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NOTICEBOARD

Visit to Freiston Shore, July 13

There aren't enough people wanting a coach seat so Mary Nourish is organising a car share instead, please see entry for July 13 on page 2.

RNHS website

Don't forget that the RNHS website, expertly managed by Peter Scott, is available for even more detail about RNHS events, etc. For example, it has the events list for the whole summer/winter, has extra information on each site for a few days before the event, and contains an account of the visit together with photos a few days after the event. The *Links* section gives immediate access to websites for many sites of interest in our area. Also, you can point interested people to the website, where they can find information about the Society, look up a copy of *Fieldfare*, read about events, enjoy the photos – and download a membership application form!

RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY events

Sunday 1 June BEAUMONT CHASE FARM 2.30 pm

An afternoon walk around Mary and Joe Nourish's farm to see the new woodland planting and other conservation measures, followed by tea and cake in the garden, weather permitting.

Please go in the farm gate and park in the farmyard. Meet at OS Explorer 234 grid ref SP847988. A possible route from Oakham: take the A6003 to Uppingham and then follow signs for the B664 to Market Harborough. The farm is one and a half miles from Uppingham on the right-hand side of this road.

Sunday 22 June MERRY'S MEADOW 10.30 am

Take a walk round this Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust reserve with leader Jenny Harris, Senior Conservation Officer with the Trust. Unimproved grassland with an abundance of meadow flora including Common Spotted Orchids, Betony, Dropwort and a new find for this reserve, Dyer's Greenweed.

Meet at OS Explorer grid ref SK938157. In Greetham village turn north into Great Lane (Viking Way) after approximately 1 mile, park on the verge near the T junction. We will then walk down the path to the reserve (about a quarter of a mile).

Fieldfare

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Sunday 13 July

RSPB RESERVE, FREISTON SHORE, LINCS

10.30 am

A day visit will provide a rare opportunity to take a walk on the saltmarsh, led by a qualified RSPB guide, exploring the form and natural history of this unusual and fascinating place. The morning walk is only about a mile long, but it is over uneven terrain and very muddy. It is timed to take account of tidal conditions and follows a planned route which minimises risk to participants. The saltmarsh is exposed and can be cold, even in July. It takes about an hour so appropriate clothing is essential.

Bring a picnic for lunch (brewing facilities available at the Living Classrooms centre, also toilets) and afterwards take a short walk to the hide to see the bird life of the saline lagoon – again, with an RSPB guide. Meet at the Living Classrooms centre, Freiston.

As there are insufficient numbers to fill a coach but enough to make a trip to Freiston viable, it has been decided to continue with this outing but using member's cars. If you have expressed an interest in using the coach but are happy to take your car and offer lifts to other members, would you please telephone Mary Nourish on 01572 823677/ 07980 567237 or e-mail joseph@joseph82.orangehome.co.uk.

There will be a charge at the reserve. If there are 15 of us it will be £4 each, but if there are more than 15 they like to split the groups up and have another guide, in which case it will cost more. Please phone or email Mary (see above) if you haven't yet notified her that you want to go, so that she has an idea of numbers.

Wednesday 16 July

COLLYWESTON DEEPS

7 pm

As a follow-up to his excellent talk, Andy Lear, Conservation Officer with Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust, will take us around the old quarry workings, amongst limestone flowers such as orchids and dodder. Then, if you can stay till dusk, we will be looking for glow-worms.

On the A43 between Collyweston and Easton on the Hill, look for the long layby on the Wittering side and park there. The track to the quarry is on the other side of the A43 – cross with care!

It may be useful to bring a torch if staying for glow-worms.

Sunday 10 August

PRIORY WATER

10.30 am

Another follow-up to an interesting talk. Ian Merrill will lead us around Priory Water, near Kirby Bellars, to look at the many different dragonflies they get there.

From Melton Mowbray, take the A607 to Leicester. After the village of Kirby Bellars, turn right (sign posted to Asfordby) and Priory Water is a short distance down this road, on the righthand side, just over the level crossing. Drive in and park near the visitors centre.

Tuesday 16 September HAMBLETON PENINSULA

Jenny Harris, our Bat Recorder (and Senior Conservation Officer with LWRT) will lead an evening walk to look for and listen to bats. Hambleton peninsula is the best place in Rutland to see a number of different species of bats, including Daubentons, Noctules and many others. This is a joint meeting with the Rutland Group of the LRWT. More details in next Fieldfare.

LEICESTER AND RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST: Rutland Group

*For information on the Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust, phone: 0116 272 0444.
Website: www.lrwot.org.uk*

Sunday 29 June

BLOODY OAKS QUARRY

2 pm

Join Dr Anthony Biddle for a guided walk through this wildlife-rich SSSI. Please park on the verge opposite the reserve entrance which is on the minor road that leaves the A606 and passes through Empingham (grid ref SK 970108)

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST: Bourne Group

See www.lincstrust.org.uk or phone 01507 526 677 in office hours, for details of the Bourne Group's events and other Lincstrust events in Lincolnshire.

Saturday June 14 **TORTOISESHELL WOOD, NR CASTLE BYTHAM** **2 pm**

An afternoon stroll round a really pleasant part of Lincolnshire. Meet at the reserve entrance on the Castle Bytham/South Witham road (east of A1). (grid ref SK 963197)

Sunday 6 July **OPEN GARDEN AT BRACEBOROUGH** **1.00–4.30**

James and Hazel Williams invite you to view their garden at 10 Main Street. Selected plants including interesting wild flowers available to buy; also refreshments. Entrance fee £1.50, children free.

Saturday 19 July **BARNACK HILLS AND HOLES NNR** **2 pm**

A splendid grassland reserve, with the chance of seeing marbled white butterflies on the wing. Meet by the car park on School Rd, Barnack.

