Kirkley Hall has long been known as an agricultural college which has trained thousands of young guardians of the British countryside. In recent years it has expanded its Animal Management programme to encompass more exotic species in its zoological garden. It now has a range of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, and aquatics, and runs events designed to introduce the public at close quarters to a variety of species.

We will meet at 10.00 in the Orangery, within the Kirkley Hall quadrangle. Morning coffee will be available at that point, after which, at 10.30, we shall head to the zoo and split into two groups. One group will have a talk on the zoo’s conservation policy and, in the discovery room, with the expertise of a Kirkley guide, be introduced to some of the zoo’s reptiles and have a chance to see them at close quarters. The other group will have the chance to explore the zoo for themselves. At around 11.30 the groups will swap over. At around 12.30 we will head back to the Orangery for a soup and sandwich lunch. In the afternoon (13.30-14.30) you can take an optional woodland walk (of approximately 1 hour), and/or visit the walled garden, and/or return, if you wish, to the Orangery for afternoon refreshments (tea and biscuits/cakes).

The Hall itself stands on the site of a manor house of 1764, belonging to the Ogle family, which was rebuilt in 1832 by Ignatius Bonomi. This was destroyed by fire in 1928, following which it was once again rebuilt. The stables date from 1764 and the South Lodge from 1832.

We have negotiated a group price for the package (morning coffee, the conservation talk and reptile session, admission to the zoo, lunch of soup, sandwich and drink, afternoon refreshments) of £20 per person. NUMBERS ARE STRICTLY CAPPED AT 35 MAXIMUM, so bookings will be accepted on a first-come first-served basis.

Please complete the attached booking form and return it [TO ARRIVE BY Monday, April 11, PLEASE] either by email to susanmaustin@hotmail.com or by post to Mrs. Susan Austin, 116 Queens Road, Whitley Bay, NE26 3AU.

Please pay by cheque, made out to Northumbrian Cambridge Association, or via bank transfer to HSBC; account name: Northumbrian Cambridge Association; account 60618446 sort code 40-34-18. Please identify your payment by KIRKLEY/YOUR SURNAME.

If you would like postal confirmation, please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope.