

Journal of the  
**RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

Registered Charity Number 514693

www.rnhs.org.uk

No 247 (259)

**November 2008**



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## NOTICEBOARD

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2009

This is due promptly on 1st January 2009. Thanks to those who have already renewed by personal payment, or have made arrangements with their banks to pay by Standing Order. We have some forms if you would like to change to a Standing Order: please ring Graham Worrall on 01572 747302.

**The form below is only for those who want to continue to renew annually by personal payment.** If you are using it, please do so as quickly as possible, even before 1.1.09 if you can!

**Please note:** If you've only just joined this autumn, you are not due to renew your membership until 1st January 2010.

### FAREWELL TO OUR WEATHER RECORDER

For around 20 years the Society has been fortunate to receive weather records from John Hollands at the MOD Meteorological Station at Wittering. These records have played an important part in putting our wildlife observations into the overall context of weather and climatic conditions, and are a vital source of information for research and analysis. From a personal point of view, I know how fascinating it is to review them and extract information for phenological purposes, as we did when we were designing the new Lyndon Visitor Centre with its emphasis on weather and climate change.

Sad to say, the MOD has reorganised its operations at Wittering and at the same time John is retiring. I would like to express the Society's heartfelt thanks to John for all his input over the years. We will miss his valuable contributions, and we wish him all the very best for the future.

### RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

#### SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL FOR 2009 *NOT USING STANDING ORDER*

To G R Worrall, 6 Redland Close, Barrowden LE15 8ES

I/We wish to renew membership and enclose cheque for £

£10 for each adult, 50p for 16s or under

Name/s \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
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Post code \_\_\_\_\_

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## RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY events

**Sunday 30 November**      **LYNDON NATURE RESERVE**      **10 am**  
*An RNHS-led outing to a Rutland Water nature reserve. There is a charge of £2 for those not covered by an Anglian Water annual permit. Please bring permits with you to sign in.  
Meet at SK895056.*

**Thursday 1 January**      **PICKWORTH WOOD**      **10 am**  
*Led by Linda Biddle, RNHS Mammal Recorder.  
Meet at SK993138 opposite church at Pickworth Ltd, or SK986139, park on verge.*

**Sunday 22 February**      **FINESHADE WOODLAND WILDLIFE**      **10 am**  
*Led by Chris Andrews RSPB, who is giving the indoor talk on 3 February (see below). Charge of £2 per person, parking free if member of RSPB.  
Meet at Top Lodge RSPB shop, SP979983.*

**Sunday 29 March**      **DAWN'S PADDOCK**      **10 am**  
*Led by Dawn Whitefield, RNHS Programme Secretary and owner of this interesting paddock, which adjoins The Seek.  
Meet at layby between Oakham and Braunston, SK840074. Ample free parking.*

### INDOOR MEETINGS

Indoor meetings are held at the Burley Road School, Oakham. There is a charge of 40p for tea/coffee/biscuits.

**Tuesday 2 December**      **BIRDS OF THE PO DELTA**      **7.30 pm**  
*Given by Carol Debney, a member of the Rutland Water Nature Reserve Management Committee and a trustee of the Italian conservation organisation, LIPU-UK. She leads wildlife tours to Italy: 'Even very experienced birdwatchers are surprised at how good the birding is and when combined with the fascinating history, food, wine, climate and lovely people, it doesn't get much better.'*

**Tuesday 6 January**      **NIGHTJARS**      **7.30 pm**  
*Phil Palmer is talking about this elusive and interesting bird.*

**Tuesday 3 February**      **WILDLIFE OF FINESHADE WOOD**      **7.30 pm**  
*Chris Andrews RSPB from the Fineshade Visitor Centre will talk about Red Kites and other wildlife in Fineshade (he is also leading a RNHS walk there on 22 February).*

**Tuesday 3 March**      **AGM FOLLOWED BY  
BATS OF THE WORLD**      **7.30 pm**  
*A short AGM followed by a talk from Jenny Harris, RNHS Bat Recorder, on bats worldwide.*

**Tuesday 31 March**      **FROM JOHN O'GROATS TO LANDS END**      **7.30 pm**  
*This meeting replaces the usual 'first Tuesday in the month' meeting (7 April) because the school is closed.  
Chris Ward will talk about the birds, wildlife and scenery of the British coastline.*

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## LEICESTER AND RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST events

Details of the LRWT Rutland group's meetings are given below. They are held at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton, admission £1, includes tea/coffee/biscuits. See [www.lrwt.org.uk](http://www.lrwt.org.uk) for information about other LRWT events.

**Monday 8 December**

**KALEIDOSCOPE OF WILDLIFE**

**7.30 pm**

*An illustrated talk by David Duckett, member of the Rutland Group Committee.*

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## LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

See [www.lincstrust.org.uk](http://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.

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## WEATHER SUMMARY John P Hollands, Wittering met.

*Sadly, this is the last of John Hollands' detailed weather reports; see page 1.*

### September 2008

**Surface wind** September 2008 began with a mainly Southwesterly light to moderate surface wind. This run of wind persisted until the 13th when the surface winds 'dropped-out' to become variable in direction and light in force. These light airs persisted until the 22nd when the surface wind 'picked-up' from the North to become mainly light to moderate in strength. This wind regime persisted until the 27th when the surface wind veered through South to become mainly West to Southwest light to moderate. This run of wind persisted until the end of the month.

**Temperature** During September 2008 the average day maximum temperature was 17.3 °C, rather cooler than the mean of 18.2 °C. The warmest day was the 10th with an afternoon maximum of 20.5 °C, rather cooler than the absolute maximum for September of 28.9 °C recorded in 2006. There were 111.4 hours of bright sunshine recorded in

September 2008. The mean is 142.0 hours and the sunniest September on record was in 1964 with 207.3 hours of bright sunshine recorded.

The average night minimum for September 2008 was 10.2 °C, a little warmer than the mean of 9.9 °C. The coldest night was the 26th/27th when the air temperature dropped to 5.1 °C, significantly warmer than the absolute minimum for September of 1.0 °C recorded in 1969.

**Rainfall** During September 2008 53.2 mm (2.09 ins) of rain fell at Wittering, close to the mean of 51.9 mm (2.04 ins). This was much less than the wettest September on record, when 131.6 mm (5.18 ins) was recorded in 1992. The wettest day was the 5th with 13.8 mm (0.54 ins) recorded. The wettest September day on record was the 22nd in 1992 when 79.2 mm (3.12 ins) fell at Wittering.

*During SEPTEMBER 2007 the average maximum was 18.3 °C, the average night minimum was 10.3 °C and the rainfall total was 35.4 mm (1.39 ins), with 151.7 hours of bright sunshine.*

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## HIGH TIDES IN NORTH NORFOLK Nola Thurlow

High tides for Snettisham; for Titchwell add 5 minutes. Times in GMT.

	December			January	
Sunday 7	00.03	13.13	Sunday 4	11.09	23.15
14	07.09	19.24	11	06.14	18.28
21	00.31	13.41	18	11.30	23.36
28	06.53	18.56	25	06.05	18.07

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

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



September provided nearly all the records for this report apart from a couple of newt records in October. There were just a handful of amphibian sightings and the remaining records were of lizards. Surprisingly there were no reports of Grass Snakes.

**Frogs** were croaking in Barrowden in the first three weeks in September and one was seen on the road in Morcott on 10th, but thereafter there were no further reports. **Newts** were only reported from Wing where two dead **Smooth**

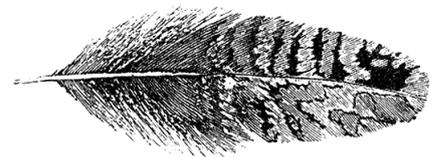
**Newts** were found on the road on 12th October and an eviscerated **Great Crested Newt** was found in the recorder's garden on 11th September, a Magpie being the chief suspect on circumstantial evidence. A living Great Crested Newt returned to my cellar on 4th October.

**Viviparous Lizards** were seen up until 26th September in two parts of Ketton Quarry, at the Yew Tree Avenue at Clipsham and at Fishponds at Rutland Water where they were unintentionally introduced last year.

*My thanks to T Appleton, F Chiverton, P Scott and L & G Worrall who sent me records.*

## BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

30 Sutherland Way, Stamford PE9 2TB. Telephone: 01780 751268



### September/October 2008

The autumn period produced an excellent range of birds, with plenty of waders and wildfowl at the reservoirs and a good passage of finches and thrushes in October. Whooper Swans were noted at both reservoirs, and migration watches at Leighfield produced some impressive totals of winter thrushes. Stonechats arrived at several regular sites and Ravens also put in a good showing. Gardens again showed their worth by attracting a range of species, including Brambling and Goldcrest.

