

Journal of the  
**RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY**

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**November 2009**



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## NOTICEBOARD

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FOR 2010

This is due promptly on 1st January 2010. 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 1.1.10 if you can!

**Please note:** If you've only just joined this autumn, you are not due to renew your membership until 1st January 2011.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO PHIL

Our own Phil Rudkin, Orthoptera recorder, ex-Chairman, birdsong guru and long-time expert sound recordist, has won yet another sound recording award to add to his trophies – two awards in fact. His *'French dawn chorus'* won the Sounds From Nature class, in the British Amateur Sound Recording Competition, 2009; it was then put forward to the International Amateur Sound Recording Competition, and won the International section of the Sounds from Nature class. Phil says *'I recorded the piece in western France, when we were on holiday with my niece and family, in farmland. It was recorded in stereo, from the back bedroom window'*. (So no hours spent searching through the undergrowth!) *'Species included Hoopoe, Cirl Bunting, Nightingale, Great Tit. And then the village church bells started.'* We can all hear this and many other recordings on 2nd March when Phil will present his award-winning sound recordings after the AGM.

### RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

#### SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL FOR 2010 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

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# WEATHER SUMMARY Roy Lemmon

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## September 2009

**Atmospheric pressure and winds** During the first four days of the month the barometric pressure was low with gusty SW-W winds; specifically, at 0900 hours on the 3rd I measured winds up to 25 knots. After that the pressure climbed and was high for the rest of the month as we came under the influence of the Azores high. The highest pressure I recorded was 1034 mb on the 11th. Winds were generally SW-NW except for the period of 13th to 20th when they were N-NE but generally of low velocity.

**Temperatures** This was a warmer than usual September. The average night-time minimum was 10.3 °C, well above 2008 and 2007 (9.4 °C and 9.5 °C) and the average day-time maximum was 20.2 °C, well above 2008 (18.5 °C) and just above 2007 (20.0 °C). The highest day-time temperature was on the 8th at 25.2 °C and the lowest night-time was on the 26th, a distinctly chilly 5.1 °C. Looking back it seems that odd occurrences of this sort are usual in September. On 28th to 29th in 2007 it dropped to 3.5 °C.

**Rain** With the anti-cyclonic conditions mentioned above, it is not surprising that this was a very dry month. I recorded rain on only two days, the 1st and 2nd, giving a monthly total of 15.3 mm (0.6 inches). This is 26% of my long-term mean (LTM) and reflects the national picture, where the averaged rainfall over England and Wales was 1.28 inches or 45% of the average for the standard reference period 1971 to 2000. Looking back over my records it was the lowest rainfall in September since 1996 when just 3.7 mm (0.15 inches) fell. Nationally September 2009 ranked the 10th driest in the last 100 years.

**Sunshine** The national average for England and Wales was 158 hours or 109% of the 1971–2000 mean.

## October 2009

**Atmospheric pressure and winds** Apart from the period 20th to 25th pressure was generally high, between 1011 and 1031 mb, but during that period it ranged between 996 and 1006 mb with winds generally E-SE. During the rest of the month it is difficult to summarize wind direction except to say that it varied considerably, although wind speeds were low.

**Temperature** This month was noticeable for a warm spell towards the end and this would appear to be largely due to higher than usual overnight minima. The mean (overnight) minimum was 7.2 °C, well above both 2008 (6.6 °C) and 2007 (5.1 °C), whereas the mean maximum was 15.5 °C, higher than 2008 (14.4 °C) but the same as 2007. The highest day-time temperature occurred on the 6th when I recorded 20.4 °C and it is interesting and rather encouraging that nationally the highest maximum at a standard site was 21.2 °C at Coningsby on that date.

**Rainfall** I recorded 40.5 mm (1.59 inches) which is 63.4% of my LTM; and this is mirrored in the averaged result for England for this month of 2.56 inches which is 68% of the average for the standard reference period. Daily amounts were generally small except for 11.5 mm (0.45 inches) on the 6th and 15.8 mm (0.62 inches) on the last two days of the month collectively. There were 18 days when no rain was detected. According to my records this is the third driest October in the last 17 years, only exceeded by 1991 (37.5 mm) and 1995 (20.0 mm).

**Sunshine** Averaged over England and Wales this was 96 hours or 86% of the 1971 to 2000 mean.

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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	6	09.00	21.07	Sunday	3	08.04	20.09
	13	03.25	16.09		10	01.38	14.32
	20	08.33	20.32		17	07.41	19.40
	27	01.13	14.16		24	11.53	–
					31	07.06	19.11

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

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### September/October 2009

There were no records of Common Frogs during September, but garden records came in October from Barrowden, Oakham and Wing. Common Toads, however, were seen in gardens in Oakham and Wing in September. The remaining sightings concerned toads on roads (6 alive and 6 dead).

Apart from a road casualty at Exton on 13th September and a live toad at Fort Henry on 30th September, the remainder were all seen between

6th and 8th October in Leighfield, Manton and Wing.

Smooth Newt larvae and terrestrial young were reported from a garden pond in Langham on 26th September. The only Great Crested Newt was an immature individual sheltering under a piece of wood in Wing.

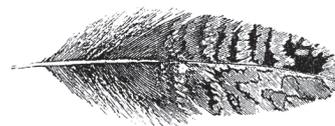
The only reptile record concerned a small flattened Grass Snake on the road near Eye Brook on 27th September.

*My thanks to the following who sent in records: T Caldicott, M Markham, T Mitcham, L Worrall*

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## BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

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### September/October 2009

Low water levels at the reservoirs did not deter returning wildfowl and there were some high totals and a good variety of scarcer species – Scaup, Common Scoter and Red-breasted Merganser, plus some early Whooper Swans. What waders lacked in numbers they made up for in variety, with both reservoirs recording Knot and Pectoral Sandpiper.

The arrival of winter thrushes and finches has not, so far, been overwhelming with few large flocks reported. Stonechats returned to regular sites quite early as summer migrants retreated south. Grey Wagtails were widespread and well-reported – lovely birds which brighten many a dull day by our rivers and reservoirs.

*My thanks to the following for their records: T Appleton, R Archer, V Arnold, A J Biddle, P & C Brown, T Caldicott, D Cole, A & J Comber, J Crosby, Dr C H Gallimore, M & G Griffin, M Grimes, A L Lawrence, LROS, R Lemmon, P Mann, N Michelsen, I Misselbrook, T Mitcham, D Perril, P Rudkin, Jill Stapleton, A R & M A Thorp, D Whitefield, M Winslow, G & L Worrall*

*See also wildfowl counts on page 7.*

**Whooper Swan.** Four arrived at RW on 25.09 and remained throughout both months, increasing to five on 27.10. There were two at EBR on 27.09.

**Barnacle Goose.** There were twelve at RW on 13.09.

**Brent Goose.** Two were at RW(Dam) on 01.10, with one nearby at Normanton on 31.10.

**Mandarin.** Four flew into a pond at Morcott on 19.09 and there was a pair at FHP on 29.10.

**Pintail.** Four were at RW(Dickenson's Bay) on 01.09. One or two were at FHP from 18.10 onwards.

**Garganey.** One was at EBR from 06.09 to at least 27.09 and one was at RW (North Arm and South Arm 3) on 19.10 and 31.10.

**Red-crested Pochard.** A male was at EBR from mid-Sept to 14.10. At RW present from 04.09 with a max. of 18 on 30.10.

**Tufted Duck.** A rather confused juvenile was noted

in gardens and on the road in Wing on 11.09. After flying off, it returned to the road but eventually flew off towards open country – perhaps a locally bred bird from Wing Fishing Lakes.