Sunday 31 August **DEEPING LAKES OPEN DAY** **10.30–4.30**

Come along to this stunning nature reserve, located on the B1166, 1 km south of the manned level crossing in Deeping St James.

HIGH TIDES IN NORTH NORFOLK Nola Thurlow

High tides for Snettisham; for Titchwell add 5 minutes. All times in BST.

June			July		
Sunday	1	04.48 16.52	Sunday	6	09.22 22.10
	8	10.21 23.17		13	03.12 15.37
	15	05.02 17.17		20	08.27 21.01
	22	09.19 21.54		27	01.12 13.29
	29	03.08 15.16			

AMPHIBIAN & REPTILE REPORT compiled by Dr C. H. Gallimore

The Stone House, Reeves Lane, Wing LE15 8SD. Telephone: 01572 737343



March/April 2008

Frogs were busy spawning in the months covered by this report – most activity occurring in three spells in March. Toads kept a much lower profile with no reports of breeding. Both species of newt were thriving round Rutland Water, but there were few records from elsewhere. **Grass Snakes** and an **Adder** were active, but there were no reports of our other two reptile species.

Frogs spawned throughout March this year. The first spawn had already been noted in February in Cottesmore and Stamford. Spawn was then seen in Barrowden on March 3rd. There followed a hiatus of about 10 days until further spawning occurred in Barrowden, as well as spawn being recorded from Braunston, Burley, Exton, Oakham and Wing. There followed a second hiatus until April 1st when more spawn was found in Egleton

and Wing, by which time tadpoles were being reported from Barrowden.

There were no records of toad spawn, or even live toads, although two dead toads were found in Wing on March 16th.

Smooth Newts were seen in Edith Weston, Exton, Lyddington and Wing in gardens, fields and on roads. In addition, surveys of ponds at Rutland Water Nature Reserve in Egleton and Hambleton recorded Smooth Newts in 13 ponds.

Great Crested Newts were found in 9 ponds at the Nature Reserve, as well as in Edith Weston, Lyddington and Wing.

The first **Grass Snake** was seen at Priors Coppice on 14th March and others were seen at Rutland Water in both months. An **Adder** was observed at Ketton Quarry on April 2nd.

My thanks to the following who provided records: T Appleton, V Arnold, Dr C Jones, A Lawrence, F & D Lee, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, D Needham, P Rudkin, P Scott, D Whitefield, M Winslow, L & G Worrall

WEATHER SUMMARY John P Hollands, Wittering met.



March 2008

Surface wind March 2008 began with a mainly West North Westerly strong to Gale surface wind. Late in the day of the 2nd the surface moderated to become mainly Westerly fresh to strong with occasional gusts to Gale Force. Early in the day of the 3rd, the surface wind veered and moderated to become mainly North North Westerly light to moderate. This run of wind did not last long as it backed at around breakfast-time on the 6th to become mainly South Westerly light to moderate, occasionally strong. This rather blustery surface wind persisted until the 15th when it became light and variable in direction. The surface wind picked up again on the 18th to become mainly North Westerly light to moderate but occasionally fresh to strong. During the 20th the surface wind backed to become mainly Westerly light to moderate. Later on the 26th the surface wind backed again to become mainly Southerly light to moderate. This wind regime persisted until the end of the month.

Temperature March 2008 was a 'very average' month with a monthly average temperature

During March 2007 the average day maximum was 10.9 °C, the average night minimum was 3.1 °C, rainfall 42.4 mm (1.67 ins) and there were 144.7 hours of bright sunshine.

April 2008

Surface wind April 2008 began with a mainly Westerly moderate to fresh, gusting strong, surface wind. During the 5th the surface wind veered to become mainly North Westerly light to moderate with occasional gusts fresh to strong. Later on the 7th the surface wind backed to become mainly Westerly light to moderate. This run of wind persisted until the 10th when it backed to become mainly Southerly light to moderate with gusts fresh and occasionally strong. Later during the 13th the surface wind backed to become mainly North Westerly light to moderate. During the 16th the surface backed again to become mainly North Easterly moderate to fresh with gusts strong to near gale and isolated to gale force. This blustery run of wind persisted until the 23rd when the surface wind moderated and veered to become mainly South Westerly light to moderate with gusts to fresh and occasionally strong – this persisted until the end of the month.

Temperature April 2008 was a fairly 'average' month with regard to temperature. An average day maximum of 11.9 °C was recorded, compared to the long-term mean of 12.2 °C. There was a

the same as the long-term mean of 9.5 °C. The warmest day was the 6th with an afternoon maximum of 13.3 °C. The coldest day was the 23rd – afternoon temperature reached only 5.3 °C.

There were 117.0 hours of bright sunshine, slightly better than the long-term mean of 110.3 hours. The sunniest day in March 2008 was the 30th with 9.7 hours. The sunniest month of March on record was in 1967 with 189.1 hours.

The average night minimum temperature during March 2008 was 2.7 °C, just a little warmer than the long-term mean of 2.4 °C. The coldest night was the 4th/5th with a minimum of -3.3 °C, significantly warmer than the absolute minimum for March of -12.0 °C recorded in 1965.

Rainfall March was a wet month with 76.3 mm (3.00 ins) of rain recorded at Wittering. The wettest day was the 15th with 34.0 mm (1.34 ins) of rain recorded. The long-term monthly mean rainfall for March is 42.4 mm (1.67 ins); the wettest March on record was in 1975 with 96.9 mm (3.81 ins).

significant range of day maximum temperatures; the highest was 19.9 °C on the 26th, whilst the lowest, 6.0 °C, was on the 6th. The absolute maximum temperature on record for April is 26.0 °C recorded in 2003. There were 137.4 hours of bright sunshine which compares favourably to the mean of 145.2 hours. The sunniest April on record was in 1948 when 210.8 hours of bright sunshine were recorded at Wittering.