*My thanks to the following for their records: T Appleton, V Arnold, M A Branston, P & C Brown, T Caldicott, J Comber, A Chiverton, C Gallimore, Mrs Leach, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, M Nourish, D & B Parker, K Potterton, P Rudkin, Jill Stapleton, A R & M A Thorpe, D R Willett, M Winslow, G & L Worrall*

**Mute Swan.** 68 were counted at EBR on 27.09.

**Whooper Swan.** One was at RW (Hambleton) on 17.10 and there were three at EBR on 28.10.

**Greylag Goose.** 260 were counted at EBR on 27.09 and there were 120 at FHP on 20.10.

**Barnacle Goose.** Nine were at RW (Burley Fishponds) on 06.09.

**Mandarin.** Single males were at FHP on 20.09 and 26.10.

**Pintail.** First noted at FHP on 20.09 with seven on 26.10. There were three at EBR on 21.10.

**Garganey.** Six were still present at Banthorpe Gravel Pit on 06.09 with one at EBR the following day.

**Shoveler.** There were 12 at EBR on 27.09 and 44 at FHP on 25.10.

**Red-crested Pochard.** Three were at RW (South Arm) on 29.09.

**Pochard.** c.65 were at EBR on 27.09.

**Scaup.** A female was at the RW dam on 02.10.

**Goosander.** First noted at RW with two redheads at Egleton on 31.10.

**Little Grebe.** Seven were counted at EBR on 27.09.

**Black-necked Grebe.** One was at EBR on 21.09.

**Cormorant.** 28 were at EBR on 27.09.

**Little Egret.** Three were at EBR on 07.09. There were 12 at RW on 14.09 and six on 19.10.

**Grey Heron.** One was noted touring Barrowden between 23.10 and 25.10, no doubt staking out likely goldfish ponds.

**Red Kite.** Singles were widely reported during both months. There were three near Woodhead on 28.09 and Horn Mill on 26.10, and two at Clipsham Park Wood on 29.10.

**Sparrowhawk.** Garden records were received from Oakham, Edith Weston and Wing.

**Buzzard.** Well reported in ones and twos from many woodlands. There were three near Wing on 16.09, near Tinwell Lodge on 08.10, and at Morkery Wood on 22.10. Ten were counted at EBR on 28.09, presumably attracted by the large numbers of Red-legged Partridges released on the western side of the reservoir.

- Osprey.** The last RW bird left on 13.09. One was at Leighfield Fishponds on 08.09 and one was at EBR on 21.09.
- Hobby.** September birds were noted at Leighfield Fishponds, RW, Pickworth Wood and Oakham and the last report was one over Oakham on 01.10.
- Peregrine.** Singles were at EBR on 28.09 and Leighfield Fishponds on 25.10.
- Water Rail.** One or two were noted at RW (Burley Fishponds and Egleton) in Sept. and nine were counted there on 19.10.
- Moorhen.** During the summer, four pairs on the Oakham Canal near Oakham reared a total of 37 chicks.
- Ringed Plover.** There were nine at EBR on 07.09 and 27 on the RW count on 14.09.
- Golden Plover.** Four were at RW on 14.09, there were 23 at FHP and 106 in Exton Park on 04.10. On 19.10 there were 975 at RW; and 350 were at EBR on 21.10.
- Lapwing.** Larger counts included 761 at EBR on 07.09, 990 at RW on 14.09 and 1729 there on 19.10.
- Dunlin.** Seven were at EBR on 07.09 with two there on 28.09. At RW there were 17 on 14.09 and 21 on 19.10.
- Ruff.** There were 17 at RW on 14.09 and seven on 19.10.
- Snipe.** Peak counts were 39 at RW on 14.09 with 40 on 19.10. There were twenty at EBR on 21.09 and up to five during both months at Leighfield Fishponds.
- Curlew.** Present at RW throughout both months, with between four and six present.
- Redshank.** Nos. at RW increased during the period with only three counted on 14.09 and 27 on 19.10.
- Greenshank.** There were three at EBR on 07.09, ten on the RW count on 14.09 and two still at Egleton on 26.09.
- Green Sandpiper.** One was at Exton Park lake on 07.09. Two were at EBR on 27.09. At RW there were eight on 14.09 and seven on 19.10.
- Common Sandpiper.** Four were at EBR on 07.09 whilst at RW there were three on 14.09, and two on 08.10.
- Common Gull.** c.300 flew west at Leighfield on 25.10.
- Yellow-legged Gull.** An adult was at RW (Egleton) on 31.10.
- Black Tern.** A juvenile was at EBR on 07.09, there were five at RW on 14.09 and another juvenile was there from 8.09 to 9.09.
- Common Tern.** Seven were at EBR on 07.09 and there were eight on the RW count on 15.09.
- Barn Owl.** Singles were noted at FHP, Barrowden, Wing Burrows and near Glaston.
- Little Owl.** One or two were present near Lodge Farm on the Hambleton peninsula on 18.10–19.10.
- Tawny Owl.** Two called at Hambleton on 16.09 and a dead bird was found on Queen's Walk in Stamford on 11.10.
- Swift.** The only Sept. record was one at EBR on 7th.
- Kingfisher.** A good spread of records during both months with birds noted at Banthorpe Gravel Pit, EBR, Exton Park lake, Wakerley Bridge and RW (four on 14.09).
- Green Woodpecker.** Regularly seen at FHP during both months. Records were also received from Tickencote Lodge Farm, Edith Weston, Little Haw Wood, EBR, Ketton Quarry and Oakham, where one was digging in a lawn on 27.10.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker.** Garden records were received from Edith Weston and Oakham.
- Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** A male was with a large tit flock at RW (Burley Fishponds) on 15.10.
- Swallow.** October birds were noted on 3rd at Wakerley Bridge and 18th at RW.
- House Martin.** c.200 migrants were at RW (Burley Fishponds) on 06.09 and there were still 25 at a Barrowden breeding colony on 08.09. The last bird was at RW (Burley Fishponds) on 19.10.
- Tree Pipit.** One flew south at Leighfield Fishponds on 08.09.
- Meadow Pipit.** There were 30 at Bussack Water on 17.09.
- Yellow Wagtail.** Eight were at EBR on 07.09 and 20 were at RW on 14.09. One at Leighfield on 21.09 was our last record.
- Grey Wagtail.** There were records between 02.09 and 30.10, mostly singles but there were ten at RW on 14.09. Birds were also noted at FHP, Wakerley Bridge, and Banthorpe Gravel Pit.
- Stonechat.** A female at Leighfield on 16.09 was the first autumn record, with two there from 02.10 to 22.10. At FHP there were two females on 08.10 and a male from 16.10 to the end of the month. One was at RW (North Arm) on 10.10.
- Wheatear.** One was found dead at Ketton on 07.09 and there were two near Great Casterton on 08.09.
- Fieldfare.** 30 at FHP on 11.10 were our first birds. There was a good passage at RW on 18.10 but larger nos. did not arrive until the end of the

month when there were 200 at Stretton on 28.10, followed by 1600 west at Leighfield in two and a half hours on the following day, and 2440 west there in four hours on 31st. Excellent counts which beg the question; how many actually crossed our recording area over these few days?

**Redwing.** Heard passing over Stamford on the evening of 02.10, small nos. were regular over the next two weeks, with 55 at RW the peak count. There were 320 west on 29th and 650 west at Leighfield on 29th and 31st respectively.

**Mistle Thrush.** Flocks at Leighfield were noted as follows: 17 on 08.09, 24 on 19.09 and 14 on 06.10.

**Sedge Warbler.** One at RW (Burley Fishponds) on 04.09 and two there on 12.09 were the last birds.

**Reed Warbler.** One was at Leighfield Fishponds on 01.09.

**Lesser Whitethroat.** There were four September records – Leighfield Fishponds, RW (Burley Fishponds and Eggleton) and Brooke with the last at RW on 26.09.

**Whitethroat.** September birds were seen at FHP, Ingthorpe, Booke Hills and Leighfield, where the last bird was seen on 02.10.

**Garden Warbler.** One was at Leighfield Fishponds on 06.09.

**Blackcap.** A female/juvenile was at Leighfield on 12.10.

**Chiffchaff.** Widespread during Sept., including one in suburban Stamford on 27.09. In Oct. there were records from four sites with the last at Leighfield on 16.10.

**Willow Warbler.** There were Sept. records between 13th and 17th from Banthorpe, Leighfield and RW and the last was a late bird at Leighfield on 09.10.

**Goldcrest.** Singles fed on peanut and fat in a Stamford garden in Sept. 19 were counted around the Hambleton peninsula on 29.09.

**Spotted Flycatcher.** Noted at Leighfield, Brooke Hill and (RW) Burley Fishponds to 17.09, our final date.

**Pied Flycatcher.** A female/juv. was at Leighfield Fishponds on 08.09.

**Long-tailed Tit.** Up to eleven were attracted to gardens in Stamford and Oakham from 18.09 onwards to feed on sunflower hearts, fat and peanuts.

**Willow Tit.** Up to three were at Leighfield and Clipsham Park Wood between 02.09 and 15.10.

**Nuthatch.** Noted in Exton Park, Hambleton and FHP, mainly in Oct.

**Treecreeper.** Eight were noted around RW (Burley Fishponds) on 12.09.

**Jay.** Three were at Ketton Quarries on 26.09 and six were at Leighfield on 09.10.

**Raven.** Up to three were reported from the Leighfield area between 14.09 and 22.10. Two flew over Burley Fishponds on 20.09 and there were two over Brooke on 09.10.