**Scaup.** A female was at RW(North Arm) on 10.09.

There were four at the Dam on 16.10 and a male at Egleton on 30.10.

**Common Scoter.** A male was at RW on 14.10 and five females were present from 16–21.10.

**Goldeneye.** There were singles at RW on 10.09 and EBR on 04.10.

**Red-breasted Merganser.** Two were at RW(Egleton) on 18.10.

**Goosander.** The first returning birds were 11 at RW on 14.10 with 2 there (at Egleton) on 30.10.

**Red-legged Partridge.** c.50 were counted at Leighfield on 11.10.

- Grey Partridge.** One or two were heard calling at Gorsefield and Leighfield during both months.
- Red-throated Diver.** One was at RW(Dam/Whitwell) from 15.10, with two noted from 21.10.
- Black-necked Grebe.** Noted at RW from 15.09 with a max. of five on 27.10.
- Little Egret.** At RW there were 23 on 20.09 and 16 on 11.10. One was on the Hambleton Peninsula on 31.10.
- Spoonbill.** One flew over RW on 20.10.
- Red Kite.** Three or four were regular at FHP throughout, with two at Clipsham on 02.10 and at Pickworth on 22.10, and one at Wing on 02.10.
- Marsh Harrier.** A juv. was at RW between 06–12.09, and a male was there on 17.09.
- Sparrowhawk.** Garden records were received from Oakham, Stamford and Wing, where one took a Blackbird on 19.09.
- Buzzard.** Up to three were widely reported over woodlands in the north and centre of the county; but six near Barrowden on 12.09 was a good count.
- Osprey.** Birds were noted at both reservoirs, Leighfield and FHP with the last at RW on 07.09.
- Kestrel.** Regularly seen at Horn Mill/FHP in both months. 3 were noted near Barrowden on 06.10.
- Hobby.** There were Sept records from six sites, all singles except for two at Wing on 13.09 and two at FHP on 15.09. The last record was at Tinwell Pumping Station on 23.09.
- Peregrine.** One was over Exton Park on 05.09. A juv. harassed wildfowl at RW on 25.09, and there were two at FHP on 25.10.
- Water Rail.** Noted between 18.10 and 27.10 with singles at FHP, HMP Stocken and Leighfield, with two at the latter site on 27.10.
- Moorhen.** High counts at RW and FHP probably relate to low water levels, which force the birds into the open. Still present in a Wing garden to 07.10.
- Oystercatcher.** Singles were at EBR on 04.10 and RW(Edith Weston) on 10.10.
- Little Ringed Plover.** Three were at RW and one at EBR on 06.09. The last were three at RW on 16.09.
- Ringed Plover.** Reported from both reservoirs between 06.09 and 22.10. Higher counts included 15 at EBR and 29 at RW on 06.09, and six at EBR on 16.09. The latest were three at EBR.
- Golden Plover.** 38 were in Exton Park on 19.09, increasing to 122 on 26.09. There were 22 at EBR on 27.09 and 1188 at RW on 11.10. c.50 flew over Williamson Cliff Quarry Site (WCQ) on 20.10.
- Grey Plover.** One was at EBR on 08.10.
- Lapwing.** At RW there were 1705 on 20.09 and 1129 on 11.10.
- Knot.** Singles were at RW on 16.09 and 06.10 and EBR on 07.10.
- Sanderling.** One was at EBR on 13.10.
- Little Stint.** A poor autumn for this species, with singles at RW on 09 and 16.09 and two there on 20.09.
- Pectoral Sandpiper.** One was at RW(South Arm 3) on 24.09 and a long-staying bird (the same ?) at EBR from 04.10 to 24.10.
- Curlew Sandpiper.** One or two were at RW(North Arm) from 07–11.09. There were five at EBR on 05.05, with a late bird there on 01.10.
- Dunlin.** Noted at both reservoirs between 01.09 and 14.10 with max. counts of 23 at EBR on 14.09 and 40 at RW on 16.10.
- Ruff.** Reported between 02.09 and 16.10 with max. counts of two at RW on 27.09 and 13 at RW on 06.10.
- Jack Snipe.** One was at EBR between 14–28.10.
- Snipe.** Odd birds were noted at Leighfield and EBR from 09.09. One was at FHP on 19.09. There were four at RW on 20.09 and 43 on 11.10.
- Woodcock.** One was noted over Oakham on 16.10 and one was flushed at Leighfield the next day.
- Black-tailed Godwit.** Apart one from one at EBR on 06.09, all records came from RW where it was noted up to 16.10. The max. count was six on 20.09.
- Bar-tailed Godwit.** One was at RW on 06.10.
- Curlew.** Present at RW throughout with eight counted on 1.10. One was at EBR on 22.10.
- Redshank.** Noted only at RW, where there were two on 20.09 and twenty on 11.10.
- Greenshank.** Up to six were at RW to 25.09 with four at EBR on 05.09 and one there on 27.09. A late bird flew over FHP on 18.10.
- Green Sandpiper.** Present at RW throughout with 14 on 20.09 and seven on 11.10. One or two were at EBR to 11.09, and two were at FHP on 05.09 and in Exton Park on 26.09.
- Wood Sandpiper.** One was at RW on 16.09.
- Common Sandpiper.** There were two in Exton Park on 13.09 and two at RW on 20.09.
- Turnstone.** There were two at RW on 02.09 and seven there on 04.09.
- Arctic Skua.** Two passed through at RW on 01.10 and one on 06.10.
- Mediterranean Gull.** Up to three frequented RW(Lagoon 4) from 25.09, with one at EBR on 17.10.
- Yellow-legged Gull.** A max. of six (18.10) was noted at RW.
- Caspian Gull.** Singles were at RW on 02.10 and at EBR on 07.10.
- Black Tern.** Up to five were at RW between 02 and 05.09.
- Sandwich Tern.** Two were at RW(Sailing Club) on 20.09.
- Common Tern.** There were three at RW on 20.09.