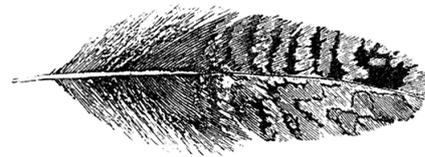
The average night minimum temperature for April 2008 was 3.5 °C, rather lower than the long-term mean of 4.1 °C. The coldest night was 15th/16th when the air temperature dropped to -2.4 °C, significantly higher than the absolute minimum of -5.5 °C recorded in 1968. The warmest night was 26th/27th when 10.4 °C was recorded.

Rainfall April 2008 was a relatively dry month with 33.2 mm (1.31 ins) of rain as compared to the long-term mean of 48.0 mm (1.89 ins). The distribution throughout the month was interesting – 43% of the month's total occurred in the last two days. The wettest day was the 29th with 9.6 mm (0.38 ins).

During April 2007 the average daily maximum was 16.2 °C, the average night minimum 6.3 °C, rainfall 3.0 mm (0.12 ins) and there were 202.3 hrs of electronically recorded bright sunshine.

BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

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March/April 2008

March and April were busy months for garden birdwatchers and for those venturing out into the county. Gardens attracted Blackcaps and a variety of finches whilst several rarities passed through – Ring-necked Duck, Crane, Great Skua, Water Pipit and Firecrest. Spring migration seemed slow to get underway for some species but by the end of April all expected arrivals were with us. A range of waders was recorded but mainly in small numbers, with Avocets perhaps the highlight.

My thanks to the following for their records: J W Ansley, V Arnold, S Barnes, P & C Brown, A Burdett, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, Dr C H Gallimore, N E Gordon, M & G Griffin, J Harris, Dr C R Jones, F & D Lee, R Lemmon, P Mann, M Martyn, T Mitcham, E & B Nicholls, M & J W Nourish, G Panter, K Potterton, P Rudkin, P Scott, A R & M A Thorp, D Willett, M Winslow, G R & L Worrall.

Mute Swan. 55 were at EBR on 01.03.

White-fronted Goose. An adult was at FHP between 01 and 07.03.

Egyptian Goose. 3 were in Burley Wood on 01.03 with a pair there on 07.03. A pair had seven young goslings by the RW Lyndon Centre on 19.03.

Shelduck. Nos. at EBR increased from one on 01.03 to eleven on 23.03 and nine were present there on 21.04. One was in Castle Cement quarry at Ketton on 07.04 and two or three were regular at FHP throughout both months.

Mandarin. A female was on the R. Welland at Wakerley Bridge on 28.04.

Wigeon. 120 were at EBR on 01.03 and c.130 were at Priors Coppice Ponds between 04 and 21.03.

Gadwall. A pair were on Wing lakes on 29.04.

Green-winged Teal. The EBR bird remained throughout March and was last reported on 29.04.

Garganey. A pair were on lagoon one at RW (Egleton) on 23.04.

Ring-necked Duck. A male was at RW on 09.03.

Goldeneye. Nos. at EBR declined from 28 on 01.03 to eight on 13.04.

Smew. A male was at EBR on 01.03.

Goosander. A pair were at EBR on 01.03 with four present on 11.03.

Ruddy Duck. A male was in Dickenson's Bay at RW on 14.03.

Red-legged Partridge. A pair were in a Wing garden on 12 and 23.04 and one was in a Langham garden on 20.04.

Grey Partridge. Pairs were seen near Barrowden on 04.04 and in Exton Park on 10.04.

Little Grebe. Three were at EBR on 23.03.

Cormorant. 26 were at EBR on 23.03 and c.20 on 13.04.

Little Egret. An undated March record was received of a bird in a field near Ashwell. Could it have been a Cattle Egret?

Red Kite. There were records of singles or pairs from sites in the southern part of the county. April birds were noted in five potential breeding areas.

Three were over Barrowden on 29.03.

Sparrowhawk. Garden reports came from Wing, Oakham, Barrowden and Stamford.

Buzzard. Pairs and trios were noted over many woodlands during both months. Five were noted near Greetham on 27.03 and 16 were over Burley Wood early in April. One was seen carrying nesting material in the east of the county on 07.04.

Osprey. The RW birds were back on site by the end of March with two pairs hopefully nesting and other sites also attracting lone males. A pair was regularly seen at EBR from mid-April.

Kestrel. An encouraging no. of records from widely scattered sites included 18 for the Edith Weston area during both months. Likely breeding sites were noted in four areas.

Hobby. One was at FHP on 25.04 and two were at RW(Egleton) on 29.04.

Peregrine. One was at FHP and a pair were noted over Burley Wood on 01.03.

Water Rail. One was at RW(Egleton) on 27.03.

Crane. Two flew east over the A1 at Woolfox on 19.04, the first record of two in the county.

Oystercatcher. Eight were at RW on 09.03.

Avocet. Three were at RW(Egleton) on 27.03 and a pair were there on 22/23.04.

Little Ringed Plover. Singles were at EBR on 15.03 and 08.04 with two at RW(Egleton) on 17.04.

Ringed Plover. One was at RW(Egleton) on 28.03.

Lapwing. There were 70 at RW on 09.03. Display was noted near Brooke, at FHP and near Mounts Lodge in March.

Sanderling. One was at EBR on 20.04.

Dunlin. 17 were at RW on 09.03. Nos. declined there to ten on 28.03. At EBR there were seven on 15.03, two on 05.04 and seven on 20.04.

Ruff. Five were at RW on 09.03 with up to three remaining to the end of the month.

Snipe. Eight were at RW(Egleton) on 07.03 with a count there of 31 on 09.03. One was at Leighfield Fishponds on 09.03 and one at RW(Egleton) on 25.04.