**Starling.** An impressive 1580, in 48 flocks, flew west at Leighfield on 31.10 during a four hour count.

**Tree Sparrow.** One visited a bird feeder at Beaumont Chase Farm on 26.10.

**Brambling.** One fed in a Stamford garden on 10.10 and one flew over Leighfield Fishponds on 29.10.

**Greenfinch.** c.80 were using a roost at Leigh Lodge on 29.10.

**Goldfinch.** There were records from Oakham and Stamford gardens of up to 16 birds taking nyger seed and sunflower hearts.

**Siskin.** One over Leighfield on 03.09 was the first. 14 were at Burley Fishponds on 04.09, 25 were at Leighfield on 08.09 and there were smaller flocks at FHP and Exton Park up to 20.09.

**Linnet.** Small flocks were reported as follows: 30 at RW (Dam) on 17.09, 20 at Ingthorpe on 19.09, 13 at Wakerley on 06.10 and 20 at RW (Manton) on 19.10.

**Lesser Redpoll.** One flew over Leighfield on 14.09 and there were four there on 16.09. 42 flew south at RW (Burley Fishponds) on 08.10 and there were at FHP on 26.10.

**Crossbill.** One flew over Burley Fishponds on 02.09.

**Bullfinch.** A total of nine were around Ketton Quarries on 26.09.



## Wildfowl Counts – September/October 2008

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry Ponds /Exton Park		Holywell Lake	
	14.09	19.10	13.09	19.10	13.09	20.10	14.09	19.10
Mute Swan	562	378	83	66	11	11	6	6
Greylag Goose	494	22	192	202	2	120	2	49
Canada Goose	903	952	33	51			62	95
Barnacle Goose	9	13						
Egyptian Goose	94	60						
Shelduck	2	3						
Wigeon	918	2909	18	56	1	1	3	
Gadwall	985	1540	18	2	15	15	5	10
Teal	1001	778	45	175	17	35	12	28
Mallard	1226	966	164	199	107	169	97	72
Pintail	85	73	2	7		6		
Shoveler	525	394	13	7	17	41	3	11
Pochard	170	59	49	254				
Tufted Duck	3678	1975	188	147		29	19	8
Scaup		2						
Goldeneye	1	29		11				
Ruddy Duck			1					
Little Grebe	116	68	6	15		1	4	9
Great Crested Grebe	584	395	27	21				
Black-necked Grebe	1	1						
Cormorant	326	175	14	24	1	3		
Grey Heron	39	25	5	4	1	2	1	
Little Egret	12	6	6					
Water Rail	10	9						
Moorhen	152	146	2	1	51	52	21	20
Coot	4442	3852	82	190	60	73	19	12

## BOTANY NOTES compiled by Graham Worrall

6 Redland Close, Barrowden LE15 6ES. Telephone: 01572 747302

### September/October 2008

September produced 33 reports of flowering plants, about as good as a dull, damp autumn could provide. October, due to Roy Lemmon doing the rounds of Bloody Oaks SSSI, Ketton Quarry SSSI and Hambleton and Barnsdale Lodge Wood, produced 58 reports!

Thank you for the Verge Reports I have received. Please send in the remainder as soon as possible.

The monitoring of the Verges (see page 16 for locations) is suffering from a lack of new

volunteers – only one person joined this year and more are required for 2009. Will anyone who would like to join this reducing band of members on only three or four very pleasant walks a year **please ring me on 01572 747302**. We need the names by the end of February 2009.

The Limestone Grassland Verges area of Rutland have been allocated cash for cutting back intrusive shrub and tree growth during the next two years by Natural England, and the society is co-operating with the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust to select the verges for action.

Rutland is not as bad as some local counties in respect of woody scrub invasion of verges, but some effort is needed.

I have had the first **Primrose** in flower in October, but as it was in my front garden I

cannot report it. Perhaps we should keep a lookout for early spring flowers out for our delight before Christmas.

Good hunting!

*Thank you for records: R Lemmon, C Jones, G Worrall, T Caldicott, L Worrall.*

## LEPIDOPTERA NOTES compiled by Jean Harvey

4 Clarksdale, Great Easton, Market Harborough LE16 8SP. Telephone: 01536 770259



### September/October 2008

#### BUTTERFLIES

Fourteen species of butterflies were on the wing in our area during September with seven species seen on favourable days during October.

Whilst we remain concerned about the decline of the **Small Tortoiseshell** in general, this was the species for which I received the largest number of records in September! Many members observed them in their gardens, especially on buddleia and on ivy blossoms. Fifteen were counted in one garden in Oakham, there were up to eleven in one area of Barrowden ('the most at any one time for years!') and nine at Ingthorpe Farm near Great Casterton. We understand that this sudden increase in numbers may have been due to a large influx that took place into the country in late summer.

**Brimstones** appeared singly during both months in gardens and on reserves. Both **Large** and **Small Whites** flew in small numbers until early October. Several records received for **Green-veined Whites** were limited to the month of September. The last **Holly Blue** was seen at Lyddington on September 14th and the final sighting of a **Common Blue** was at Ketton Quarry on September 19th, which was obviously a good day for butterfly watching as this date appeared on a large number of cards!

**Red Admirals** were seen in a variety of locations throughout both months and would appear to have had a successful season. It has been a very poor summer for migrants but **Painted Ladies** were found in September at Edith Weston, Langham, Lyddington and Uppingham. A few single **Peacocks** were recorded during September only. A number of **Commas** were observed at Clipsham Park Wood, Edith Weston, Great Casterton, Ketton Quarry and Rutland Water Egleton Reserve, with singles in other areas, thus making this another well-recorded species for the year. Amongst records for **Speckled Woods**,

ten were counted on the Egleton Reserve on September 19th and several in Ketton Quarry with nine the following week in Clipsham Park Wood. There was one late record for **Gatekeeper** in Lyddington on September 6th and one **Small Heath** was seen in Ketton Quarry on the aforementioned September 19th!

#### MOTHS

Although this has been a poor year nationally for moth trapping, with migration numbers very low, a few individual species seem to have done well. The **Small Square Spot** and **Flame Shoulder**, for example, have appeared in numbers in our traps. September was a reasonable month on good weather nights but October has been quite poor in the main.

We trapped at Eyebrook Reservoir on two occasions in September, catching 36 species on the 8th and 21 species on the 27th. Here the highlights were **Merveille du Jour** and **Pale Pinion**. We also had a very late **Light Emerald**, which is a species usually on the wing in July and August. This must have been from a second generation that is often seen in the South.

The garden traps at Lyddington yielded 88 species during September, including a **White Point** and a **Dusky Lemon Sallow** and 52 species during October, when an **Orange Sallow** was new for the site. Other traps were run at Barrowden, Barnsdale Gardens and Edith Weston.

A single **Humming Bird Hawk Moth** was observed at Stretton on October 9th. Male **Vapourers** were recorded (the females of this species are of course wingless) in an Uppingham garden and at Edith Weston. A beautiful **Red Underwing** was found resting on a house wall in Oakham and this species was also attracted to a trap at Eyebrook on each of our two visits, which was unusual as it is a species not often found in traps.

Some attractive caterpillars can be found at this time of year as they search for sites in which to pupate or over-winter. I received photographs of a **Yellowtail** larva found near Fishponds Cottage

and a **Pale Tussock** larva found in an Uppingham garden. Other records included **Pale Tussock** and **Poplar Hawk** found near Rutland Water and **Angleshades** found in a garden at Ketton.

Many thanks to all recent recorders : V Arnold, T Caldecott, G Chiverton, A Comber, R Follows, CR Jones, AL Lawrence, D & F Lee, R Lemmon, J Levisohn, B Lynch, J Mallett, P & E Mann, D Needham, E Northen, D & B Parker, P Rudkin, P Scott and G & L Worrall.

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## ORTHOPTERA REPORT compiled by Phil Rudkin

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### September/October 2008

#### CRICKETS

##### **Oak Bush Cricket**, *Meconema thalassinum*

It is getting better! A few more sightings, of this non-singing bush cricket – one, found in our Edith Weston member's house. Sadly, it was a dead specimen, caught in a spider web, 8th September. Better news: on 6th October, in the same abode, a live one. In the far north of Rutland, a male, observed on scaffolding. Our builder member took it home in his lunch box for identification. It was released the next day, back in Stretton, 14th October. The famous Lyddington garden moth trap had one attracted to the MV light on 26th August.

##### **Dark Bush Cricket**, *Pholidoptera griseoptera*

More good news! Some new 1-kilometre squares for this species. Two members separately located a large colony, in exactly the same location, unbeknown to each other. This was in a large nettle bed, on the Flooded Fields (Burley Fishponds), on 21st and the 24th September. The final sighting was at the same location, on 13th October. This site is part of the Rutland Water Nature Reserve. These records are only the second for the reserve. Yew Tree Avenue, again, had several stridulating males, and specimens observed, on 1st September, in the vegetation next to the car park. A new square was created when a member's bat detector located males in roadside verges, in Stretton village, on 1st September.