- Barn Owl.** Three of a brood of four were ringed at Beaumont Chase Farm on 03.09. Also noted at Seaton Meadows, Barrowden and Tinwell, where one was rescued after falling down a chimney.
- Little Owl.** Regularly seen at FHP in both months. Also noted at RW(Egleton) on 25.09, EBR on 27.09, and at Barrowden on 30.09 and the following day.
- Tawny Owl.** Well reported as birds called to retain or establish winter territories with records from RW(Egleton), Barrowden, Edith Weston, Langham, Barleythorpe and Brooke. One was dead by the A606 at Empingham on 20.09, and one was found dead but unmarked by a garden pond in Lyddington on 05.10.
- Swift.** Only three Sept. records; FHP on 1st, EBR on 6th and Stamford on 7th.
- Kingfisher.** Singles were in Exton Park, at FHP and EBR in Sept. One or two were regularly seen along the R.Welland between Stamford and Tinwell during both months.
- Green Woodpecker.** Present throughout at FHP and Edith Weston. One was at RW(Lyndon) on 08.10.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker.** Only two records received – one in an Oakham garden on 20.09, and often noted in Edith Weston in Oct.
- Shorelark.** One was seen briefly at RW(Whitwell) on 27.10. This is the third Rutland record following one at EBR in 2001 and two at RW in 2002.
- Swallow.** Noted at Barrowden and Morcott on 27.09 with the last at HMP Stocken on 08.10.
- House Martin.** Late juvs. fledged at Barrowden on 29.09. Three at Barleythorpe on 07.10 were the latest reported.
- Meadow Pipit.** Passage flocks of c.30 were noted at WCQ on 24.09 and 6.10, and at RW(Lyndon) on 11.10.
- Rock Pipit.** One or two were found at RW between 05 and 21.10 at RW, mainly in North Arm, Whitwell and the Dam.
- Yellow Wagtail.** The largest passage 'flock' was fifteen at RW(Dam) on 13.09. Odd birds were noted in early Sept at EBR and Banthorpe Gravel Pit and the last were two at RW(North Arm).
- Grey Wagtail.** A pair present throughout at Tinwell Pumping Station with regular sightings at FHP (three on 21.09). Also noted at HMP Stocken, Leighfield and RW(Edith Weston) and there were garden records from Oakham and Barleythorpe.
- Whinchat.** One was at FHP on 05 and 12.09. One or two were at Leighfield between 05.09 and 23.09 and similar nos were at RW to 21.09.
- Stonechat.** An early returnee was at RW(Egleton) on 18.09. At FHP a male was seen on 04.10 and 17.10 with a pair present to the end of the month. One was at Leighfield on 19.10.
- Wheatear.** Up to four were at RW to 06.10 with one at EBR on 13.09 and five at Luffenham Airfield on 08.10. A late bird was at RW on 26.10.
- Blackbird.** 24 were around Leighfield on 27.10.
- Fieldfare.** One over Leighfield on 11.10 was the first followed by three over Lady Wood on 16.10. The first flocks were forty at Stamford and 450 at Leighfield on 27.10 and 110 over South View, Stamford, the next day.
- Song Thrush.** 15 were noted around Leighfield on 05.10 and twelve at RW (Egleton) on 13.10.
- Redwing.** First noted over HMP Stocken and Leighfield on 08.10. There was a large movement over Oakham on 15.10, when 2200 passed west.
- Mistle Thrush.** Flocks of ten and eighteen were seen at Leighfield between 17.09 and 14.10.
- Cetti's Warbler.** One was ringed at RW(Egleton) on 19.09.
- Sedge Warbler.** Two were at Leighfield on 12.09 and two at RW(Egleton) on 21.09.
- Reed Warbler.** Singles were at RW(Egleton) on 21.09 and Leighfield on 26.09.
- Garden Warbler.** One at RW(Egleton) on 10.09 was the latest reported.
- Lesser Whitethroat.** There were records from four sites in Sept with the last at Leighfield on 23rd.
- Whitethroat.** Noted at seven sites in Sept, with the last at RW(Egleton) on 18.09.
- Blackcap.** There was one Sept report – WCQ on 24.09; and three Oct records with the last at Leighfield on 19.10.
- Chiffchaff.** Widespread and well recorded in Sept, with 24 noted at Leighfield on 23.09 and one in a Stamford garden on 09.09. Small nos still present throughout Oct with one at Brooke on 31.10.
- Willow Warbler.** One was singing at FHP on 05.09. The last were two at Leighfield on 26.09.
- Spotted Flycatcher.** On 06.09 two were at Normanton and two at EB Plantation.
- Long-tailed Tit.** Five were in an Oakham garden on 02.09 and c.50 were counted around Egleton reserve on 07.09.
- Willow Tit.** Three were at Leighfield on 05.09 and two at EBR inflow (in willows!) on 27.09.
- Marsh Tit.** One collected beech mast at EBR Stoke Dry carpark on 27.09. Noted at feeders at Egleton Centre (24.09) and in Tunneley Wood from mid-Oct.
- Treecreeper.** Noted in a Langham garden on 31.10.
- Jay.** Regular in the Exton woodlands during both months. Two were over Wing on 25.10 and one was at a feeder at Dawn's Paddock on 31.10.
- Raven.** One was seen north of Stamford, making for Great Casterton, on 10.09. Two were over RW(Lax Hill) on 24.09, and pairs were at Leighfield on 05 and 23.10.
- Starling.** c.860 flew west at Leighfield on 23.10.
- Tree Sparrow.** c.25 fed on spilt grain near Braunston on 09.10 and up to 5 were with Greenfinches at Leighfield on 30.10.

**Brambling.** All records were of up to three on passage between 06.10 and 29.10. Localities included RW(Dam), Oakham and Leighfield.

**Greenfinches.** Crops of sunflowers attracted c.200 to Leighfield by 14.10, with c.300 present on 23.10.

**Goldfinch.** c.130 noted at Leighfield on 05.09, with 100 still present on 26.09. There were c.30 near Horn Mill on 13.09, and c.35 assembled at a Barrowden garden on 10.10.

**Siskin.** One was at a feeder at Egleton Centre on 24.09 and one flew over Oakham on 29.09. Two were in Exton Park on 18.10.

**Linnet.** Flocks of between forty and sixty were reported from Brooke, Leighfield, FHP and RW(Lyndon) between 17.09 and 11.10.

**Lesser Redpoll.** One flew south at FHP on 29.10.

**Crossbill.** Four flew over Oakham on 16.09. Three were at Leighfield on 11.10, and five fed in larch at FHP on 17.10. Four flew over RW on 26.10.

**Bullfinch.** Seven fed on meadowsweet seeds at RW(Egleton) on 25.09, and 14 were counted around the reserve there on 14.10. One was in a Langham garden on 18.10.

**Corn Bunting.** One was flushed from a pond at WCQ on 17.09.

## Wildfowl counts September/October 2009

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry Ponds /Exton Park		Holywell Lake	
	20.09	12.10	20.09	10.10	19.09	10.10	18.09	10.10
Mute Swan	487	463	106	80	10	11	2	2
Whooper Swan		4						
Greylag Goose	476	368	205	102		25	68	26
Canada Goose	440	800	4	34		4	6	145
Barnacle Goose	13							
Egyptian Goose	46	62						
Shelduck	4	12	2	4				
Wigeon	1681	2896	62	80				
Gadwall	1746	1370	6	22	38	39	12	6
Teal	1150	1373	232	315	39	41		8
Mallard	1518	1509	181	148	111	125	66	106
Pintail	163	205	13	7				
Garganey			2					
Shoveler	739	773	42	41				5
Red-crested Pochard	12	1		1				
Pochard	35	67	193	222				
Tufted Duck	7216	6188	25	36		13	5	3
Scaup		1						
Goldeneye	1	19						
Ruddy Duck	1							
Little Grebe	127	164	20	23		2	6	9
Great Crested Grebe	548	579	61	43				
Black-necked Grebe	3	4						
Cormorant	445	470	53	31		4		
Little Egret	36	16						
Grey Heron	40	30	5	5	1	1		
Moorhen	208	285	2		63	136	17	22
Coot	2830	3098	183	323	59	73	24	19
Kingfisher		1						1

## BOTANY NOTES compiled by Graham Worrall

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### September/October 2009

The warm dry September continued to give us **Yellow-wort** and **Common Centaury** and **Wild Basil** whilst **Traveller's Joy**, the only native Clematis, and **Ivy** were in flower. Tim Caldicott found some still flowering **Small Teasel** near the River Chater at Leighfield. This biennial plant grows in scrub, woods and beside streams, unlike

Wild Teasel, which prefers bare or sparsely grassy places such as Ketton Quarry. Clive Jones and Roy Lemmon both found **Water Chickweed** in flower at Whitwell and Barnsdale Lodge, on the Rutland Water shore. The odd rain patches kept the usual late flowers coming, such as **Dandelion**, **Silverweed**, **Harebell**, **Scentless Mayweed** and **Creeping Buttercup**.

