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NOTICEBOARD

Birdfair 2010

Friday 20 August to Sunday 22 August, 9.00 am to 5.30 pm. Tickets: adults £10, children under 16 free, 2-day ticket £18, 3-day ticket £24. RSPB and Wildlife Trust members, Sunday only, £8. Tickets can be bought in advance or on the day.

There are some events which need booking beforehand. You're already too late for the Celebrity Wildlife cruise with Chris Packham! But tickets are still available for the Celebrity Lecture 'Last chance to see - a search for animals on the edge of extinction' with Mark Carwardine. It's on Friday 20th August 7.30 pm, at the Events Marquee, Birdfair Site; sponsored by WildSounds. Tickets at £10 can be booked through The Birdfair Office on 01572 771079 or at info@birdfair.org.uk.

Another special event is led by Jenny Harris (our RNHS bat recorder and Bat Conservation Trust) and can be pre-booked: it is a 'Bat Walk and Talk' on Saturday 21st 7.45 pm at Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre. Advance bookings taken prior to the fair on 01572 771079 or at the Bat Conservation stand.

Top names in nature and conservation are at the fair this year: Simon King, Jonathan and Angie Scott, Mike Dilger, Janet Sumner, Chris Packham, Johnny Kingdom, Nick Baker and new this year – Philippa Forester and Charlie Hamilton-James.

The 2010 official programme will be available with the August issue of *Birdwatch Magazine*, as well as from several nature reserves around the country. It is also available, with the most up-to-date news, on www.birdfair.org.uk – there is so much going on that you need to allow plenty of time to go through it.

HIGH TIDES IN NORTH NORFOLK Nola Thurlow

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

August				September			
Sunday	1	10.39	23.07	Sunday	5	04.05	16.50
	8	05.33	18.05		12	09.34	22.03
	15	10.39	23.14		19	04.28	17.23
	22	05.48	18.30		26	08.40	21.01
	29	09.37	22.00				

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RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY events

OUTDOOR MEETINGS

Saturday August 14 **LYNDON RESERVE** **11.00 am**

Our own RNHS Orthopterist Phil Rudkin will lead this walk to the Lyndon Reserve at Rutland Water, primarily to see Coneheads, Crickets and Grasshoppers. Park in the car park (OS Explorer 234, SK 894056).

Sunday August 29 **WICKEN FEN: DRAGONFLY PROJECT SAFARI** **2.00 pm**

Organised by the British Dragonfly Society. £3.50 for National Trust members, £8 for non-members. There is also a small charge for parking. Meet at OS Explorer 226, TL 564 705, at the Wren Building.

Saturday September 18 **DAWN'S Paddock** **4.00 pm**

Led by Dawn Whitefield, RNHS Programme Secretary, there's lots to see at this interesting paddock with its ancient hedges and grassland, osiers down by the stream, etc., next to The Seek. Meet at laybe between Oakham and Braunston, ample free parking, OS Explorer 234, SK 840 074.

INDOOR MEETINGS

Indoor meetings are held at the Burley Road School, Oakham: charge of 40p for tea/coffee/biscuits. After the summer break, they start again on October 5.

LEICESTER AND RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST

See www.lrwt.org.uk, or phone 0116 272 0444 in office hours, for other events in Leicestershire and Rutland, including guided walks all over the area – for which it is often necessary to book. Here are some local events at Rutland Water.

Friday August 6, 13, 27 **AUTUMN WADERS** **10.00 am**

By August many waders have left their northerly breeding grounds and are heading south. It is possible to see up to 20 species in a single day at Rutland Water. On these guided walks we'll point out the various different species that are feeding up before continuing their journey. We'll also visit an Osprey nest. £5 per person, booking essential, call 01572 737378 and ask to speak to a member of the Osprey Team.

Tuesday August 10 **OSPREY FAMILY FUN DAY** **10.00 am**

Bring the family to the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton, to learn about the life of an Osprey. Children will get their own numbered osprey ring and can then spend the day catching fish, nest building, feeding their chicks and then migrating to their winter home. There will also be a chance to make osprey masks and mobiles and use the radio tracking equipment to find an 'Osprey' lost on the reserve. £10 per family, no need to book. More information can be found at www.ospreys.org.uk or call 01572 737378 and ask to speak to a member of the Osprey Team.

Tuesday August 31 **FAMILY FUN DAY** **10 am–12 pm or 1–3 pm**

Fun for all the family at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton. No need to book, just turn up on the day, £3 per child. More details at www.rutlandwater.org.uk.