- Black-tailed Godwit.** A pair were at RW(Eggleton) between 28.03 and 01.04.
- Bar-tailed Godwit.** One flew around lagoon one at RW(Eggleton) on 28.03.
- Woodcock.** Singles were flushed in Burley Wood on 3 March dates and one at Priors Coppice on 21.03.
- Curlew.** Six were at RW on 09.03 with three present there (Eggleton) on 28.03. On 27.03 birds were seen and heard near Merry's Meadows and one was seen near Lyddington on 01.04.
- Redshank.** There were 17 at RW on 09.03 with pairs noted there in April. At EBR there were one or two throughout March with four noted on 05.04.
- Green Sandpiper.** One was at RW on 09.03.
- Turnstone.** One was at EBR on 20.04.
- Great Skua.** One visited EBR on 20.04 but had gone the following day.
- Little Gull.** There were three at RW(Eggleton) on 22.04 and one the next day.
- Kittiwake.** An adult was at RW on 28.03.
- Common Tern.** Our first record was an early bird at RW on 28.03 with the first on the nesting islands there on 22.04.
- Arctic Tern.** Two were at RW(Eggleton) on 23.04.
- Cuckoo.** The first birds were heard at Exton Park and Lyddington on 14.04 with records from Wing, Oakham and RW by the end of the month.
- Barn Owl.** There were March records from EBR, Brooke and RW with birds noted near Oakham and Barrowden in April.
- Little Owl.** Two were calling at Wing fishing lakes on 27.03 and one was in Exton Park on 10.04.
- Tawny Owl.** One was heard at Leighfield on 14.03 and breeding confirmed near Horn Mill in April.
- Swift.** First noted over Edith Weston on 20.04. The next were over Uppingham and Barrowden on 26.04 with birds at EBR and Wing on 29.04.
- Kingfisher.** The only record was one at RW(Eggleton) on 28.03.
- Green Woodpecker.** A popular (and noisy !) species which was widely recorded with birds at Burley and Pickworth Woods, Exton, EBR, Belmesthorpe, Clipsham and Ketton Quarries.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker.** Few reports received – drumming noted in Burley and Tunneley Woods and at Ketton Quarry. A pair were in a Wing garden on 09.04.
- Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** A female was in Tunneley Wood on 10.04.
- Sand Martin.** First noted at RW on 01.03 with small nos. noted there and at EBR from mid-month. 18 were at EBR on 08.04.
- Swallow.** One at Wakerley Bridge on 29.03 was our first record with the next at FHP on 09.04. Back at breeding sites in Barrowden on 20.04.
- House Martin.** First noted at FHP on 09.04.
- Meadow Pipit.** Twenty were at RW(Dam) on 08.03.
- Displaying birds were noted in March in Exton Park and near Leighfield.
- Water Pipit.** One was at the inflow at EBR on 20.04.
- Yellow Wagtail.** One at Wakerley Bridge on 14.04 was our first record with one at EBR on 16.04. 3 were at EBR on 29.04 – a very poor showing.
- Grey Wagtail.** One was at FHP on 07.03 and one at RW(Hambleton) on 15.03. There was a pair at Wakerley Bridge on 20.03 and at FHP on 20.04 with one at the latter site on 27.04.
- Pied Wagtail.** 20 were along the dam at RW on 14.03.
- Nightingale.** Reports came from Gibbet Gorse/Lyndon reserve and Hambleton Wood at RW. The first record was at Lyndon on 22.04.
- Stonechat.** Records covered the period between 03.03 and 23.03, with a pair at FHP, one at EBR and up to three at Gorsefield Wood.
- Wheatear.** Four at EBR on 24.03 were our first birds with two there the next day. Two Greenland Wheatears were at RW(Dam) on 25.04, with three of the nominate race on Eggleton reserve. One was at Ashwell on 26.04.
- Blackbird.** 57 were counted around Brooke on 13.03 and a newly fledged juvenile was in a Stamford garden on 14.04.
- Fieldfare.** Some large flocks were reported in March with 100 at Wakerley Bridge (05.03), 120 there on 10.03 and 150 at EBR on 25.03. There were also 250 at Brooke (13.05) and 450 in flight near Gunthorpe (17.03). The largest April flock was c.250 in Exton Park on 09.04 and the last were twelve at Wakerley Bridge on 25.04.
- Song Thrush.** Sixteen were counted around Brooke on 13.03.
- Redwing.** Very few were reported, the max. being forty at Wing on 11.03. Up to six were at Beaumont Chase, EBR and Wakerley Bridge with the last at this site on 25.03.
- Grasshopper Warbler.** One sang near lagoon one at RW(Eggleton) on 22/23.04 and two sang in Tunneley Wood on 27.04.
- Sedge Warbler.** First noted at RW(Eggleton) on 17.04.
- Reed Warbler.** One sang by lagoon one at RW(Eggleton) on 25.04.
- Blackcap.** 'Winter' birds were in two Oakham gardens on 26/27/03. The first singing bird was at Lyddington on 01.04.
- Lesser Whitethroat.** First noted near RW(Eggleton) on 22.04 with one at Langham on 27.04. One was near EBR on 29.04.
- Whitethroat.** One near Langham on 27.04 was our first arrival with one near Barrowden on 29.04.
- Chiffchaff.** One in song at RW(Burley Fishponds) was our first 'spring' bird. Other singing birds were noted at Leighfield, Priors Coppice, Burley and Tunneley Woods and Pickworth Wood. Well distributed by the end of March.

Willow Warbler. First heard in Pickworth Wood on 01.04 with our next at RW(Sykes Lane) on 04.04.

Firecrest. One was in a hedgerow at the top of Shacklewell Hollow on 07.04.

Long-tailed Tit. Noted feeding on peanuts in an Oakham garden on 15.03.

