

Gordon Redford – a tribute from Rachel

Well, this Moth Night is for you, Dad...my/our lovely, kind, sweet, loving, real-life human hero of a Dad...nearest, dearest Pater, our Father who art in moth heaven...Gordon, Nodrog or Gordon the Warden to many, up there in the moth workshop in the sky, with the moths and angels now, creating and designing some magical moths for us to see on the wing and find hidden away in the true magic of nature...just know you will be sending some magical marvels to us on our walks in nature and in the many moths traps lit by so many who have shared in the delights with, been guided by and moth mentored by you over the years. And not just in moths, in nature and all its wonders too, in career and conservation and all those wonderful opportunities that can arise with a little bit of self-belief and gentle guidance and encouragement. Those magical walks in nature we have all had with you over the years...for us luckily since we could be carried, or crawl, toddled, walked, skipped and run... Or for the many of you all who have met him over the years, through work and play, and that wonderful intertwine between the two that he did so well, on the many nature and wildlife adventures over the years on all the different country parks we have lived on or Dad has been involved with; all the schools, communities, volunteering, nature enthusiasts, wardens, dog walkers, wildlife savers and conservationists, creating some wonderful wildlife ventures (long before they were common practice) like junior wardens and Project Countryside's - a true nature engager, inspirer and pioneer! Many of these were run on goodwill and passion alone; along with a true love of nature and a desire to engage and share in wildlife's wonders, over summer holidays or on weekends, fuelled by Dad's enthusiasm, good humour, natural history wisdom and ever expanding biodiversity knowledge and his good humour and utter infectiousness for nature, conservation and wildlife, along with some incredible wardens, nature enthusiasts and an army of amazing volunteers; Woodlands Camp, Aldridge, West Mids, Thorndon Country Park, Brentwood, Essex, Waseley Hills Country Park, Rubery, Bham, Bolam Lake Country Park, Morpeth, Druridge Bay, Amble/Cresswell, Tyne Riverside, Plessey Woods, Northumbria, Milton Keynes Country Parks Campbell Park, Parks Trust and his/our beloved Linford Lakes Nature Reserve and, my goodness, the plethora of parks we have visited over the years just to appreciate the sheer pleasures of them - there are just too many to mention! Oh to have shared those delights with you. Now that was the true gift.

I know Dad has sent a few wonderful moths and magical moments in nature our way already to make us smile and to let us know he is still looking down and watching over us, with that magical sunbeam smile of his. And we will still feel his warmth in the sun, as he was true sunshine and warmth to so many of us. 🌟💛👤💛🌟

Nature walks won't be the same without him there, stopping along the way every so often, and more often than not, to point out and share his mammoth natural history knowledge, philosophies and stories of nature and wildlife wonder with us. The delight in seeing and sharing a simple, magical moment with a flower, tree, moth, butterfly, bird, deer, fox, badger, weasel or robin [* insert nature/wildlife occurrences of relevance to you here!] was plain to see. I will always remember the magic of the midnight night-time badger set adventures we had. The hushed wonder of glimpsing the mother weasel carrying her family across a babbling brook, one by one. The majestic meeting with a stag in a field of bracken, eyes locked, awe and wonder and

respect shared in full. Sharing in the miraculous first-time magical emergence of Emperor Moths. Dad's excitement and delight unparalleled.... "If you look for it, you will find the magic".

I feel so close to Dad still in heart and soul, that I know he will be by our sides and sharing the magic of nature with us, but this time gifted by his own creations from up above for us to find. Oh the nature adventures we will all have finding his hidden treasures.

And just know his ever loving presence and ability to give us what we need when we need it most will still magically happen, in his own unique up in the heavenly ether way. Whether it be a magical moth, a delightful butterfly, a dragonfly gem, a firefly glow, a swooping barn owl, the buzzard and kites power, the delightful dart of the wren, the snow white of the smew and soothing flow of the swan, dartford warbler elusiveness, cetti's warbler favourite song, cuckoo'ed cuckoo and woodpecker knocking glee, moonlit bat dances, playful otter splashes, kingfisher flashes, the wildflower meadow marvels, the heady scent of honeysuckle, the forget me nots cornflower blue cheer, the bluebell wood walks for peace and stillness and to be with you when we need it, a sunset or star or rainbow that shines just that bit brighter and vibrant than usual, oh the magic that awaits our walks guided by you from up above. We know it won't just be magical moths that he sends our way! ✨❤️✨

All your lovely messages, memories, tributes, cards, flowers, calls and kind words so far have been so heart-warming for us all and I hope I've done justice here to his memory for you too. Throw out wildflower seed bombs, grow pollinators in your gardens, plant trees, care for the ancients (trees, animals and humans), be kind to wildlife, get involved in conservation, volunteer for nature, get out in nature and share in the marvel and wonder that he truly loved so much.

He had such a close affinity with nature; it was his pleasure and treasure, his source of richness and wonder, his guide, his teacher and he was nature's ever-loving student, it was one of his true loves and passions, and he passed that on. You come from nature, learn from nature, see nature with the delight and wonder and respect and awe it deserves, go back to nature, and give the magic back. And he is right there with us in nature right now. I know he is right by my side. And in my heart and soul. And he is right by your sides and in your hearts and souls too. Cherish your memories, share them with love and laughter, cry your gentle tears, but always remember him with a smile. For that is what he would have wished. He is always in the love we show and in our hearts and hugs and smiles. Please be gentle with yourselves in your love, your loss, your grief, your sadness, and your healing back to love. In life and love, in loss and grief and sadness, it always comes back to love. Rest in Peace Dad/Gordon; beautiful warm sunshine guiding light & shining soul. ✨❤️💚💙🦋💙💚💛✨

"Goodbyes are only for those who love with their eyes. Because for those who love with heart and soul there is no such thing as separation." - Rumi

Rachel Redford
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