The regular males on Verge 8 (Great Casterton), were heard on 26th September.

Three stridulating males were found in the hedgerow on the Little Casterton Road verge, 8th October, giving a further new 1-kilometre square. (Temperature 18 °C, 4.50 pm.)

##### **Roesel's Bush Cricket**, *Metriopectera roeselii*

Late record card for 8th August, for 2 stridulating males, in rough, tall vegetation, (grasses and thistles) in uncut corner of Yew Tree Avenue car park. And another observer heard same stridulations in this location, on 1st September. This is a new 1-kilometre square. Back at the Lyndon reserve, Rutland Water, large numbers had survived the hay cutting, in the fields opposite Shallow Water Hide (14th September, SK 892 055).

Down at the Flooded Fields (Burley Fishponds), on North Arm 1, one stridulating male was heard in rushes, at the edge of the Greater Reed Mace beds (21st September. SK 878 086).

On 19th September, Clive Jones and myself accompanied Martin Banham, Regional Landscape Adviser & Rutland Land Management Adviser for Natural England, into private farmland at Ingthorpe Farm, near Great Casterton. A sunny, warm morning provided us with a total of 9 stridulating males, in various habitats, in a 2-mile walk along the farm track, resulting in two new 1-kilometre squares. We are grateful to Natural England for this opportunity to explore new territory!

A further new 1-kilometre square was created when 2 members explored the hay fields, adjacent to the Normanton car park, next to Edith Weston village. 2 stridulating males heard (2 bat detectors utilised!), SK 924 056. On the afternoon of 26th September, temperature 22 °C, three members checked out Ketton Quarries and located 4 stridulating males in rough grasses at The Dell, also, a further 4 males in grasses, opposite side of the valley, known as The Donkey Paddocks. Later, as the members made their way out along

the LRWT entrance, in the rough field adjacent to the footpath, large numbers of stridulating males were heard (SK 978 052).

The few, welcome warm days in October proved rewarding!

On 6th October, 2 stridulating males were located in long grasses in the Leighfield region. On the 8th October, at 4.20 pm, temperature 18 °C, 2 males were half-heartedly attempting to stridulate, in the rank grasses/thistles, at the neglected farmland, Brickyard Quarry, Little Casterton Road, Stamford. The final songs reported from this attractive bush cricket were at Wing Fishing Lakes, 12.15 pm, temperature, 15 °C. There were 2 males, in rough vegetation, at the far edge of the second lake (19th October). An interesting summary, received from the Society's treasurer, for June to September: 'A good population heard and seen along field margin, at the top of garden' in Lyddington.

#### **Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus discolor***

First report for this period, 13th September, came from Leighfield Fish Ponds: one female found, SK 929 039. On the Rutland Water Lyndon reserve, 14th September: good numbers, located in long grasses, just past the car park, into the cut hay field, west of the Interpretive Centre. These have survived the hay cutting!

On the Flooded Fields (Burley Fishponds), on North Arm 1: five stridulating males, in rushes along the fence line, adjacent to the Greater Reed Mace beds (SK 878 086).

On 14th September, on the Hambleton Peninsular Road, one male, and a few yards further along, 4 more males, heard in the long grasses. Another new 1-kilometre square, for 9 stridulating males in long grasses on the outer edges of Fishponds, adjacent to Normanton Car Park, Edithweston (18th September, SK 924 056).

On a fine sunny morning, 19th September, Clive Jones and myself accompanied Martin Banham, of Natural England, into private farmland, at Ingthorpe Farm, near Great Casterton. One new 1-kilometre square, for 2 stridulating males, in rank grasses/thistles, in a set-aside field, just off the A606 (SK 981 084. Elevation, 45 metres.) Thank you to Natural England for this opportunity!

In The Dell, Ketton Quarries, 4 stridulating males. Also, 5 heard in long grasses, in the field adjacent to the footpath, on the LRWT entrance (26th September).

Those few warm days in October produced large numbers of stridulating males in the neglected

farmland, Brickyard Quarry, Little Casterton Road, Stamford (8th October). These distinctive (hard to find), green bush crickets are much more inclined to sing later than Roesel's. However, the latter commences singing earlier in the season. Final stridulations reported, were from Wing Fishing Lakes (12.15 pm, temperature 15 °C, overcast) with 2 males in rushes, and 2 on grass bank, at edge of first lake; and 4 in grasses at edge of second lake, with 2 more a few yards away (19th October). Finally, a general summary from the garden at Lyddington, for June/September: 'A good population, heard and seen along field margin, at top of garden'.

#### **Short-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus dorsalis***

Just as I was bemoaning the poor weather and thinking 'that was it' for this season, a few warm days in October gave us much excitement with the orthoptera species. And the big surprise came on the late morning of 10th October (warm and sunny, 20 °C) – a new, large colony, located in a fringe of rushes and Tufted Hair Grass, 33 yards in length, situated on the south shore of North Arm 1, Rutland Water (the fifth field, SK 901 079, elevation 85 metres). Stridulation from many males. Females and males sunbathing on top sides of the rushes. Females caught and photographed (essential for comparison with female Long-winged Conehead). One flightless nymph seen (see photo opposite), and photograph taken on rushes. This is proof that this species was here in 2007. However, the large colony suggests they have been here possibly 2 to 3 years at least, hitherto, **un**-detected.

I cannot emphasise enough the importance of the use of the bat detector in our work. This location is in a new 1-kilometre square. A further visit on 12th was very frustrating, when a macropterous (long winged form), male, and then a female were observed, but too quick to capture. And a final visit on 19th, when it was 9 °C, overcast and windy, had 3 males, reluctantly singing in bursts.

#### **Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima***

Excellent, usual large numbers! From the entrance gate, west of the Interpretive Centre at the Lyndon reserve, all the length of the hedgerow, along the trail, finishing at Shallow Water Hide. The majority were in hawthorn (14th September). On the Eggleton Road to the Hambleton Peninsular Road, although much of the hedgerow has been cut, a few have survived, and 2 males were caught and photographed (14th September).

During the Bat Walk (joint field meeting with the LRWT Rutland Group, on the evening of 16th



Short-winged Cone-head. Flightless nymph.

September), with many bat detectors switched on, Hambleton Woods was alive with the stridulations of numerous males.

On the private farmland, at Ingthorpe Farm, Great Casterton, on 19th September, with Natural England, two new 1-kilometre squares. Massive numbers located in a 100 yards stretch, mainly hawthorn (SK 995 083). After a break in the hedges, a further walk into the next square revealed many more stridulating males. One male observed on Bramble leaves (SK 989 085, temperature at 11.40 am 23 °C).

One new 1-kilometre square: on tree-lined hill, near footpath, above North Arm 1, below Hambleton village, 8 stridulating males in Ash. A few yards down, another 4, also in Ash (SK 901 079, elevation 88 metres).

General summary from the Lyddington garden, for July / August: 'This species regularly found in garden'.

## GROUNDHOPPERS

### **Slender Groundhopper, *Tetrix subulata***

My man at the Brooke Road allotment in Oakham has done it again! Great to receive records for this very under-recorded species. 3 seen on the 8th September, and again on 15th. The allotment has two small streams, on either side. This species favours vegetation and bare earth areas, near streams, ponds and other wet places. It can also swim well. One found on grass bank, at side of Fishponds, on the shore of South Arm, Edith Weston (18th September, SK 924 056). Both of these records are new 1-kilometre squares. From the June / September period from the Lyddington

garden: 'One and two coming to MV light moth trap, on two occasions'.

### **Common Groundhopper, *Tetrix undulata***

From the Lyddington garden, June / September: 'One and two, coming to MV light moth trap, on a couple of occasions'.

## GRASSHOPPERS.

### **Field Grasshopper, *Chorthippus brunneus***

Only one report this for this period! 2 seen on bare ground, in The Dell, Ketton Quarries, on 19th September.

### **Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus parallelus***

2 males, found on grass bank, of Fishponds, on shore of South Arm, 18th September.

And, in the surrounding grassland, numerous adults and nymphs observed, new 1-kilometre square, SK 924 056. On the private farmland at Ingthorpe Farm, Great Casterton, with Natural England, 19th September, 12 stridulating males, in rough grasses, SK 983 086. Further along the track, and in set-aside field, 5 adults seen.

SK 981 084, new 1-kilometre square. Large colony, stridulating males, many nymphs and adults found, in long grasses, in North Glade, Ketton Quarries, on 19th and 26th September. 4 stridulating males, in The Donkey Paddock. One nymph found, on 10th, and 2 stridulating males in long grasses on 12th October, on the south shore of North Arm 1, Rutland Water, SK 901 079, new 1-kilometre square.

One, observed on roadside grass verge, outside of Brooke village, on 6th October.

In the field margin, at the rear of Main Street, Lyddington. 'A few seen and heard during June to September. But, population well down on previous years.'

**Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, *Chorthippus albomarginatus***

Small numbers survived the hay cutting on the Lyndon reserve, west of Interpretive Centre (14th September). 4 stridulating males in long grasses, and 4 individuals seen, in small triangle, at edge of cattle grid, Edith Weston (SK 928 056); and 4 males, and one pair in courtship, found on grass

bank of Fishponds, South Arm, Rutland Water, Edith Weston (SK 924 056) – two new 1-kilometre squares.

Many nymphs found, and adult males stridulating, in lush grasses, in North Glade, Ketton Quarries. Also, 4 adults observed, in The Dell, all on 19th and 26th September.

Pair, observed in field, on 10th and 12th October, on the south shore of North Arm 1 – a new 1-kilometre square.

Finally, on 6th October, one on grass verge, outside of Brooke village, and on 10th and 20th October, 3 observed on the Brooke Road, Oakham, allotment.

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*Many thanks to contributors, for this seasons sightings, and digital photography: V Arnold, T Caldicott, A Chiverton, F Chiverton, G Chiverton, C Jones, A Lawrence, D & F Lee, D Needham, P Rudkin, P Scott*

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## **PLANT GALLS REPORT** compiled by Roy Lemmon

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### **September 2008**

Both of these months have seen an increase in the number of reports of galls on Oak, quite why this is I am not sure, but leaf fall certainly makes it easier to spot them.

Robins Pincushion on Dog Rose was seen at Ryhall Heath on the 12th and at Ingthorpe on the 19th - this record was accompanied by a very nice photo. Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue was the site of a Cherry gall on Oak on 14th and Cola Nut, Hedgehog and Knopper galls were at Lyndon on Oak on the 18th. Burley Wood on 25th gave a Smooth Spangle gall on Oak and also assorted galls on Buckler Fern, Bracken, Field Maple and two different galls on Meadowsweet, one of which was caused by a rust.

### **October 2008**

One would expect the number of galls to decrease as the season draws to a close but paradoxically this month has seen an increase in the number of reports. The month started with reports from Brooke on 6th of four different galls, Artichoke, Common Spangle, Marble and Silk Button on

Turkey Oak. This is excellent as it is a species for which we seldom get reports. It would be tedious both for me and for the reader to detail the 38 other reports for this month. They will appear in the Annual Report of course and inevitably many of the common ones, by definition, appear more or less each month. The gall-inducing rusts were prominent as at about this time they reach the teliospore stage in their life cycle and it is one which often brings about galling. A common one is the rust on Ground Ivy which produces ring shaped dark brown galls on the underside of the leaf, and this was reported from Ketton Quarry on 2nd and Barnsdale Lodge Wood and Bloody Oaks Quarry on 16th. Other galls which have featured this month have been what might be loosely called 'hairy patches on leaves', technically an erineum. These are sometimes white but often coloured and are caused by mites which having induced the plant to produce them then live amongst them. These galls were found on Beech in Ketton Quarry on 2nd, on Crab Apple, same site same date and also on Crab Apple in Hambleton Wood on 9th. Buckthorn in Bloody Oaks Quarry on 19th completes the reports of this type of gall.

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*The Society's thanks to T Caldicott, G Chiverton, P Rudkin and R Lemmon for their reports.*

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# INSECTS AND OTHERS compiled by Gill Chiverton

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*As I started writing up these notes I felt it might be a fairly short report this time. However, getting down to reading all the report cards proved me wrong and as usual RNHS members have been seeing and recording lots of interesting insect behaviour.*

## September 2008

Dragonflies and Damselflies start this month. A **Brown Hawker** was recorded at the Oakham Canal, **Southern Hawk**ers were recorded at the Oakham Canal and at Barrowden, Ketton Quarry and Edith Weston. Two **Migrant Hawk**ers were seen at Ketton Quarry and a single **Common Hawker** was noted at Langham. **Common Darters** were recorded at Oakham Canal, Hambleton Woods, Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue, Edith Weston, and in two records at Ketton Quarry were noted as 'numerous' and 'still in good numbers'. A **Ruddy Darter** was noted at Oakham Canal.

**Common Damselflies** were observed at Oakham Canal and RWeg. Two **Emerald Damselfly** records came from Leighfield Fishponds and RWBurley Fishponds.

Several Shield Bug sightings came in this month. The **Green Shield Bug** *Palomena prasina* was noted on two occasions at Edith Weston. A **Hawthorn Shield Bug** *Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale* was noted at RWBurley Fishponds. Two instar stage **Bronze Shield Bugs** *Troilus luridus* were recorded on hedge woundwort at Leighfield Fishponds. A **Forest/Red-legged Shieldbug** *Pentatoma rufipes* was recorded at Edith Weston. A 5<sup>th</sup> instar **Parent Shield Bug** *Elasmucha grisea* was noted on bracken at Burley. **Dock Squash Bugs** *Coreus marginatus* were noted in good numbers all month at Brooke Road Allotments in Oakham.

Two sightings of **Devil's Coach-horse beetles** *Ocypus oleus* came from Burley and Edith Weston. A **Violet Ground Beetle** was recorded in Edith Weston. Recordings of single specimens of **7-spot Ladybirds** came in from Ketton Quarry (twice) and Edith Weston.

**Harlequin Ladybirds** were recorded at RWBurley Fishponds, and up to 10 all month with several pupae were noted at Brooke Road Allotments, Oakham.

An 'abundance' of **Hornets** *Vespa crabro* were recorded flying along the hedgeline at Hambleton Peninsula, North Arm; indicating a nearby nest. In Burley Wood 4-5 **Hornets** were seen in flight and a single **Hornet** was caught in a moth trap

at Edith Weston and another single **Hornet** was noted flying low over set-aside at Ingthorpe.

A large number of **Common Wasps** *Vespula vulgaris* were seen feeding on ivy flowers at Barrowden.

In September a large wasp's nest (football size) was recorded hanging on a low branch of a horse-chestnut tree in Edith Weston. After taking photographs the recorder decided that 'disgression was the better part of valour' and did not stay long enough to get a close view of the species of wasp. Luckily on enlargement of one photograph did reveal a wasp entering the nest. However, wasps are definitely identified by their facial markings so it didn't help that the wasp was flying into the nest. It is probable though that the wasps were of the Median Wasp *Dolichovespula media* species as the nest precisely fitted the description of a median wasp nest as given in Richard Lewington's *Guide to Garden Wildlife*: 'The nest, usually suspended in a tree or shrub, is mainly grey but often has coloured bands that reflect the different types of wood used in its construction.' On the enlarged photograph the coloured bands were clearly to be seen.

Two records of the **Garden Spider** *Araneus diadematus* were received. One record came from Ketton Quarry, and complex web construction by garden spiders was noted in Barrowden and interestingly too their behaviour with regard to temperature was recorded.

Some end of Summer/early Autumn observations from Lyddington – Southern Hawker Dragonfly – regular emergences from garden pond, probably 12 in total. **Cream-spot Ladybird** – occasionally one insect in moth trap throughout summer. In August one Brown Hawker Dragonfly noted in garden. Common Darter Dragonflies – 2 or 3 were seen regularly from late August to mid-October. Migrant Hawker Dragonflies – 2 in garden late August/September. Harlequin Ladybirds were noted from June – October but never in great numbers, max 2. 7-spot Ladybirds – very few sightings this year with a maximum of 2 adults this autumn.



Green Shield Bug, *Palomena prasina*

## OCTOBER 2008

Once again Dragonfly and Damselfly records start this month. Two **Migrant Hawk**s were recorded at Hambleton Peninsula and one single insect was recorded at Ketton Quarry. **Common Darter Dragonflies** were recorded as follows – four insects at Hambleton Peninsula, 4 insects at Ketton Quarry and 2 insects at Ketton Quarry valley.

Three **Common Blue Damselflies** were recorded at Hambleton Peninsula and one 'rather lethargic male' was noted at Barnsdale Lodge Wood.

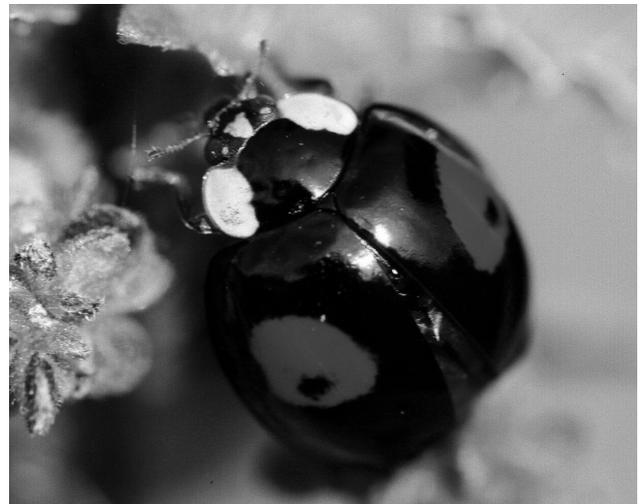
Two Shield Bug records. A group of RNHS members were at Hambleton Peninsula when a **Green Shield Bug** *Palomena prasina* 'joined us for lunch in the car park'. (How easy can insect recording get!) A **Parent Shield Bug** *Elasmucha grisea* was noted at the 5<sup>th</sup> instar stage at Bloody Oaks Quarry. A **Mirid Bug** *Notostira elongata* was recorded at Brooke Road Allotments, Oakham. **Marsh Damsel Bugs** were recorded at Brooke and RWBurley Fishponds. Two **Cabbage Whitefly** *Aleyrodes protettella* were noted on the underside of a common figwort leaf at Barnsdale Lodge Wood. A **Solitary Wasp** *Ectemnius continuus* was recorded at Brooke Road Allotments, Oakham.