Willow Tit. One was seen and heard at the back of lagoon one at RW(Eggleton) on 22.04.

Marsh Tit. Noted throughout both months in Exton Estate woodlands. Eight were counted in Priors Coppice on 04.03.

Nuthatch. Territory holding birds were reported from Burley, Pickworth and Tunneley Woods, Exton Park and Beaumont Chase

Carrion Crow. A pair in Barrowden had returned to a previously used nest and were incubating on 06.04.

Raven. One was watched and recorded as it flew around the Clipsham Quarry / Pickworth Wood area on 06.04. This is our most easterly record to date. Also noted over RW, where one attempted to rob an Osprey of its prey in early April!

Tree Sparrow. Ten were near Lyddington on 02.04 with a similar no. near Tickencote on 08.04.

Brambling. Reports of one or two feeding in gardens were a feature of these months between 05.03 and 16.04. Records came from RW(Eggleton Centre), Oakham, Edith Weston, Stamford and Beaumont Chase.

Goldfinch. Fewer were reported during these months with no records of nos. exceeding ten.

Siskin. One Oakham garden attracted up to 24 during March, whilst other members in Oakham and Stamford had to be content with up to seven ! Last noted were three in Stamford on 22.04.

Lesser Redpoll. Up to six fed on nyger in a Stamford garden between 01.03 and 12.04. One was in an Oakham garden between 20/26.03.

Yellowhammer. Two or three fed at a garden feeding station at Lyddington in April.

Reed Bunting. Up to three fed in an Oakham garden between 18/28.03. A female fed in a Stamford garden on 23.03. Thirty were counted on a hedge near Ashwell in March and twelve were noted at RW(Eggleton) on 27.03.

Corn Bunting. The Mounts Lodge flock was still present on 24.03, when 32 were counted.

National Waterfowl Counts	Rutland Water	Eyebrook Reservoir	Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park	Holywell Lake
	09.03.08	09.03.08	07.03.08	09.03.08
March 2008				
Mute Swan	71	88	9	2
White-fronted Goose			1	
Greylag Goose	19	59	48	3
Canada Goose	181	52	4	38
Barnacle Goose	11			
Egyptian Goose	44			
Shelduck	46	5	1	
Wigeon	1741	340	42	
Gadwall	111	31	35	8
Teal	151	42	1	12
Mallard	342	15	79	54
Shoveler	26			1
Pochard	118	15	2	
Ring-necked Duck	1			
Tufted Duck	480	42	73	19
Scaup	5	2		
Goldeneye	335	36		
Goosander		1		
Little Grebe	30	7		2
Great Crested Grebe	54	14		
Cormorant	69	31	2	
Grey Heron	5	6	1	
Moorhen	56		23	24
Coot	662	72	51	12

BOTANY NOTES compiled by Graham Worrall

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March/April 2008

Early March sightings were much as would be expected in a mild spring: **lesser celandine**, the last of the **hazel catkins**, **shepherd's cress**, **primrose** and **dog's mercury**. Seemingly everywhere were **cultivated daffodils**, **daisies** and **dandelions**.

Mid-month **moschatel**, **groundsel** and a few **bluebells** were found in Barnsdale Wood and Burley Wood, and **cowslips** were starting to appear, along with **sloe**. At the end of the month, **common whitlowgrass** was seen on the central reservation of the A1 and on an island at the A47/A6121 intersection at Morcott and in Clipsham Park Wood. Other flowers seen were **ground ivy**,

wood anemone, **barren strawberry**, **toothwort** and **green hellebore**.

In April, as one would expect, the earlier spring sightings proliferated, **cowslips** were up the A1 towards Stretton, all woods with **bluebells** excelled and imports such as **Danish scurvy-grass** occurred on bare ground on verges which are regularly salted.

Roadside Verge Nature Reserves

We welcome one new verge investigator this year – Mr J Whiteford of Ketton. We hope he enjoys the verge he has been assigned. I have already started to receive verge report cards and look forward to many more during the spring and summer.

My thanks to the following: J Mallett, P Scott, P Rudkin, C Jones, D Needham, P Ennis, G Worrall, T Mitcham, R Lemmon, D Parker, B Parker, J Paterson, L Worrall, A Malcolm, A Lawrence, M Branston.

LEPIDOPTERA NOTES compiled by Jean Harvey

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March and April 2008

BUTTERFLIES

Exactly a year ago, I reported the sighting of a **Camberwell Beauty** in Burley Wood in April. This year, one was seen briefly in a Lyddington garden on March 30th so it must have been an over-wintering specimen. These have been the only two known records in Rutland recently but we have read of similar sightings in other areas.

Of some twenty records received for butterflies in March, all but five were for insects seen on the 30th!! This will show how dismal the weather was for most of the month. Over fifty records came in for April and the big majority of these occurred during the last week of that month so let us hope that the overall picture is now improving.

Brimstones were seen in many areas with the largest numbers found in Clipsham Park Wood, Ketton Quarry and on the Lyndon Reserve and one was even flying in the snow in Uppingham on April 4th. **Small Whites** were found in Barrowden, Edith Weston, Ketton Quarry and Lyddington, and **Green Veined Whites** were seen in Belton, Lyddington, the Lyndon Reserve and Uppingham.

The first **Orange Tips** were observed from April 22nd, a week later than in 2007, and the first **Holly Blue** was noted on April 10th.

Small Tortoiseshells were only reported from eight sites but **Peacocks** were a much more numerous species, with over 20 counted in various parts of Ketton Quarry on April 22nd and records came from twelve other areas. **Commas** were found in the woods and quarries and one in a garden at Lyddington. **Speckled Woods** have been very late emerging this year and only appeared at Lyndon on April 26th and at Lyddington the following day.

Finally, it must be noted that Red Admirals are missing from the above list – I have received no records as yet for this period.