*Thanks to R Lemmon, C Jones, T Caldicott, T Mitcham and J Mallett.*

## LEPIDOPTERA NOTES compiled by Jean Harvey

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### September/October 2009

#### BUTTERFLIES

Despite some very mild weather during this period, comparatively small numbers of butterflies were observed and thus not a great number of records were received. Twelve species were seen in September and nine in October.

Two records for **Brimstone** were from Barrowden and Egleton both in September. **Large** and **Small Whites** were seen until mid-October but **Green-Veined Whites** were only observed in the second week of September. Single **Small Coppers** were reported from Lax Hill, Edith Weston and Tinwell, with a final sighting on bramble at Leighfield on October 8th. On September 5th one **Brown Argus** was also seen at Leighfield.

In contrast with 2008, it has been a poor season this year for **Red Admirals**. Some were noted in Edith Weston in both months and others were in Barrowden and Oakham during September and at Barleythorpe in October. **Small Tortoiseshell** numbers were also similarly well down again this year following their better year in 2008. The only records received recently were from Oakham, Edith Weston and Egleton.

After the 'explosion' of **Painted Ladies** during the summer, following the influx into the country, there was a decrease in the number of sightings during September. However in the second half of October, this species re-appeared (presumably these were from the successive generation) at Barleythorpe, Burley Fishponds, Edith Weston, Leighfield, North Luffenham and Tinwell.

**Peacocks** were only seen at Edith Weston and Egleton in September and at Tinwell in October.

**Commas** have continued to be well recorded during both months with eight being counted at Egleton in September. There were also good numbers of **Speckled Woods** at Egleton on the same day with other records for this species coming from Prior's Coppice and Edith Weston, both in September. Finally a very late sighting of a single very small **Gatekeeper** was at the Lyndon Reserve on October 8th.

#### MOTHS

Compared with the autumns of 2007 and 2008, this year has seen an increase in the number of moths on the wing due to the milder weather, especially in October.

National Moth Weekend this year took place over two nights, 19th and 20th September, hoping for migrants to be trapped. Several traps were operated in our area, but nothing unusual was seen and the number of species recorded was rather on the low side.

At Rutland Water the trap in the Reedbeds was switched on weekly for nine sessions and it held good numbers, but disappointingly very few migrants were caught there.

At Barrowden, the garden trap was run on eighteen nights resulting in 65 species during the two months. A **Dusky Lemon Sallow** trapped here was a species not seen since the year 2000.

We visited Eyebrook Reservoir on September 18th and caught 320 moths of 28 species. Practically half of this total was made up of 149 **Lunar Underwing** and a very unusually high number of 22 **Broad-Bordered Yellow Underwings**. On our second visit on October 29th we encountered a problem with the power supply and had to re-site

two of our traps on this occasion. The numbers, therefore, of only 42 moths of 12 species were disappointingly much lower than we had hoped for, but did include 10 **Yellow Line Quakers** and 9 **Feathered Thorns**. Results from other traps run at Barnsdale Gardens Exton and Edith Weston have been added to our annual records.

At Barleythorpe, moths were monitored coming to outside lights and an interesting list of eleven species during September and three species in October has been compiled. Also found in this

area, was a **Sycamore** caterpillar and the eggs of the **Vapourer** moth. Adult Vapourers were reported flying in Edith Weston with a maximum of six in early September. A **Hummingbird Hawk moth** was in the same garden on September 12th and **Red Underwings** were admired both here and at Barnsdale Gardens.

**Leaf miners** have now taken over practically every Horse Chestnut tree in Rutland!

In October, the names of several more villages were added to our previously published lists.

*Thanks for the above contributions to: V Arnold, T Caldicott, R Follows, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, D Perril and L Worrall.*

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## ORTHOPTERA REPORT compiled by Phil Rudkin

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### September/October 2009

I missed the first week of September, as we were in Spain, and then received notice to go into hospital to have a new hip fitted on 21st September. Tim Caldicott sent in several records for September and October, which has helped enormously.

I have received no sightings of any new species in Rutland in 2009. (The last new orthopteran was the Short-winged Conehead on 13th September 2007.) This an opportune moment to reflect on what there is to hope for in 2010. A species that I hope will eventually reach Rutland is the **Great Green Bush Cricket**, *Tettigonia viridissima*, which would be a wonderful addition. A photograph of a new species taken during the Society's field meeting in Suffolk by Peter Scott was identified by David Richmond, the Norfolk County Recorder as the **Stripe-winged Grasshopper**. It has recently (2003) begun to extend its range and is no longer restricted to chalk grassland. 'It has occurred in Notts, so listen out for it in Rutland', says David. Further afield, the **Bog Bush Cricket**, *Metrioptera brachyptera*, has a large breeding colony on a nature reserve in Shropshire. It is popping up in various locations across the country, and who knows! It would be fascinating if this creature made it to our area, as it is closely related to **Roesel's Bush Cricket**, and looks very similar. Fortunately, it has a slightly different stridulation, a steady series of chirps, harder and slower than Roesel's continuing buzzing.

#### BUSH CRICKETS

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

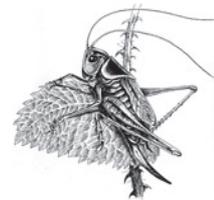
We have our moth trap members, and outside lights, to thank for sightings in September. This lovely green cricket is attracted to lights, and often comes into lighted bedroom windows. Two were observed around an outside light in Barleythorpe, on 13th September. Two were found inside a moth trap in the morning and released, 20th September. This trap was being operated in a garden, at South Luffenham (SK 943 017).

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

On the dull, cold, overcast and very windy morning at 11.0 am, 13th September, I was delighted when 7 intrepid members turned up to join me on the Society's last summer meeting. We had to go down into the valley at the Horn Mill/Exton footpath meadow (11.45 am) before locating 2 males stridulating in the reeds alongside the

North Brook. Two more males were heard in the long grasses on the meadow. As three bat detectors were aimed in the general direction, suddenly Martin Grimes spotted a dark shape in the grass near us – a lovely male. This was captured and passed around to admire, then released (SK 953 109). On 15th September, I paid my last visit to Wing Fishing Lakes, on a cool dull afternoon, and was pleased to pick up approx 4 stridulating males in the stronghold grassy margins around the first lake (SK 889 023).

Martin Grimes, long-time member and new treasurer, is a welcome addition to our small army of reporters. On 27th September, he was on the Lyndon reserve, and remembering the sounds of this species from the Exton field meeting, he recognised the song, and described it exactly. This was on the track between Wader Scrape Hide and Shallow Water Hide (SK 883 052) – another



stronghold for Roesel's. Well done, Martin!  
Finally, on October 8th, Tim Caldicott located 6 males in the grass verges, half way down the hill, between Prior's Coppice and Leighfield Fish Ponds (SK 833 048).

**Long-winged Conehead**, *Conocephalus discolor*  
One was observed sunning itself on a wooden post, on the Egleton Reserve, 10th September. On 13th September at the Society field meeting (see above), we had to get down into the valley before Ron Follows located three males stridulating in the reeds of the North Brook, at 11.45 am. Next, two more were found in the grasses in the meadow. A male was captured and passed around, then released (SK 952 109).

On 15th September, on my last visit to Wing Fishing Lakes (see above), 3 to 4 males were still stridulating in the rushes bordering the first lake.