The only beetle records received for October were of the **Harlequin Ladybird** *Harmonia axyridis*

The Harlequin Ladybird comes in a number of colour variants and some of the most commonly occurring have now been named. *Harmonia axyridis succinea* is the variety with 15-21 black spots on a yellow-orange background. *Harmonia axyridis spectabilis* is the variety with 2 or 4 orange or red spots on a black background. *Harmonia axyridis conspicua* (see below) is the variety with 2 red spots on a black background, each red spot containing a small black spot.

Some of the following RNHS records reflect these new namings. *Harmonia axyridis* records came on two occasions from Edith Weston, with approximately 20 recorded on one sighting. On two occasions *Harmonia axyridis* was noted at RWBurley Fishponds with 12 seen fairly close together and two weeks later 10 recorded in the same place. A single specimen of *Harmonia axyridis conspicua* was recorded at Hambleton Peninsula.

50+ Harlequin Ladybirds were recorded on the south-facing front of a house in North Luffenham. These were a mixture of different variants, namely *Harmonia axyridis spectabilis* and *H. axyridis succinea* plus a more orange variation with fewer spots.



Harlequin Ladybird, *Harmonia axyridis conspicua*

Many thanks to the following recorders: V Arnold, J W Ansley, T Caldicott, C R Jones, A Lawrence, F & D Lee, R Lemmon, J Levisohn, D Needham, P Rudkin, P Scott, L & G Worrall

## MYCOLOGY NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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### September/October 2008

These months seemed characterised by dullness but while September was wet and cool, October was a bit dryer and there was even a brief apology for an Indian Summer.

Many fungi which might have been expected seemed either to have fruited early and then given up or disappeared entirely, and instead we have seen more unusual species which presumably didn't mind the soggy summer. I'm most grateful for your reports, which allow some insights into such things.

At the end of October members found interesting fungi on the Society's visit to Tortoiseshell Wood. The Leicestershire Fungi Study Group equally found a good number of fungi in Wakerley Woods, where unusual species proliferated while the more likely ones were scarce.

There has been just one sighting of Stubble Rosegills *Volvariella gloiocephala*, and that was from Spanhoe, just in Northants, at the end of September. Sometimes our field edges are full of their dainty pale umbrellas emerging from soft sacs like an amanita, but Rosegills have pinky-brown gills and pink spores, while amanitas have white gills and spores. Nor have there been many Shaggy Inkcaps or Jelly Ears.

But there have been waxcaps including the Pink at Clipsham, White Spindles were in Lyddington, *Russula* and *Lactarius* species were also at Clipsham and a huge *Agaricus macrosporus* caused a diversion for golfers at North Luffenham. Roy Lemmon's mildews and rusts have been stars!

### RESERVES

**Lyndon Reserve: 3.8** (sorry for delay): Fresh Coral Spot (likes the damp!), Russet Toughshank *Collybia dryophila*, two new Ochre Brittlegills *Russula ochroleuca* (fruiting rather early), and 4 Stinkhorns.

**Lyndon Centre: 18.9:** Powdery mildews *Microsphaera alphitoides* teleomorph on oak, *M penicillata* teleomorph on alder, *M tortilis* anamorph on dogwood, *Podosphaera clandestina* on hawthorn, *Uncinula adunca* teleomorph on goat willow, *Sphaerotheca epilobii* anamorph on broad-leaved willowherb; a group of 20 *Tephrocycbe anthracophila* in dense moss on old fire site; Rusts *Puccinastrum epilobii* on broad-leaved willowherb, *Phragmidium bulbosum* on bramble with Hyphomycete *Hainesia rubi* parasitic on this rust.

**Gibbet Gorse: 18.9:** Conifer Blueing Bracket *Postia caesia* on conifer wood, fresh Blushing Bracket on broadleaf, more than 100 fresh Sulphur Tufts in several groups on broadleaf, an Oakbug Milkcap *Lactarius quietus* in mixed woodland with one Charcoal Burner *Russula cyanoxantha* and 10 Scaly Earthballs *Scleroderma verrucosum*; Rust *Kuehneola uredinis* on bramble.

**Hambleton Wood: 15.9:** Blackening Waxcap in grassland just beyond exit gate towards end of peninsula. **9.10:** Powdery mildews *Erysiphe cynoglossi* anamorph on field forget-me-not, *E galeopsidis* anamorph on ground ivy (differentiation with *E biocellata* impossible at this stage), teleomorph states of powdery mildews *Microsphaera alphitoides* on oak, *Phyllactinia fraxini* on ash and *Sphaerotheca aphanis* on wood avens; Rusts *Puccinia arenariae* on red campion, one Blackening Waxcap *Hygrocybe conica* in grass in woodland clearing and in Drawdown Zone of Reservoir: Rust *P lagenophorae* on groundsel (a galler).

**Barnsdale Lodge Wood: 16.10:** Common Tarcrust, King Alfred's Cakes on fallen ash, teleomorph states of Powdery mildews: *Erysiphe heraclei* on hogweed, *Microsphaera alphitoides* on oak, *Phyllactinia fraxini* on ash, *P guttata* on hazel, *Sawadaea bicornis* on field maple, *Sphaerotheca epilobii* on broad-leaved willowherb, *Uncinula adunca* var *adunca* on grey willow, *U adunca* var *regularis* on goat willow; powdery mildew *Phyllactinia mali* on hawthorn, asco *Venturia maculiformis* on great willowherb; six Sulphur Tufts, six Angel's Bonnet *Mycena arcangeliana*; Rusts *Phragmidium violaceum* on bramble, *Puccinia arenariae* on red campion, *P glechomatis* on ground-ivy. Rust *P pulverulenta* was with Powdery Mildew *Sphaerotheca epilobii* on broad-leaved willowherb (as above) and Rust *Melampsora capraearum* was with Powdery Mildew *Uncinula adunca* var *adunca* (as above).

**Prior's Coppice: 21.9:** Birch Polypore.

**Bloody Oaks Quarry: 8.9:** Remnant of small yellowish fungus on quarry floor, appearing to be broken off. On the last day of August there was a flourish of Persistent Waxcaps, with more 'pinpoints' perhaps to come, and it seems remarkable that this is the only survivor only a week later. **2.10:** Marssonina state of Black Spot of Rose *Diplocarpon rosae*, Sycamore Tarspot on Sycamore leaves, Powdery mildew *Erysiphe depressa* anamorph on next year's Lesser Burdock,

Candlesnuff Fungus; 12 clumps of Honey Fungus, 25+ per group plus 3 very large crowded groups, 100+ Common Inkcaps on woody debris, c30 Common Bonnet *Mycena galericulata* on, probably, hawthorn stump; Rusts *Puccinia calcitrapae* on dwarf thistle, *P. glechomatis* on ground-ivy, *P. punciformis* on creeping thistle (a galler), *P. violae* on hairy violet (galler), *Pucciniastrum agrimoniae* on common agrimony.

**Ketton Quarry: 2.10:** North Glade: Rusts *Melampsora caprearum* on goat willow and *Puccinia glechomatis* on ground-ivy (both gallers.) **RIGS:** Sycamore Tarspot. **Woodland:** Lemon Disco *Bisporella citrina* on broadleaf wood, King Alfred's Cakes on fallen ash, fresh Common Tarcrust *Diatrype stigma* on fallen hawthorn twigs on soil; Bay Polypore *Polyporus durus* past their best on their usual log, and in beech litter / soil: Wood Mushroom *Agaricus silvicola* in a ring and two emergent Wood Blewits.

## WOODS

**Burley Wood: 25.9:** Powdery Mildew teleomorph *Microsphaera alphitoides* on oak *Quercus petraea*, Coral Spot on fallen broadleaf twigs, Sycamore Tarspot on sycamore leaves but not a heavy infestation; Fresh Jelly Ears on fallen elder near ground; 2 Yellow Fieldcaps in grassy rides, large numbers going over on old broadleaved stump, c75 Amethyst Deceivers *Laccaria amethystina* in soil / leaf litter under broadleaves; Rusts *Kuehneola uredinis* and *Phragmidium violaceum* on bramble, *Pucciniastrum epilobii* on rosebay willowherb, *Triphragmium ulmariae*, a gall former, on meadowsweet.