MOTHS

Firstly, the 2006 results from the Rothampstead Trap situated permanently at Rutland Water Nature Reserve have only recently become available. Two species caught there were new for Rutland and deserve a special mention. These were, on July 17th 2006, a **Webb's Wainscot** which frequents reeds and other water plants, and on August 25th 2006 a **Lempke's Gold Spot** usually found in the fens of East Anglia.

Numbers of moths caught at traps during both March and April on the whole have been low. The garden traps at Lyddington were operated on nine nights in March resulting in 7 micro-species and 19 macro-species in total. An exceptional

night there, however, was March 14th with 22 species including **Common Quaker** (26), **Hebrew Character** (22) and **Clouded Drab** (20). Thirteen nights in April yielded 7 micro-species and 33 macro-species including **Mullein Moth** and **Oak Nycteoline**. The garden trap at Barrowden was operated on a few nights in both months attracting the usual spring species.

We recommenced our fortnightly visits to Eyebrook Reservoir in April and were not particularly lucky with the weather on the two nights chosen, i.e. 12th and 24th, as we only caught 6 and 8 species respectively. Stoke Dry Wood was visited

on April 28th and the 10 species taken included 3 **Frosted Greens**. A trap at Barnsdale Gardens on April 4th took only 3 species.

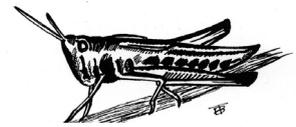
A few interesting day-flying moths have been recorded. An **Orange Underwing** was observed at Rutland Water on April 4th. (This fairly unusual species was also spotted over the County border at both Collyweston Great Wood and Bedford Purlieus on the same day.) A member visited Ketton Quarry on April 22nd and photographed a **Common Heath** and on the 27th another member photographed a **Latticed Heath** in the same area.

Very many thanks to: V Arnold, R Follows, C H Gallimore, J Harvey, C R Jones, A L Lawrence, D & F Lee, R Lemmon, J Levisohn, P & E Mann, E Northen, D & B Parker, P Rudkin, P Scott and G & L Worrall.

ORTHOPTERA REPORT compiled by Phil Rudkin

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There are no records for March/April. Please keep sending your records in, the season is starting!



PLANT GALLS REPORT compiled by Roy Lemmon

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March 2008

In keeping with what is the 'close season' for plant galls there was just one report this month of a marble gall on Oak in Burley Wood on 19th. This is of course one of the galls that persist during the winter, the gall wasp whose nursery it was is long gone.

April 2008

Again just one report this month but this time one which has recently been formed. It manifests itself as curled leaves, more especially the young ones on violets, in this case the wood dog violet in

Ketton Quarry. The leaves are curled upwards on both longitudinal sides and are hairier than usual; they are the nursery for the larvae of a gall midge.

In my garden here in Stamford I noticed that some leaves of winter aconite had black powdery pustules on them and on checking in the book I found that this is a gall caused by a smut, hence the black powder. This doesn't of course count as a record as it is out of the County but it has prompted me to ask if any member who lives in Rutland has found the same. If so perhaps you could give me a ring and I will generate a record card.

My thanks for records from: C R Jones, D Needham, P Rudkin, P Scott, R Lemmon.

INSECTS AND OTHERS compiled by Gill Chiverton

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Your recorder has been indisposed. Please keep sending your records in.



GLOW-WORM NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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I hope for some sightings! Around 10.30 pm to 11.30 pm from mid-June to mid-July is probably most likely, but before or after would be possible. I would be glad to know of anywhere you have looked, whether you found any or not. Please also let me know of any you see outside Rutland.



MYCOLOGY NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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March/April 2008

After a dry February, March was wet with snow at Easter weekend (23rd) and April mildish. Last year's heavy rains do not appear to have helped morels, as there have been so far (don't stop looking!) very small scatters of Semifree Morels. 'Reasons' for fungal activity are fraught with innumerable variables, but even a brief look at weather reports compared with fungi in our Annual Reports suggests the best flourishes of morels (e.g. an amazing splurge in 1991) occur after a hot dry summer, good rains in late autumn and odd deluges in late spring. There is undoubtedly more to it, not least the state of the species with which morels may be mycorrhizal. Mycologists are interested in investigating fungal interactions with trees, etc., which is why I appreciate members noting with what their finds occur, and why such things are recorded for reference where possible.

There was a time when fungi were classified as plants, though they have characteristics of animals as well, and they are now recognised as a separate Kingdom. However, you will find algae and a liverwort below, as well as lichens and slime-moulds which are not technically fungi either, but they are fascinating. We have no Recorders for them, and they deserve not to be overlooked.

RESERVES

Prior's Coppice: 6.3: King Alfred's Cakes on ash, discomycete *Polydesmia pruinosa* upon stromata of Common Tarcrust *Diatrype stigma* on decorticated ash, Hazel Woodwart *Hypoxylon fuscum*, Common Grey Disco *Mollisia cinerea*, Bleeding Broadleaf Crust *Stereum rugosum* very common on hazel throughout the wood, rust *Milesina kriegiana* on Broad-leaved Buckler Fern *Dryopteris dilatata* and three algae on an immersed bramble stem in a small pool: *Euglena sp*, *Draparnaldia sp* and *Tetraedron sp*. **14.3:** At top end of wood on waste ground with rotting mossy log pile, at least 9 Scarlet Elf Cups *Sarcoscypha austriaca* (thanks Peter, Phil, Dave).

Barnsdale Wood: 13.1: Hazel Woodwart on hazel, asco *Nectria episphaeria* hyperparasitic on old stromata of Common Tarcrust on decaying deciduous wood in contact with ground, several fresh Witches' Butter *Exidia glandulosa* on deciduous twig on ground, rust *Uromyces muscari* on bluebell and a Liverwort *Marchantia polymorpha* growing on old firesite.