**Speckled Bush Cricket**, *Leptophyes punctatissima*  
The meeting point for the 13th September field meeting (see above) was the grass verge at the entrance. Before setting off, members switched on their bat detectors, and 20 minutes was well spent listening to at least 10 stridulating males, in the tall, thick Hawthorn hedges. However, due to the dull, sunless weather, these crickets did not sunbathe, and although members tried hard, none could be observed (SK 951 106).

On the morning of 14th September, Ann Tomlinson found a female on her front doorstep in Aldgate, Ketton. Ann was pleased but not surprised as there is a large colony in bushes over the bridge, just near the house (SK 981 045).

## GROUNDHOPPERS

**Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*  
All records from the Brooke Road allotment, Oakham. 5 observed on 8th, 1 on 16th September and, finally, 2 on 10th October (SK 860 081).

**Common Groundhopper**, *Tetrix undulata*  
One found in Vic Arnold's garden, in Edith Weston, 1st October (SK 929 055).

## GRASSHOPPERS

**Field Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus brunneus*  
All records are from Tim Caldicott. In September: 3 in the Leighfield area, 9th; 3 on the Brooke Road allotments, 19th; one on verge, at Barleythorpe, 20th. Finally, on 2 October, one on the Brooke Road allotments (SK 860 081).

**Meadow Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus parallelus*  
The Society's field meeting (see earlier) on 13th September produced males and females hiding in the grass verges, at footpath (SK 952 107). Then, more found in the meadow valleys (SK 953 109). Due to the dull and cold, we had to search for these. It was a good exercise in identification of female and males in the hand. One, found in grass on the verge, near the village of Brooke, near Brooke Priory, 8th October (SK 845 062).

**Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*  
September sightings were: one on 8th and one on 22nd, Brooke Road allotments, Oakham. One female only, caught and identified, on 13th September, during the Society's field meeting at Horn Mill/Exton footpath and meadows. They are very hard to find when it is dull and cold. Finally, one, on the Brooke Road allotments, 10th October (SK 860 081).

Many thanks in a trying season, to contributors: V Arnold, T Caldicott, M Grimes, P Rudkin, A Tomlinson.

## PLANT GALLS REPORT compiled by Roy Lemmon

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### September 2009

The month opened with an interesting report from Leighfield Fishponds on the 6th of a gall on Ground Ivy, one which although not a rarity is not often reported here (the last occasion was on Verge 7 in 2008). A gall wasp lays its eggs and this induces the plant to grow hairy globular galls on leaves or stems in which the pupal and larval stages take place, the insect eventually emerging after metamorphosis.

Priors Coppice on the 10th produced some 7 records, 2 each on Field Maple and Meadowsweet and singles on Blackthorn, Goat Willow and



Enchanters Nightshade, the latter being the only rust in this batch. Rusts featured more prominently in records from Ketton Quarry on the 17th: examples causing galls were noted on Ground Ivy, Dog Rose, Marjoram and Common Knapweed. The latter *Puccinia calcitrapae* is not, in my experience found commonly in the County. Goat Willow on this occasion produced 3 distinct galls, two of them caused by different species of gall midge and the other by a rust. The list was completed by galls on Elm, Hawthorn, Germander Speedwell, Apple, Nettle and, last but not least, by Robin Pincushion galls on Dog Rose.

## October 2009

On the 4th a report was received of 20–30 Knopper galls on an Oak tree planted in a Wing garden as a sapling in 2000. Young oaks are sometimes slow to develop galls but in this case the proximity of a more mature oak with the same galls is probably the reason. Oak galls seem to be a feature this month, as a visit to Barnsdale Lodge Wood on the 1st produced records of Oyster, Silk Button, Common Spangle and Pea galls. The same venue also yielded galls on Beech, Goat Willow, Sycamore (two different types), White Willow, Nipplewort and Ground Ivy. The latter, which is caused by a rust, was also seen in Hambleton Wood on the 22nd and at Horn Mill on the 29th.

*Thanks to T Caldicott, Dr C H Gallimore, R Lemmon*

Further galls on Oak were Common Spangle on the 8th at Lyndon, together with one which doesn't have a common name as far as I know but which occurs on the acorn cup and is caused by a gall wasp, *Andricus grossulariae*. Lyndon on the same date also produced Marble galls on Oak and others on Lime, Meadowsweet, Hawthorn and Willowherb. As the autumn proceeds it is noticeable that the number of galls falls. Ketton Quarry on the 17th produced two, on Hairy Violet and Common Mallow, and Hambleton Wood on the 22nd three, on Hawthorn, Goat Willow and Field Maple. Horn Mill on the 29th yielded just one, a rust on Common Mallow.

## INSECTS AND OTHERS compiled by Gill Chiverton

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There is an interesting longhorn beetle sighting to note. The beetle was actually found at the end of August at Edith Weston, but the recorder was waiting for confirmation from another entomologist for his own identification of the insect. This specimen of the **Longhorn Beetle** *Arhopalus rusticus* was found in a moth trap at Edith Weston. These beetles are found mainly in the basal part of conifer stems and can cause dieback where they are abundant. However, they are found more often on tree stumps where they have a positive role in wood decomposition.

### September 2009

**Odonata:** One **Common Darter Dragonfly** *Sympetrum striolatum* was seen at Barrowden.

**Hemiptera:** A **Spiked Shieldbug** *Picromerus bidens* was recorded at RW Egleton reserve.

**Hymenoptera:** A **Buff-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus terrestris* was recorded at Barleythorpe. Also recorded at Barleythorpe was a **Red-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus lapidarius*. A **Hornet** *Vespa crabro* was seen in flight at Bloody Oaks Quarry, and a Hornet's Nest was noted at Stoke Dry Wood. An **Ichneumon** *Amblyteles armatorius* was recorded on two occasions at Wing.

**Coleoptera:** **Harlequin Ladybirds** *Harmonia axyridis* were recorded over the month at Edith Weston, though not in great numbers. At Barleythorpe up to 12 Harlequin Ladybirds were noted at the beginning of the month and the same numbers were still present towards the end of the month. Also recorded at the end of the month

were up to 12 harlequin larvae. Again recorded at Barleythorpe on the 7th, but by a different recorder, was a gathering of about 100 Harlequin Ladybirds. These were noted at the edge of a small wood and some of those recorded were in the larval stage. On the 20th numbers at this site had dropped to approximately 50 insects. Two **7-spot Ladybirds** *Coccinella 7-punctata* were noted at Priors Coppice and three 7-spot Ladybirds were recorded at Ketton Quarry. Four **Pine Ladybirds** *Exochomus 4-pustulatus* were seen at Stretton.

**Gastropoda:** Several **Brown-lipped Snails** *Cepaea nemoralis* were recorded at Ketton Quarry.

### October 2009

**Odonata:** Two dragonfly records: a **Southern Hawker** *Aeshna cyanea* was seen near Fieldfare Hide at RW(Egleton), and two **Migrant Hawkers** *Aeshna mixta* were seen in flight at Burley Fishponds.

**Hemiptera:** A **Hawthorn Shieldbug** *Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale* was observed in Barleythorpe. A **Forest Bug** *Pentatoma rufipes* was also seen in Barleythorpe. Two **Birch Shieldbugs** *Elasmotethus interstinctus* were noted on a brick wall at Barleythorpe.

**Trichoptera:** **Caddis Fly** – three caddis flies were recorded at Barnsdale Gardens and provisionally identified as *Phryganea grandis*. However, the recorder noted that this was a late record for this species. A record of a large Caddis Fly was also received from Barrowden.

**Diptera:** A record of several **Crane Flies** came from a moth trap at Barnsdale Gardens. The recorder noted that these insects had been rather uncommon this year probably due to the dry weather. Two 'noisy' **Brindled Hoverflies** *Helophilus pendulus* were seen at Barrowden.