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

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

LEICESTERSHIRE FUNGI STUDY GROUP

Sunday September 5th FUNGUS FORAY IN PRIORS COPPICE 10.00 am

Join Tom Hering to find what's lurking in this Wildlife Trust Reserve. Between Braunston and Brooke, turn west into lane signed Leighfield Lodge for half a mile and park on right just before farm entrance gates or by trackside, SK 833049; please do not use farm entrance for parking or turning. Booking is essential: Ring Richard Iliffe on 01455 612769.

WEATHER SUMMARY Roy Lemmon

87 Empingham Road, Stamford PE9 2SU. Telephone: 01780 762051

MAY 2010

Atmospheric pressure and winds A feature of this month has been the presence of high pressure systems to the north west of the British Isles, which have meant that winds here have been predominantly from the NW-NE and temperatures have been lower than usual. There were occasional days as each system moved away when winds were SE-SW but the northerly trend continued to the end of the month.

Temperatures This has been a colder than usual month, nationally the coldest since 1996 largely due to minimum temperatures being lower than in preceding years. The mean night-time minimum I recorded was 5.8 °C, colder than 2009 and 2008 (which were 7.7 °C and 8.1 °C respectively); and the mean day-time maximum was 18.75 °C (compared with 19.0 °C in 2009 and

20.1 °C in 2008). A marked feature of the month was a night-time minimum of -1.5 °C on the 12th. I have had to search my records back to 1996 to find another May minimum which was below zero, namely -0.7 °C on the 6th, and 1995 which yielded a low of -0.3 °C on the 14th.

Rainfall A second successive drier than usual month. The rainfall I recorded was 19.9 mm (0.78 inches) which is 39.4% of my LTM, compared to 1.56 inches or 64% in England and Wales for the national standard reference period 1971 to 2000. There was a period of 17 days, the 9th to 25th, in which I recorded no rainfall.

Sunshine Averaged over England and Wales, 219 hours were recorded or 108% of the 1971 to 2000 mean.*

JUNE 2010

Atmospheric pressure and winds Apart from the period 8th to 11th which saw pressures between 1000-1008 mb, this has again been a month of predominantly high pressures. That said there were no exceptional highs, the period 18th to 23rd was the highest with between 1025 and 1030 mb. Winds were generally NW-E with occasional days with other orientations as pressure systems passed over us.

Temperatures A warm month with a mean day-time maximum of 22.8 °C (2009: 22.1 °C, 2008: 21.3 °C) but a run-of-the-mill mean night-time minimum of 10.1 °C (2009: 10.5 °C, 2008: 9.9 °C). At the beginning of the month, from the 3rd to the 5th, there was a warm spell and later the temperature rose again on 22nd and stayed that

way until the end of the month, with a maximum of 29.6 °C on 27th.

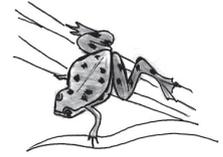
Rainfall The total recorded was 46.7 mm, which is 88.8% of my LTM (16 years), but as this followed two dry months it gives a misleading impression. Averaged nationally, rainfall January to June inclusive was 356.8 mm, the lowest since 1929; for this station the total for that period was 250.0 mm which again goes to emphasise what a dry area we live in. Of this 46.7 mm, 83% fell between the 5th and 9th and there were 19 days on which no rainfall was detected.

Sunshine Averaged over England and Wales this was 260 hours or 137% of the 1971-2000 mean and this was the highest in any June since 1975.*

**Philip Eden, Sunday Telegraph*

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

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May/June 2010

There have not been a lot of records during these two months, although all eight species of amphibian and reptile have been observed. Amphibians usually keep a low profile at this time of year and they did this with success this year.

The only record of **Common Frog** was from Empingham where they were reported to be drastically reduced and no spawn was seen for the first time in 40 years. **Common Toads** fared slightly better. Toads and toadlets were seen at Exton and Wing and a toad was observed in the

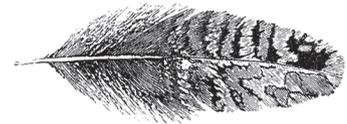
proximity of St Andrew's Church in Whissendine. Both **Smooth** and **Great Crested Newt** were only recorded in small numbers in Empingham and at HMP Stocken.

There was a single sighting of a **Viviparous Lizard** at Ketton Quarry, and the first record of a **Slow Worm** from Clipsham since 2003 was heartening. There were **Grass Snake** records from Exton (two), Empingham and Barrowden (dead) – all in May. **Adders** were regularly seen in Ketton Quarry, usually singles, but two were seen on 22nd June.