Whitwell Centre: 13.3: At bases of old dead nettle stems, perfect stage of disco *Calloria neglecta* and asco *Leptosphaeria acuta*; several fresh Blushing Brackets on Sloe.

Gibbet Gorse: 3.4: 20 mature, spore-producing Stump Puffballs *Lycoperdon pyriforme* on decaying broadleaved wood on ground and one plasmodium of slime-mould *Reticularia lycoperdon* on broadleaved wood on the ground.

Lyndon Centre: 3.4: Both states of asco *Calloria neglecta* on dead stems of nettle, along with *Leptosphaeria acuta*; and Lichen *Amandinea punctata* in small patches on willow bark.

Ketton Quarry Woodland: 27.3: King Alfred's Cakes on ash, asco *Chaetosphaerella phaeostroma* velvety black on fallen beech wood, *Leptosphaeria acuta* on bases of old dead stems of nettle, *Mollisia melaleuca* on underside of well decayed fallen ash log, disco hyperparasite *Phaeohelotium extumescens* on stromata of Common Tarcrust, itself on decaying ash on soil, asco *Rosellinia aquila* on decorticated beech; Jelly Ears in two places, one very small and recent on beech, two much larger and mature on ash, Common Jellyspot *Dacrymyces stillatus* on fallen beech branch, Yellow Brain *Tremella mesenterica* on fallen beech twig; 12 Velvet Shanks on cut stump, rather frosted, one *Panaeolus ater* on soil in cleared part of wood and 4 small frozen Scurfy Twiglets *Tubaria furfuracea* on woody debris. **17.4:** Twelve smallish Bleach Cups *Disciotis venosa*, some nibbled (good spring find!), discos *Mollisia cinerea* and *M melaleuca* on decaying beech; a group of 4 Bay Polypores *Polyporus badius* (*durus*) and 1 mature and 4 emerging Red-edged Brittlestems *Psathyrella currugis*.

Ketton Quarry, shallow pool: 27.3: Alga *Spirogyra* sp.

Ketton Quarry: 27.4: Visit by Leics Fungi Study Group who kindly supplied a list, here summarised: Ascospores etc: *Botryobasidium aureum* (anamorph), *B conspersum* (anamorph), *Chaetosphaerella phaeostroma*, King Alfred's Cakes, Common Tarcrust, Bleach Cup, 3 or 4 Vinegar Cups *Helvella acetabulum* (nice find), *Hypomyces aurantius* on Blushing Brackets, Beech Woodwart *Hypoxylon fragiforme*, Birch Woodwart *H multifforme*, Brittle Cinder *Kretschmeria deusta* on living beech root, Nettle Rash *Leptosphaeria acuta*, several scattered Semifree Morels *Mitrophora semilibera* near ash on track from valley to woodland but not in previous area in valley where scrub was removed, *Mollisia melaleuca*,

Mycosphaerella punctiformis on fallen oak leaves, *Peziza micropus* on exposed beech root (nice!), Sycamore Tarspot, Beechmast Candlesnuff *Xylaria carpophila* on fallen beech cupules; Jellies etc: Jelly Ear on ash and elder; Aphyllophorales etc: *Cylindrobasidium evolvens*, Blushing Bracket on willow, Elder Whitewash, *Hyphodontia sambuci*, old Shaggy Bracket/Wet Carpet *Inonotus hispidus*, *Peniophora lycii*, Bay Polypore *Polyporus durus*, Hairy Curtain Crust *Stereum hirsutum*, Yellowing Curtain Crust *Stereum subtomentosum*, Turkeytail *Trametes versicolor*; Gill fungi: Glistening Inkcap *Coprinus micaceus*, small Sulphur Tufts, Spring Brittlestem *Psathyrella spadiceogrisea*.

WOODS

Pickworth Great Wood: 1.4: Hoof/Tinder Fungus *Fomes fomentarius* on birch, and on living hazel Cinnamon Bracket *Hapalopilus nidulans*. The latter is 'uncommon', a cute small orange-brown bracket which quickly turned bright purple in a drop of ammonia. A summer/autumn annual, it had dried out, but soaking brought back its colour. Both these fungi were used in dyeing. Thank you Clive.

Clipsham Quarry: 27.4: Three cheers for DP, PM, EM and BP who found 6 fresh Semifree Morels *Mitrophora semilibera*, even if 2 had their heads off! They were not in the usual places but at the

entrance, along drive and a track. (May 6th: 4 more.)

Ingthorpe: 27.4: Regular Semifree Morel site checked, but none found. Some disturbance from roadwork.

Burley Wood: 10.4: Discos *Calloria neglecta* on old nettle stems, *Hyaloscypha stevensonii* syn *H aurieliella* on decorticated wood of *Pinus sp* in contact with ground, a few pseudothecia of asco *Leptosphaeria acuta* on old nettle stems, Coral Spot on detached twig of broadleaf; two small Scurfy Twiglets on woody debris; and among filamentous algae in a fast running shallow clear streamlet the deep green alga *Cosmarium subcrenatum* and alga *Mesotaenium sp*.

FIELDS, GARDENS, VERGES

Belton-in-Rutland Churchyard: 9.3: Alga *Trentepohlia aurea*, orange-red on north facing limestone church wall (thanks, Ivan and Roy). A large number of lichens were seen on the Society's visit, and I hope to have a list later.

Tinwell Churchyard: 13.3: Smut *Entyloma ficariae* on leaves of Lesser Celandine and rust *Puccinia lagenophorae* on Groundsel.

Lyddington: April: 6 large patches of Bleach Cup *Disciotis venosa* in orchard, a breath of spring, thanks F and D.

Many thanks for all reports: Dr T Hering, Dr C R Jones, R Iliffe, F & D Lee, Leicestershire Fungi Study Group, R Lemmon, E & P Mann, D Needham, B & D Parker, I Pedley, P Rudkin, P Scott.

MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

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On our evening amble on 5th March, at the Trout Farm near Fort Henry, we walked up to the second bridge, stopping to watch kestrels on the way. Looking upstream, we saw a disturbance in the water. The area is wider, shallower and a little reedier and weedier than the rest of the stream, and often a moorhen is paddling about. A snout, followed by a head and two eyes, emerged from the water and remained very still, looking like part of the vegetation. If we hadn't seen it emerge we would have thought that was what it was. A moorhen popped up further upstream, but still the snout stayed still, observing us for at least 3 minutes, before bobbing down under the water and swimming into the reeds! A **Water Vole**, the first we have seen there for many years, and the first record for the Society for some time.

No signs of Otters this month, but many signs of life at **Badger Setts** in the area, bedding being cleared out, and lots of digging seen. Tracks were

found in a local wood, and a live **Badger** seen crossing the road between Seaton and Barrowden on two dates in March, and crossing the B672 in early April. On 20th April on the Hambleton road a badger crossed the road in front of a car, then stopped on the verge and stared at it! Sadly there are the usual numbers of road casualties, 8 recorded, though certainly there are more that which go unreported.

Dr Gallimore has a **Stoat** which visits his garden in Wing regularly. In early March it was filmed by builders as it hunted in flower beds, and was seen again on the 15th. On 24th April it dragged a dead, very wet, rabbit around the house and into a hedge. It was seen at least once a week by workmen during April. On 9th March a Stoat was seen near a small stream at Leighfield, and at the end of March another was seen at the car park near the pumping station on Hambleton peninsula. **Weasels** also frequent Dr Gallimore's

garden. In early March a weasel was seen carrying a small mammal, perhaps a young vole, from near the house to an adjacent bungalow. It was seen again twice during April. A weasel crossed the road, bobbing as it ran, in front of a car near Christian's Lodge, Pickworth, at the end of April.

Sadly on April 1st a young **Fox** was found dead on a track towards Pickworth woods. It looked to have injuries around the neck as though it had been snared, but either managed to escape or been dumped there. A live fox crossed the Oakham road in Uppingham at 7.00 pm on April 7th. Foxes have also been seen at Burley Wood, on 22nd April, when 2 were observed separately, and again on 29th April, when two were seen together, fighting and chasing each other.

Only two reports of **Hedgehogs** this month – a large one in Dovecote Close in Barrowden and one in a Lyddington garden. It is a matter of concern that there are so few reports (though we have seen droppings regularly in our Stamford garden). A **Grey Squirrel** was seen near the road entrance to Burley Wood on April 10th.

A dead **Mole** was found in a ride at Priors Coppice in mid March, and fresh workings seen

there and near the Whitwell Centre at Rutland Water, also in a Lyddington garden. Two March **Hares** crossed the Preston to Uppingham road very slowly; 31 were recorded in areas of the county. **Rabbits** are reported from the entrance to Gibbets Gorse, Walk Farm, Empingham verges.

Field Mice have been seen at least every other night in the Worrall's garden at Barrowden, feeding on crushed peanuts put out for birds. At Dawn's Paddock on April 1st a very pale field mouse scuttled into undergrowth as a dog ran past. A dead **Brown Rat** was found at Bloody Oaks Quarry in early March.

Many reports of large numbers of **Fallow Deer**, particularly from Burley Wood through March and April, but also from Pickworth, Clipsham, Little Haw, Morkery Woods, and the Walk Farm track. **Muntjac** have also been commonly seen, at Burley, Priors Coppice, Pickworth and Wing, where a female was seen with fawn on April 7th. In Stamford in mid March a gardener was trimming a hedge at the Casterton rest home, Casterton Road, when a Muntjac jumped up and ran away – an example of how far into town they can be found!

Many thanks to all contributors: M A Branston, T Caldicott, Dr C H Gallimore, V Hemsley, C Jones, D & F Lee, R Lemmon, C Nelson, P Scott, A R & M A Thorp, P J Rudkin, D Whitefield, L & G Worrall

BAT REPORT compiled by Jenny Harris

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No flight records were received for March, and the only record for the month was of a bat found roosting between the plastic back-plate of an intruder alarm and the brick wall on which it was mounted. This record came from just west of Uppingham, off the Leicester Road, where the householder reports seeing many bats flying in his garden in summer, which seem to come from the direction of farm buildings to the west.

In April, one or two bats, probably **Pipistrelle**, were seen occasionally in the Worrall's Barrowden garden, and one was flying round the Stone House, Wing on 25.4. Bats have also been seen foraging on Wood Lane, Braunston, on several occasions.

Members of bat groups from Leicestershire and Rutland, Lincolnshire, Cambridgeshire, Northamptonshire, Nottinghamshire and Bedfordshire met at the Egleton Visitor Centre on

19.4 for a seminar on the Nathusius' Pipistrelle, presented by the national expert, Jon Russ. Although the weather was very unpromising, 17 of the 35 attendees elected to go for a bat walk at Hambleton in the hope of hearing Nathusius' pips. Among trees near the track we were happily surprised to hear first **Common Pipistrelles** then **Soprano Pipistrelles** foraging for and (by their feeding buzzes) finding insects. As we returned along the track, with detectors tuned to 39 kHz, at a point where a belt of woodland connects the village to the reservoir, we suddenly heard a burst of echo-location that could only belong to **Nathusius' Pipistrelle**. This single bat was heard several more times, at intervals that suggested it was patrolling the interface between trees and a small pasture. It was a fitting end to a very useful event, aimed at inspiring bat workers in the East Midlands to go out and search for these rare and elusive bats.



Many thanks to the following contributors: D Follows, Dr G Gallimore, A Lear, G & L Worrall