**Hymenoptera:** Two **Buff-tailed Bumblebees** *Bombus terrestris* were noted on three different dates at Barleythorpe. A **Common Carder Bee** *Bombus pascuorum* was also seen at Barleythorpe. A **Hornet** *Vespa crabro* was seen at Edith Weston. A **Common Wasp** *Vespula vulgaris* was recorded at Lyndon.

**Coleoptera:** **7-spot Ladybirds** *Coccinella 7-punctata* were present, though not in great numbers, at Barnsdale Gardens on the 27th. **Harlequin Ladybirds** *Harmonia axyridis* were also seen, though again not in great numbers, over the month at Edith Weston. At Uppingham, after an

absence all summer when only 7-spot Ladybirds were noted, many Harlequin Ladybirds made a sudden appearance and all variations were noted. At Wing, towards the end of the month, 82 ladybirds were counted, 'nearly all were harlequins'. At Barleythorpe, again at the end of the month, Harlequin larvae were seen and Harlequin *Harmonia axyridis conspicua* and *Harmonia axyridis succinea* varieties were seen. Two 7-spot Ladybirds were recorded at Barnsdale Lodge Wood, and five 7-spot Ladybirds were seen at RW(Lyndon Centre). A **Kidney-spot Ladybird** *Chiloconis renipustulatus* was noted at Burley Fishponds.

**Gastropoda:** An active **Snail** *Monacha cantiana* was seen at Horn Mill. A **White-Lipped Snail** *Cepaea hortensis* was found on the underside of a log at Ketton Quarry. A spotted **Great Grey or Tiger Slug** *Limax maximus* was noted feasting on peanuts at Barrowden.

Many thanks to the following people for records and photographs: V Arnold, T Caldicott, A Chiverton, C H Gallimore, C R Jones, R Lemmon, J Nourish, D Perril and L Worrall.

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## MYCOLOGY NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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### September/October 2009

Both months were mainly dry and warm, which must help to account for the amazingly low number of gill fungi found – just 6 species, all at the end of October when it was a bit wet and somewhat more autumnal. Amongst all his mildews and rusts, RL had one Pleated Inkcap at Hambleton Wood and three Flat Oysterlings in Ketton Quarry woodland, while D&BP, EN and JM had numbers of Common and Spectacular Rustgills and Sulphur Tufts plus one Wood Blewit at Gibbet Gorse. Brackets were also scarce, with fresh Birch Polypores and Blushing Brackets in KQ Woodland and the only Jelly Ears spotted were in Barnsdale Lodge Wood, but dried up. All these fungi were in wooded areas and decomposers rather than mycorrhizal.

#### RESERVES

**Ketton Quarry Valley Area SK976050 17.9:** Two galls: Discomycete *Leptotrochila ranunculi* on Creeping Buttercup leaves and Rust *Melampsora capraearum* hypophyllous on Goat Willow. **17.10:** Powdery mildew *Phyllactinia mali* teleomorph on Hawthorn. Rust *Puccinia violae* on leaves of Hairy Violet.

**Ketton Quarry North Glade SK975056 17.9:** Four galls: Rusts *Phragmidium mucronatum* on Dog

Rose leaves, *Puccinia calcitrapae* on Common Knapweed leaves, *P. glechomatis* on Ground Ivy leaves and *P. menthae* on Marjoram leaves.

**Ketton Quarry RIGS and Car Park SK978053 17.9:** Anamorph state of Powdery mildews *Microsphaera alphitoides* on Oak and *Sphaerotheca epilobii* on Great Willowherb. Rusts *Coleosporium tussilaginis* on Coltsfoot and Anther Rust *Microbotryum lychnidis-dioicae* on White Champion (this used to be the Smut *Ustilago violacea*).

**Ketton Quarry West Glade SK972056 17.10:** Powdery mildew *Microsphaera alphitoides* teleomorph on Oak. Rust *Melampsoridium betulinum* on Silver Birch.

**Ketton Quarry Woodland SK974055 17.10:** Fresh apothecia of Lemon Disco *Bisporella citrina* on moss covered log, several King Alfred's Cakes on fallen or fresh Ash branches, ascomycete Common Tarcrust *Diatripe stigma* on decaying log with discomycete *Phaeohelotium extumescens* on its stromata, 4 apothecia of *P. extumescens* on underside of a log, *Hormotheca robertiani* on Herb Robert with domed, black, shiny pseudothecia. c.30 fresh Blushing Brackets on several felled Hawthorn branches, two fresh Birch Polypores on a standing Birch and 3 fresh Flat Oysterlings *Crepidotus appianatus* on the underside of a Beech log in contact with the ground.

**Prior's Coppice 10.9:** Powdery mildews: anamorph state: *Sphaerotheca epilobii* on Great Willowherb; teleomorph state: *Erysiphe heraclei* on Hogweed, *Microsphaera sparsa* on Guelder Rose, *M tortilis* on Dogwood, *Phyllactinia fraxini* on Ash and *Uncinula adunca* var *regularis* on leaves of Goat Willow. Rusts *Phragmidium violaceum* on Bramble, *Puccinia arenariae* on Red Campion, *P circaeae*, a galler, on Enchanter's Nightshade and *Triphragmium filipendulae* on Meadowsweet.

**Lyndon Centre SK895056 8.10:** Powdery mildew anamorph of *Erysiphe heraclei* on both Cow Parsley and Hogweed; teleomorph state of *Microsphaera alphitoides* on Oak. Rusts *Melampsora larici-populina* on Poplar and *Phragmidium violaceum* on Bramble.

**Lyndon to Deep Hide SK890055 8.10:** Discomycete *Leptotrochila ranunculi* on leaves of Creeping Buttercup; Powdery mildews: anamorph state: *Erysiphe sordida* on Hoary Plantain and *Sphaerotheca fusca* on Dandelion; teleomorph state: *Microsphaera tortilis* on Dogwood, *Podosphaera clandestina* var *clandestina* on Hawthorn, *Sawadaea bicornis* on Field Maple and *Sphaerotheca fugax* on Meadow Cranesbill. Rusts *Melampsora alii-fragilis* on Crack Willow, *M capraearum* on Goat Willow, *M salicis-albae* on White Willow, *Puccinia behennis* on Red Campion leaves and the galler *P pulverulenta* on Greater Willowherb.

**Lyndon to Teal Hide SK898057 8.10:** Powdery mildews: anamorph of *Erysiphe aquilegiae* var *ranunculi* on Creeping Buttercup, *E sordida* on Greater Plantain and *Sphaerotheca epilobii* on Great Willowherb; teleomorph state of *Microsphaera friesii* on leaves of Buckthorn, *M sparsa* on Guelder Rose and *Phyllactinia fraxini* on Ash. Rust *Kuehneola uredinis* epiphyllous on Bramble. **22.10:** Powdery mildew anamorph *Erysiphe sordida* on Hoary Plantain.

**Lyndon Reserve, Gibbet Gorse SK901059 19.10:** 4 species of gill fungi – oh yes! A dense, very fresh cluster of Spectacular Rustgill *Gymnopilus junonius* at base of sawn down Willow, Common Rustgills *G penetrans* on old conifer debris with plentiful fresh Sulphur Tufts *Hypholoma fasciculare* nearby and one good specimen of a Wood Blewit *Lepista nuda* at the wood edge.