**Clipsham Park Wood: 28.9:** Around the track off the middle of Yew Tree Avenue, D and B Parker, P and E Mann and E Northen found fresh Birch Polypores, Common Funnel *Clitocybe gibba* (*infundibuliformis*), Clouded Funnel *C. nebularis* and Tawny Funnel *Lepista flaccida*, Sulphur Tuft, and a nice selection of Lactarius and Russulas: Lilacscale Milkcap *Lactarius spinosulus*, Rufus Milkcap, False Saffron Milkcap *L. deterrimus*, Woolly Milkcap *L. torminosus*, Oakbug Milkcap *L. quietus* and also Ochre Brittle gill, Charcoal Burner *Russula cyanoxantha*. In the Avenue were some waxcaps and spindles: 4 fresh Pink Waxcap *Hygrocybe calyptriformis*, Meadow Waxcap *H. pratensis*, Persistent Waxcap *H. persistens* var *langei*, Snowy Waxcap *H. virginea*, very fresh White Spindles *Clavaria fragilis* and Golden Spindles

*C. fusiformis*; also Bay Bolete *Boletus badius*, Red-cracking Bolete *B. chrysenteron*, Field Mushroom and The Prince *Agaricus augustus*. Super finds for this year! Woodland side of Avenue: Conifer Blueing Bracket *Postia caesia*, Brittle Bracket *P. stiptica*, Turkeytail, Shaggy Inkcap, Pleated Inkcap and Stinking (it does!) Dapperling *Lepiota cristata*. **26.9:** J Ansley found and photographed several of the above fungi.

## FIELDS, VERGES, GARDENS

**Lyddington: Aug/Sept:** Over 100 fruiting bodies of Yellow Stainers *Agaricus xanthodermus* in the Lees' orchard. **8.9:** Clive Jones found a number of Blackening Waxcaps and dense growths of White Spindles *Clavaria fragilis* (*vermicularis*) in sheep pasture to south of Lyddington-Uppingham road near Community College.

**Oakham: 12.9:** A Shaggy Inkcap *Coprinus comatus* in J Ansley's front garden. Hurrah.

**Uppingham: 12.9:** Alan Blake found Suede Bolete *Boletus subtomentosus* under a lime on Todd's Piece.

**Wing: 15.9:** G Worrall spotted Giant Polypore *Meripilus giganteus* surrounding beech just west of waterworks entrance; **23.9:** Almost gone over.

**North Luffenham Golf Course: 24.9:** Huge chunky *Agaricus macrosporus* in grass found by D Bagshaw of Barrowden and brought to me.

**Barrowden: 7.9:** Jelly Ears briefly on our Field Maple stump, warm after much heavy rain. **10.9:** On Green by duckpond, one Ruby Bolete *Boletus rubellus* on south side of oak bole; nearby and under adjacent lime even more Split Fibrecaps *Inocybe rimosa* than in August; a stately group of Petticoat Mottlegills *Panaeolus papilionaceus* at north edge of oak canopy and a flourish of pinky cream Deceivers *Laccaria laccata*. **16.9:** After several warm days with cool nights: grass cut day before and there was a little Split Fibrecap debris, but 45 little Deceivers escaped. They did not, however, develop. Over 20 years I've not seen Deceivers there before and hardly ever a Fibrecap. **14.10:** Our rotting log pile had none of its usual fungi, but I was surprised by a flourish of Grooved Bonnets *Mycena polygramma*, which had never occurred before there either.

**Cottesmore Spinney: 12.10:** Two large Stinkhorns, one gone over, the other active with flies on its black slimy ridges.

Thanks for reports: J Ansley, D Bagshaw, T Behets, A Blake, R Iliffe, C Jones, D and F Lee, R Lemmon, E and P Mann, E Northen, B and D Parker, P Scott, G and L Worrall.

## MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

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### July to October 2008

The records for July and August have been combined with those for September and October, so I apologise to those of you who have waited some time to see your reports in Fieldfare, and thank you for sending me your sightings. There have been fewer reports than usual, perhaps reflecting the indifferent weather, and consequent reluctance of members to venture from home! As usual reports range through the county, and cover many of our local species. It is noticeable that we have not seen mink locally for some time, and otters are still around, but we have not yet had any increase in sightings of water voles, so I would like members to look for them, and signs of their presence, if walking near local rivers and streams.

Our first report for the summer months was **Otter spraint** found under the second bridge from the trout farm at Fort Henry in August, and again in the same spot at the end of October.

Fewer **Badgers** have been reported this summer, just one crossing Seaton Road Barrowden, in October, and one road casualty between Ketton and Tinwell, but setts in the area are active, and latrines have been reported from Ketton Quarries, Hambleton, Walk Farm and Pickworth Wood. In July a **Stoat** was watched as it crossed the tractor wheelings to the west of the dam below the lower lake at Fort Henry. It ran excitedly around, chasing its tail, and leaping up into the air for several minutes before it disappeared into the plantation nearby. In September a dead stoat was found on the A6003 at Gunthorpe, and four were reported in October, one crossing the B672 by Seaton meadows. A second on Morcott Road Seaton dropped its meal (a mouse) as it came out onto the road, so returned to retrieve it before crossing the road. A third crossed Seaton Road Bisbrooke, and another was observed hunting along the stone wall by North Brook Bridge at Fort Henry Ponds. **Weasels** have been seen – in July one crossed the road between Ashwell and Teigh, in August two ran together across the road leading to Egleton village from Hambleton peninsula, and a single animal crossed the A606 W of Empingham. In October there were three weasel reports, crossing roads at Ashwell, Tolethorpe, and near Greetham valley golf course. **A Hedgehog** was seen regularly by the Combers in their Oakham garden throughout July, and

once during August, but no more records since then. A **Wood mouse** was also feeding on bird seed under their bird feeder for several days in mid-July. At Barrowden the Worralls report a hedgehog taking residence in a box in their garden in early October, filling it with leaves. Two hedgehogs, one large, one smaller, were seen feeding on peanuts and on food put out for them, and a gentle grunting noise heard (they prefer the nuts!) and the box continued to be stuffed with leaves. Later in the month the smaller one was not seen, but the larger one occasionally appeared, and at the end of the month as the weather got colder the occupant of the box did not emerge much, if at all. A **grey squirrel** ran along the Worralls' garden fence in mid October.

**Molehills** were freshly dug in Barnsdale Lodge Wood during October, and many workings seen in fields near the Trout farm, Fort Henry.

During July **Brown hares** were seen at Exton, Pickworth Wood and Walk Farm track. In August a very young leveret ran in front of a car for 100 m on Seaton Road Barrowden before diving for the hedge. In September at Ingthorpe Farm, Great Casterton, two hares were seen separately, one in stubble and the other in a set-aside field. In the same month at Fort Henry a hare was seen in the field on top of the hill to the west of the upper lake.

In July **Foxes** were seen at Little Haw wood, and a road casualty found on the A606 near Whitwell. In August two were seen separately in Clipsham Wood, and in October a cub was seen on Barnsdale Hill. One record carried forward from June was an adult fox and two cubs trotting along Steadfold Lane Ketton in daylight, before disappearing into the hedgerow.

**Fallow deer** have been seen in large numbers during the summer and autumn, and fawns regularly with them. In Burley Woods up to 7 fawns were seen on one day in July, with a total of over 50 adults. Little Haw Wood also has a very large population, over 100 being counted in one October day, in groups of 50, 19, 8, and 7. Other reports come from Pickworth, Clipsham, and Morkery Wood. **Muntjac** are regularly reported from Burley, Pickworth, Little Haw and Barnsdale Woods. In July a Muntjac emerged from Tippings Lane Barrowden onto the village green, in front of the Exeter Arms, in full view of drinkers outside. It jumped into the garden of the house next to the pub, meeting the surprised householder, before

disappearing. In August a Muntjac was eating windfall apples in Dr Gallimore's garden in Wing, and later the same month three, two adults and one young, were seen on the verge between

Preston and Wing. In September many Muntjac slots were found in soft mud in the valley at Ketton Quarry.

*Many thanks for all contributions from: A Biddle, M Branston, A & J Comber, C Gallimore, C Jones, P Langston, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, D & B Parker, P J Rudkin, A R & M A Thorp, L & G Worrall.*

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## **BAT REPORT** compiled by Jenny Harris

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### **May to October 2007**

Relatively few records have been received directly from members this summer; the weather may have been responsible for keeping bats and members at home most evenings. Even at their usual haunt, for instance at the entrance to Barnsdale Wood, no bats were recorded during the summer, and bats were absent from several roosts counted for the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP), although several new roosts were found.

#### **Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle (species not always identified or separated)**

At Redland Road, Barrowden, eight bats flew past the Worrall's garden on 1.5, and by the end of the month ones and twos had been present most evenings, foraging over the garden. Two were noted flying 'home' at 4.0 am that day. There were frequent sightings there in June, often with two bats following each other, and on some occasions up to 15 passed over in the space of five minutes as they left a nearby roost. On 10.7, 12 bats in the course of three minutes flew directly over the garden, without stopping to forage, in the direction of the duck pond and river, and this behaviour was observed again on 23.7. It has been noted that when feeding conditions are poor (either because of unsettled weather or low insect numbers) bats tend to be concentrated in optimal foraging habitat, such as riparian sites and wooded areas.

