)

For more information on hedgerow or boundary management:

[www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/land-management-guidance](http://www.highweald.org/downloads/publications/land-management-guidance)

**If you are interested in applying for this grant and would like assistance in completing the paperwork then please contact Matt ASAP.**

### Events to watch out for:

**Monday 5 June at 6pm—Grassland Enhancement Walk and Talk led by Keith Datchler, location to be confirmed**

**We are also aiming to arrange a Pollinator Farm Walk during June led by Bug Life**

### Useful Information

**Top tips for mob grazing** [www.fwi.co.uk/business/business-clinic-mob-grazing-tips-success](http://www.fwi.co.uk/business/business-clinic-mob-grazing-tips-success).

There is a local landowner who has had experience of mob grazing, if you would like to know more then contact Matt.

### Is there a future for the small family farm in the UK?

The Princes Countryside Fund has published a new report [www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk](http://www.princescountrysidefund.org.uk)



The Upper Rother and Dudwell Landowner's Group brings farmers, foresters and other land managers together to improve the natural environment of the Upper Rother at a landscape scale. The Group is assisted by the High Weald AONB Partnership with financial support from the Countryside Stewardship Facilitation Fund. To find out more and get involved contact:

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