**Barnsdale Lodge Wood SK905088 1.10:** Jelly Ears well developed but dried out, on Elder. Sycamore Tarspot on Sycamore leaves. Powdery mildews: anamorph state: *Erysiphe cynoglossi* on Russian Comfrey, *Erysiphe galeopsidis* on both White Dead-nettle and Hedge Woundwort; teleomorph state: *Erysiphe depressa* on Lesser Burdock, *Phyllactinia mali* on Hawthorn, *Uncinula adunca* var *regularis* on Goat Willow. Rusts *Melampsora capraearum* (a galler) on Goat Willow, *Phragmidium violaceum* on Bramble, *Puccinia glechomatis* telia on Ground Ivy leaves, *P lagenophorae* on Groundsel and *P lapsanae* (galler) on Nipplewort.

**Hambleton Wood SK904071 22.10:** Discomycete *Leptotrochila ranunculi* on Creeping Buttercup leaves, Powdery mildews: anamorph states of *Erysiphe aquilegiae* var *ranunculi* on Creeping Buttercup, *E cichoracearum* on Rough Sow-thistle, *E urticae* in patches on Common Nettle leaves, *Sphaerotheca aphanis* on Herb Robert, *S fuliginea* on Germander Speedwell; teleomorph states of *Erysiphe depressa* on Lesser Burdock, *E heraclei* on Hogweed, *Microsphaera alphitoides* on Oak, *Phyllactinia fraxini* on Ash. Rust telia of *Puccinia glechomatis* on Ground Ivy leaves. And, oh joy, one mature fruiting body of a Pleated Inkcap *Coprinus plicatilis*!

#### FIELDS, GARDENS, VERGES

**Horn Mill to Fort Henry Ponds SK952113 29.10:** Rust telia of galler *Puccinia malvacearum* on leaves and petioles of Common Mallow and *P glechomatis* on Ground Ivy leaves.

Many thanks to R Lemmon, B and D Parker, E Northen, J Myers, and also to those who have looked and not found, which would include your Recorder.

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## MAMMAL REPORT

compiled by Linda Biddle

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### July to October 2009

**Otter** spraint was found under the North Brook bridge at Fort Henry in both July and August. In early September spraint was found in the same place, and on the same day two were seen on the concrete outfall of Ryegate Lake. At the end

of September spraint was found on a concrete culvert cover on the River Welland where it crosses the A1.

A **Mink** was seen running along the North bank of the Welland at Tinwell, over the bridge, moving upstream towards the pumping station. A dead

**Polecat** was reportedly seen on the A47 at Glaston on August 23rd, with a very dark face mask, but unfortunately we cannot confirm that it was not a polecat ferret.

**Badgers** have been seen, crossing the road near Barrowden on two occasions in July, and in the same month setts in the area showed signs of activity, much digging and brimming latrines. There were several road casualties, notably a total of 5 on the A47, October 5th, one at Morcott, one at S Luffenham, and three between Duddington and Wansford, the latter out of the recording area.

We have a bumper bundle of **Stoat** reports this time, indicating high numbers present in the area, and reflecting the healthy population of **Rabbits**. In July on two occasions a stoat crossed Seaton Road, Bisbrooke, and one crossed the A6121 to the W of Ketton. At 12.00 midday on August 8th one ran to the centre of the road at Live Hill Barrowden, returning to the verge when it saw the observer. At Wing in August Dr Gallimore saw a stoat hunting **Bank Voles** in the garden wall, and being distracted by a **Grey Squirrel** which it chased up a pear tree, and round and round the trunk, until eventually the squirrel made a dash for another tree, and the stoat went back to the Bank Voles. The stoat again eyed the squirrel later in the month, but didn't pursue it. In early September a stoat chased a magpie in Dr Gallimore's garden, following as the bird flew from chair to table and back to chair, before giving up and returning to hunt the wall for Bank Voles and a repeat performance happened in the same place four days later. A stoat was observed hunting along the footpath by the River Welland at Tinwell in September. At Leighfield a stoat was seen on 30th August, and another on 19th October. One crossed Bottom Street, Wing, early in October, and another was seen catching a rabbit at the end of the month at Greetham golf club.

There were just two reports of **Weasels**, one in August crossing the road near Barleythorpe

village, and in September one crossing Main Street Seaton. There were fewer **Fox** reports, 4 in July, one at Pickworth Wood, one at Welland Spinney Tixover, and 3 seen separately at Burley Wood, where two were also seen in August.

In addition to Dr Gallimore's **Grey Squirrel**, there were three other records, from Dawn's Paddock, Hambleton Wood, and Walk Farm.

Two separate **Hedgehogs** were seen in our own garden in July (not in Rutland), one lame with a string around its leg, but unfortunately it hid under the shed, so we could not help it. In July a hedgehog was seen in a Cottesmore garden, and one was seen most nights by the Worralls in Barrowden. In August one was seen in an Oakham garden. The hedgehog visited the Worrall's patio to collect food every night in August, and in October two small ones were seen, and later the same evening three were eating peanuts. **Molehills** have appeared at Dawn's Paddock, the verge between Great Casterton and Pickworth, **Rabbits** were seen at Walk Farm plantation, others at Hambleton Wood, and Ketton Quarry. **Brown Hares** were recorded at Walk Farm and Barrowden.

The Bank Vole in Dr Gallimore's garden wall was seen in September, and a **Pygmy Shrew** was caught in the portacabin in Egleton car park, and released unharmed. A small **Brown Rat** crossed Main Street, Barrowden, in mid-September.

Two reports concern **Roe Deer**; one crossed the Pickworth-Great Casterton Road slowly, hiding in the hedge until the car had passed, then crossed back again. Two moved quietly into roadside vegetation on the north side of Stamford Road, Ketton. A total of four **Muntjac** were recorded, including Dr Gallimore's one that limps seen twice, one at Clipsham Wood, one at Seaton Road, Barrowden. **Fallow** are reported in large numbers from Little Haw Wood, Clipsham Wood, Burley, Pickworth and Morkery Woods, the largest group being 34 at one time.

*Thank you very much for your records: T Caldicott, A Comber, M Iannantuoni, C Gallimore, P Langston, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, P J Rudkin, AR & MA Thorp, D Whitefield, M Winslow, L & G Worrall*

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

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### **May to October 2009**

The weather throughout the breeding period for bats (May to October inclusive) was warm and relatively benign, with fewer wet nights compared with the preceding two years, and a



long dry period in September/October. Judging by the number of grounded bats I have received, especially infants and juveniles (see species accounts), it has therefore been a much better season.

There were no 'unidentified' bats in May or July, but during June and August Graham and Linda Worrall reported seeing larger bats in their garden, that may have been long-eared, but even though they were seen flying through the car port in August, there was no supporting evidence of droppings or moth wings. On 6.8 a bat was found floating on top of a water butt in Ashwell Road, Langham. After being rescued it was left in a wheelbarrow in a wood to dry out and had gone later in the day. Four bats had previously been seen flying round the wood at this address. Numerous bats were recorded flying round The Stone House, Wing on 19.8; they were not seen emerging from the house, although fresh droppings, probably those of long-eared bats, were regularly seen. A possible long-eared bat flew past me in Ashwell churchyard on 29.8, which may have emerged from the church. The last record of the period was a small bat foraging at Woodland View, Oakham on a fine, mild evening.