Using an RNHS detector, Alan and Julie Coomber recorded Common Pipistrelle (peaking at 45 kHz) in their Oakham garden regularly throughout July, August and September, while Soprano Pipistrelles (55 kHz) were occasional visitors to my own (but more often next door's) garden during the period. Common and Soprano Pipistrelles were in Burley Wood on 3.5, 28.6, 23.7 and 28.7; there was a tremendous amount of activity in the south-west (Compartment 20)

of the wood on 28.7. On 4.7, there seemed to be fewer pipistrelles of both species in the Aldgate area of Ketton, but later in the month there were plenty of bats along the south shore of Hambleton Peninsula on 29.8. In August sightings at Barrowden were of up to five pipistrelles on most evenings up to 9.8, plus droppings in the car port, where the bats fly through and on 17.10 one was flying at dusk after a cold, sunny day. On 15.8 a group of Soprano Pipistrelles, foraging under the shelter of trees overhanging a track at Eggleton NR, delighted participants on the Bird Fair bat walk.

In September, a walk at Rutland Watersports, Whitwell, on 4.9, revealed much activity along the reservoir shore, with foraging activity building up after dark, as it does at Hambleton. On 16.9, during the joint meeting of the RNHS and LRWT local group at Hambleton, it was noticeable that insect numbers had plummeted, compared both with the August visit and with surveys at the same time in other years. As a result, pipistrelle activity was lower than previously observed.

Two new roosts were discovered and counted for the NBMP, and a new roost, thought to be of Common Pipistrelles, was found in Lyndon on 22.6 while surveying at another, abandoned, roost. The colony at Braunston church, which has been known for many years, was counted for the NBMP for the first time this year, thanks to member Jim Whiteford, but the other roost in the village was unoccupied. Dr Gallimore's colony in Wing, which has been counted for the NBMP for many years, was studied by David Cole, and their echo-location calls analysed; it seems probable that these are Soprano Pipistrelles, and not Common, as was previously thought. A roost in Oakham which is not counted for the NBMP because the bats are usually absent in June, visited for several weeks in May then had more than 200 bats in early August, although they only stayed for five days. Another roost in Oakham, discovered last year in an area of the town where

**Table 1 Grounded Pipistrelles, May to October 2008**

Date	Species	Location	Age	Sex	Reason	Outcome
5.6	Common	Oakham	Ad.	M	Injured wing	Died E
24.6	Soprano	Whitwell	Inf.	F	Away from roost	Died E
8.7	Not determined	Whitwell	Juv.	M	Away from roost	Died
8.7	Not determined	Whitwell	Juv.	M	Away from roost	Died
8.7	Soprano	Whitwell	Juv.	M	Away from roost	Died *
9.7	Soprano	Whitwell	Juv.	F	Away from roost	Died *
14.7	Common	Seaton	Juv.	F	Trapped indoors	Released
18.8	Common	Allextion	Ad.	F	Cat victim	Dead

**Key:** Died E - euthanized by vet; Died \* - survived several months before dying of natural causes in captivity.

the bats move from roost to roost, apparently according to the weather, had 195 bats on 23.7. At a newly discovered roost in Seaton more than 30 Common Pipistrelles emerged on 15.7.

There were eight grounded pipistrelles during the period, five of them infants and juveniles found in the boiler room at Whitwell Hotel, where they had crawled from their inaccessible roost in the roof.

#### **Nathusius' Pipistrelle**

Following a visit on 5.7 that was abandoned because of rain and high winds, poor weather prevented the Bat Group carrying out further visits at Hambleton to search for the roost of this rare bat. On 28.6 and 23.7 only four bats emerged from the roost in Burley Wood, although on the latter occasion social calls from the roost suggested that there were more bats inside. At least one flew through Compartment 20 in Burley Wood on 28.7. On 29.8 at Hambleton south shore, several passes by a single bat were heard very clearly late in the evening.

#### **Brown Long-eared Bat**

Away from roosts, Long-eared Bats are hard to record, but in Barrowden, Graham and Linda Worrall regularly see one, or evidence of its presence, especially in their car port. On 31.5, however, there was a 'larger' bat flying round a street light and nearby sycamore, which was likely to have been this species. They are known to have a taste for aphids, for which sycamore is famous. Droppings beneath the car port were noted on 9.8, 27.8, 17.9, 15.10 and the last droppings on 27.10. Three roosts were counted for the NBMP, at Wing, Manton and a new one at Barnsdale. Dr Gallimore noted copious droppings

beneath the newly created access at the gable end of his new extension on 13.9, and at 7.45 pm he observed a Long-eared Bat emerging. Fresh droppings were seen there until mid October. A probable maternity roost was visited in September at Stockerston and had six bats still in residence.

There were three grounded Long-eared Bats during the period: a juvenile female was found on the side of a building between Stockerston and Allextion on 19.8; an adult female was found dead in Edith Weston in October, and another bat was found in Whissendine on 27.10.

#### **Whiskered Bat**

A count was made at the known roost in Seaton, on a rather cool evening in June (12.6, 10 °C); 26 bats emerged. A single grounded bat was rescued: a juvenile female was huddled on the sill of a ground-floor window at Rutland County Council offices, in Oakham, where it was seen by staff on 29.8. By the number of droppings, it had been there all night, possibly confused by the bright lights that illuminate the building after dark. It was released safely about three weeks later.

#### **Daubenton's Bat**

We do not know of any confirmed roosts for Daubenton's Bat in Rutland, although there must be some, as this species is regularly found in suitable foraging habitat. For instance, there must be a roost in, or near, Burley Wood, since *Myotis* bats thought to be Daubenton's by the sonogram of their echolocation calls are recorded on most visits to Burley Wood; not foraging there but commuting through the wood towards Rutland Water. Fewer bats than usual were seen at the Station Road bridge in Ketton on 4.7, and the same was true at Hambleton Peninsula on both

29.8 and 16.9. However, the bats that were seen came very close in to the shore so that they were easily visible in the strong torchlight. I am sure that one even flew over our heads towards the trees. More Daubenton's Bats were active in the sheltered bay at Whitwell Creek on 4.9, where we saw several actually touch the water surface. It is unusual to receive any grounded Daubenton's Bats, but this year two were found in Rutland. The first was a male found dead at a property between Stockerston and Allexton on 5.8; the second was an adult female found surprisingly in the new estate on the west side of Oakham on 9.9. Both seemed in good condition; both were cat victims. A female found trapped inside a travel agents in Stamford on 18.9 was released at Stamford Meadows and could be heard flying up and down the river for some minutes before disappearing. Not in Rutland, I know, but a nice success story!

#### Natterer's Bat

Natterer's Bats seem to have had a reasonable summer, although the counts at Whissendine church have not regained the 2003 level of 81 bats. Stoke Dry church was also counted for the NBMP in June. The species was probably recorded in Burley Wood on 28.7, according to sonogram data.

#### Noctule Bat

Noctules were widespread but infrequent during the summer, with foraging bats heard at a number of sites, but their roosts are unknown at the moment.

In Burley Wood on 3.5 a single Noctule was heard late in the evening in the northern part of the wood, but it passed over without foraging. By contrast, a number of bats were foraging over the railway line and adjacent fields in Ketton (feeding buzzes were heard), but none were feeding at the churchyard, and Ann Tomlinson reported that she did not see them there during the period when cockchafers usually emerge. None were heard during a 'bats and glow-worms' walk in Ketton on 4.7. In Braunston, a single Noctule flew over the church on one of the count nights in June, and two were seen east of Lyndon village, flying northwards, on 22.6. On 28.6 several Noctules were foraging over the main east-west ride in Burley Wood, but the best view of the year was on 16.8 during the bat walk at Eggleton NR. From the service track, up to five were visible, flying in a large circuit over Lagoon I, the plantation and the arable field to the west. The last report of the season was a single bat heard briefly over the south shore of Hambleton Peninsula on 29.8.

**Table 2 Roost counts for NBMP**

Species	Location	Date: 1 <sup>st</sup> Count	Number	Date: 2 <sup>nd</sup> Count	Number
Brown Long-eared	Barnsdale	11.6	18	19.6	17
Brown Long-eared	Little Casterton	9.6	2	19.6	4
Brown Long-eared	Manton	June	0	30.6	42
Brown Long-eared	Wing	10.6	17	25.6	
Natterer's	Whissendine church	7.6	58	16.6	67
Pipistrelle sp.	Braunston church	15.6	34	4.7	39
Soprano pipistrelle	Braunston	NP (1)			
Soprano pipistrelle	Edith Weston	nc			
Soprano pipistrelle	Ketton	NP (2)			
Soprano pipistrelle	Lyndon	NP (1)			
Soprano pipistrelle	Manton	10.6	77	17.6	0
Pipistrelle sp.	Oakham	NP (1)			
Pipistrelle sp.	Rutland Watersports (new roost)	9.6	159	24.6	158
Pipistrelle sp.	Whitwell Hotel (new roost)			23.6	165
Soprano pipistrelle	Wing	10.6	73	25.6	

**Key:** nc – not counted this year; NP (1) - not present during count period, not known if present at other times; NP (2) - not present during count period but present at other times.