My thanks to the following who sent in records: J Crosby, J Harris, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, B, D, R & J Parker, M Tyler and L Worrall

BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

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



May/June 2010

An excellent spring at Rutland Water added two species to the Rutland list – Buff-breasted and Broad-billed Sandpipers – and attracted other exciting species: Spoonbill, Red-necked Phalarope and White-winged Black Tern. Our usual summer migrants arrived generally on time but in reduced numbers for some species. Birds of prey featured strongly with many records of Red Kites, Buzzards and Kestrels plus Marsh Harrier and Hobby.

Many records of more common warblers, wagtails and finches will be forwarded to the BTO as part of our contribution to the current Atlas recording. Timed tetrad and other visits have found interesting and less common species such as Curlew, Wheatear, Yellow Wagtail and Reed Warbler. There are still a number of sites, even in our small county, which are rarely visited and which would repay attention.

My thanks to the following for their records: J W Ansley, V Arnold, T Caldicott, A & G Chiverton, A & J Comber, J Crosby, Dr C H Gallimore, M & G Griffin, M Grimes, J Harvey, A Lawrence, LROS, R Lemmon, P Mann, T Mitcham, J Ostler, P Rudkin, P Scott, Jill Stapleton, A R & M A Thorp, M Winslow, G & L Worrall.

Greylag Goose. Six flew over Stocken on 03.06.

There were single broods at FHP and Exton Park in June.

Canada Goose. Breeding was confirmed at RW and EBR and also near Wardley Wood, where a pair accompanied five well-grown goslings on pasture on 12.06.

Egyptian Goose. Four were present in Burley Wood for most of June. Breeding was confirmed at RW(Egleton).

Shelduck. Up to six were at FHP to 20.06, with a brood of three there on 31.05. At EBR there was a brood of nine on 12.06, and breeding was also confirmed at RW.

Mandarin Duck. A male was at FHP on 16.05.

Wigeon. Two were at RW(Egleton) on 24.06.

Teal. A male was at EBR on 12.06 with 17 there on 19th June.

Garganey. A male was at RW(Egleton) between 07 and 12.06.

- Shoveler.** Two males and a female remained at FHP throughout both months.
- Pochard.** A male was at EBR between 08 and 30.05.
- Goldeneye.** Two females remained at RW(Eggleton) throughout both months.
- Red-breasted Merganser.** A pair was at RW (South Arm) on 04.05.
- Grey Partridge.** There was a pair in Exton Park on 08.05.
- Little Egret.** Present at RW throughout both months with a max. of seven on 09.06.
- Grey Heron.** One was a regular visitor at Barrowden duckpond during June.
- Spoonbill.** Two were at RW(North Arm) on 21.06.
- Red Kite.** Regularly seen over Stamford and Stocken. One was feeding on a hedge near Pilton on 11.05, and possibly the same bird was seen to pick up road kill near Wing on 12.06. There are indications of at least six or seven pairs breeding this year.
- Marsh Harrier.** A female drifted over George Henry Wood (Stretton) on 07.05, mobbed by a pair of Ravens.
- Sparrowhawk.** One carrying a Starling at Wing was mobbed by a Mistle Thrush. One was seen to catch a House Sparrow at Stocken on 29.06.
- Buzzard.** Five over Stocken on 12.05 and 28.06 was the max. count, with three noted over Burley Wood, Barnsdale Gardens, Woodhead and Little Haw Wood in May.
- Osprey.** The RW(Lyndon) pair hatched three chicks which continue to prosper. Single birds visited FHP and Leighfield Fishponds (LFP) occasionally in June.
- Kestrel.** Records were received from the Wing, Preston and Barrowden areas, George Henry Wood, Shacklewell, Lyddington Crossing (breeding), Beaumont Chase Farm (breeding), FHP(breeding) and Langham, where one ate a Blackbird on a village lawn.
- Hobby.** One flew over Stocken on 01.05, and one or two were noted at EBR, LFP, Oakham, and Burley. Birds hunted regularly at RW throughout both months with a max. of nine on 18.06.
- Water Rail.** One called on lagoon 3 at RW(Eggleton) on 14.05. Breeding occurred on the Lyndon Wader Scrape.
- Oystercatcher.** One flew over Oakham on 03.06, and there were two at EBR on 12.06. Breeding was confirmed on both sections of RW reserve.
- Avocet.** One was at RW (Eggleton) on 11.05, with a pair present there on 23/24.05 and 07.06.
- Lapwing.** Breeding birds were reported at Woodhead, Exton Park and RW(Eggleton).
- Knot.** Two were at RW(Eggleton) on 07.05, with one on four dates between 08.05 and 24.05.
- Sanderling.** Noted at RW between 08.05 and 26.05, with a max. of ten on the last date.
- Temminck's Stint.** Singles were at EBR on 23.05 and RW (Eggleton) on 25/26.05.
- Curlew Sandpiper.** One was at RW(Eggleton) on 18.05.
- Dunlin.** Noted at RW between 08.05 and 02.06, with ten on the first date. There were three at EBR on 15.05.
- Broad-billed Sandpiper.** A first record for Rutland, one spent an hour on lagoon 4 at Eggleton on 02.06.
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper.** A first record for Rutland, one was present on lagoon 4 at Eggleton on 17/18.05.
- Black-tailed Godwit.** Three flew over RW on 04.05. There were up to six at EBR between 18/27.06. At RW(Eggleton) there were flocks of 29 on 20.06, and 21 on 29.06, with three noted on 30.06.
- Whimbrel.** One was at RW on 06.05. There was a strong passage on 08.05 when flocks totalling 63 passed through here. One was present on 24.05.
- Curlew.** In May singles were near RAF Cottesmore and RW(Eggleton) with a pair in the Welland valley near Thorpe-by-Water. Two flew over Barleythorpe on 07.06, one over Oakham on 18.06, and one fed on a manure heap near Greetham on 20.06.
- Spotted Redshank.** Two in breeding plumage were at EBR on 18/19.06.
- Redshank.** Two were at EBR on 15.05, with one at RW(Eggleton) on 21.05.
- Greenshank.** Singles were noted at RW(Eggleton) between 09.05 and 11.06, with one at EBR on 08.05.
- Green Sandpiper.** Singles were at EBR and RW on 12.06, with nos. at RW rising to seven on 25.06.
- Wood Sandpiper.** Singles were at RW(Eggleton) on 01 and 26.05.
- Common Sandpiper.** On 08.05 there were two at RW(North Arm) and four at EBR with one at EBR next day.
- Turnstone.** At RW there was a max. of four (10.05) between 01.05 and 04.06.
- Red-necked Phalarope.** A female was at RW(Eggleton) on 28.05.
- Mediterranean Gull.** Two adults were at RW(Eggleton) on 14.06.