#### **Pipistrelle (Common, Soprano, or undetermined)**

Common pipistrelles were present in Alan and Julie Comber's Oakham garden regularly throughout May, June, July, August and September, but I have seen none in my own or neighbouring gardens and only heard occasional bats flying nearby. On 1.5 a limited survey was carried out in part of Barnsdale Wood, near the upper car park; there was most activity from both species, but particularly sopranos, over a small stream within the wood. Both common and soprano pipistrelles were foraging under the canopy of mature trees in good numbers in a compartment in the southern part of Burley Wood on 29.5. There was also much activity near the entrance nearer to Oakham, where the ride crosses a little stream. Small numbers of common and soprano pipistrelles were heard near the old railway tunnel at Morcott on 9.5.

In Barrowden, on 5.6, approximately 30 bats passed through the Worralls' garden (they discounted obviously circling bats). Most dashed through from the direction of Dovecote Close, presumably on their way to foraging areas. On 11.6 around 15 passed through in a five-minute period, and this continued for most nights during June. On 20.7 again 15 bats passed through the Worralls' garden in a five minute period, from about 10 minutes after sunset, with only one taking time to dive round a small tree before whizzing after the others.

During June, eight roosts were counted for the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP),

but three of these contained no bats during the period; a further two were not counted because the bats did not return. At Whitwell Hotel, there were 155 soprano pipistrelles on 11.6; 216 on 22.6 and 245 on 12.7. The last two counts definitely included flying juveniles, identified mainly by their hesitant flight and tendency to flutter around the roost as if getting their bearings. At Whitwell Watersports the maximum count was 111. The Manton roost of soprano pipistrelles contained 177 bats early in June, but these had gone by 21.6. Other roosts had smaller numbers of bats.

Both species of pipistrelle were heard in the Aldgate area of Ketton on 3.7, and soprano pipistrelles were emerging from a roost on Main Street, Hambleton on 11.7, before rain halted the survey at 10.00 pm. Pipistrelles were foraging over Ashwell Canal on 31.7. In August, both species were heard around Braunston church on 4.8, many soprano pipistrelles were foraging at Whitwell Creek on 7.8 and at Egleton reserve during a bat walk on 21.8. There were pipistrelle droppings in Ashwell church on 14.8, and several common pipistrelles emerged from under eaves on the south side of the church on 29.8 and 6.9. Both common and soprano pipistrelles were foraging on the Hambleton south shore on 14.9 and 28.9; on the latter date, when it was very windy, they were particularly active in the shelter of trees at the first fishermen's car park. On 6.10 three bats foraged briefly in a Barrowden garden, before flying off southwards, and on several occasions in October, a single common pipistrelle was foraging close to houses, including mine, on Woodland View, Oakham.

*'Grounded' pipistrelles* Eight grounded bats have been dealt with during this half year, with six adults, only two juveniles, no infants. Six males and two females were recorded. This suggests that survival of both young and breeding mothers has been much better this year, compared with the relatively high infant and juvenile mortality in 2008. Division between the species is: four common pipistrelles, three sopranos and one undetermined. Four bats died; two from cat strike, one from injuries with unknown cause and one was emaciated. Only one bat became a permanent captive, from injuries caused by a dog while the bat was trapped indoors. A female soprano found outside a factory in Uppingham gave birth to a stillborn baby, but was safely released a week later, while a sexually active male common pipistrelle found its way into Fords Department Store (bedding department), and took two shop assistants and me an hour to catch. A male soprano became impaled by its mouth and

tail membrane on discarded fishing line caught in a tree beside Oakham Canal. It was discovered by a dog walker, who used his dog's lead to pull down the branch, and took the bat to the vet, where a barbed fishhook was removed from its mouth. It was released once it was obvious it could feed properly. Barbed fishhooks are now illegal because of the risk they pose to wildlife, so this very unlucky pipistrelle was fortunate to be rescued in time.

#### **Nathusius' Pipistrelle, *Pipistrellus nathusii***

On 29.5 three Nathusius' pipistrelles emerged from a known roost in Burley Wood at approx. 9.50 pm (i.e. roughly 40 minutes after sunset), and one or two were foraging in a compartment near the southern edge of the wood, where there is no shrub layer, but the oak/ash canopy is more or less continuous and the ground layer is quite dense (mostly brambles). Two members of the Bat Group (from near Market Bosworth) recorded several foraging around the church in Hambleton in August. On 14.9 and 28.9, I carried out a pilot Nathusius' pipistrelle survey (with a Bat Group colleague) for the Bat Conservation Trust. On both occasions we heard no Nathusius' pipistrelles during the survey, but on 28.9 as we walked back, we heard plenty of activity in sheltered conditions at the first fishermen's car park, more than an hour after sunset.

#### **Brown Long-eared bat, *Plecotus auritus***

Several long-eared bats were recorded foraging in Barnsdale Wood over a small stream on 4.5, and in Burley Wood on 29.5.

In Ketton, a long-eared bat was entering an office in a converted barn and leaving telltale droppings on the carpet. Several long-eared bats were foraging next to Oakham Canal (north side of the Burley Road towards Langham) on 31.7. They were flying very close to shrubby vegetation, at between one and three metres height, and I was picking them up on the detector between 40–60 kHz. In Langham on 21.8, a member reports opening her garage door at around 10.0 pm, and as she switched on the light, two long-eared bats flew in, following moths attracted to the light. They roosted briefly on wooden beams of the roof, where she could see their long ears quite clearly and their brown fur. When she turned off the light, the bats returned outside.

Three roosts were counted for the NBMP in June, with disappointing results (2008 in brackets). In Little Casterton only one bat emerged (4);

at Barnsdale four bats came from a different entrance to that used in 2008 (18), and in Wing six bats were counted on 11.6 (17). However, the story was the same all over Leicestershire, with lower numbers reported from all the roosts.

**Grounded brown long-eared bats** Three long-eared bats were found 'grounded' during the later months of the period. On 4.9 a juvenile female was killed by a cat in Thistleton, and on 19.9 an extremely emaciated juvenile female was found on the pavement in front of Walkers newsagent in Oakham. Sadly this one also died. A male entered a house in Belton-in-Rutland, and during a search by the owner and myself, it was found roosting in the corner of the surround of a blocked fireplace; this one however was soon fit to be released.

#### **Whiskered bat, *Myotis mystacinus***

Whiskered bats cannot be identified easily in the field, even with computer sonograms, so the only record is of a count at a known roost in Seaton. Here, 56 bats emerged on 16.6 in clear, still, dry weather, with emergence beginning at approximately 9.45 pm. Bucking the trend, this count is higher than for the previous three years.

#### **Daubenton's bat, *Myotis daubentonii***

Daubenton's bats were recorded foraging at the usual sites: off the south shore at Hambleton Peninsula, in Whitwell Creek near the Water Sports centre, and in Burley Wood. There were no grounded bats for the period in Rutland, but interestingly two separate grounded bats were brought in from Corby, both adult females, one of which has been released, the other kept because of a damaged wrist.

#### **Noctule bat, *Nyctalus noctula***

With practice, noctule bats may be identified in flight by their size and shape, but mainly by their echo-location signals, even without sonogram analysis. However, this year, noctules have been notable for their absence, with none heard during bat walks and surveys in Lyndon (June), Egleton and Whitwell (August) or Hambleton south shore (September), although the Bat Group members from Husband's Bosworth heard quite a bit of noctule activity on their Nathusius' pip foray at Hambleton village in August.

#### **Barbastelle, *Barbastella barbastellus***

Ecologists working at Ketton have reported recording Barbastelle bats in several places around Castle Cement's land, south of the quarry, especially at Ketton Gorse, in Empingham parish. No further details are available at present.

*My thanks to members for their sightings: R Burdett, A & J Comber, Dr C Gallimore, J Harris, M Markham, G & L Worrall*