- Little Gull.** A first-summer bird was at RW from 04.05 to the end of June. One was at EBR between 18/24.06.
- Yellow-legged Gull.** Singles were at RW on 07 and 11/12.06.
- Caspian Gull.** A first-summer bird was at RW(Egleton) on 25.05.
- Little Tern.** Singles were at RW on 04 and 11.06, and at EBR on 22.06.
- Black Tern.** Noted at RW between 14.05 and 04.06, with a max. of ten on 23.05.
- White-winged Black Tern.** Two in breeding plumage were at RW(Egleton) on 23/24.05.
- Arctic Tern.** Early May produced good nos. at RW, with 80+ on 04.05, 50+ on 06.05 and 35 on 07.05.
- Common Tern.** Three or four were regular at EBR during both months with some activity at a nesting platform. At least 35 pairs were breeding on Egleton Reserve in June.
- Turtle Dove.** One was at Leighfield on 21.05, and singles were noted at RW(Egleton) on 31.05 and 05.06. It seems that we shall soon lose this species in Rutland.
- Cuckoo.** Singing birds were heard throughout both months to 30.06 at fifteen sites well scattered across the county. Four males were seen in flight near Oakham on 01.06.
- Barn Owl.** There were reports from Brooke, Leighfield, Gorsefield Wood, RW(Egleton and Lyndon), Exton Park and Wing. One was found dead by the A606 near Burley Wood on 05.05.
- Little Owl.** Reported from Brooke, FHP, Beaumont Chase Farm and Lyndon Top.
- Tawny Owl.** Up to three called regularly at Stocken throughout both months. Heard at Morkery Wood and Horn Spinney and bred in nestboxes at RW and Tunneley Wood.
- Short-eared Owl.** There was an unseasonal bird at RW on 26.05.
- Swift.** A much under-recorded species in villages where (we hope!) they still breed. Screaming parties were noted in Lyddington, Barrowden and Empingham with no indication of numbers. 800 were estimated over RW(Egleton) on 07.06.
- Kingfisher.** Two were at LFP during June, with singles by the Gwash at Brooke on 13.06, and one at a Barleythorpe pond on 22.06.
- Green Woodpecker.** Present at Stocken in both months with other records from Bloody Oaks Reserve, Tolethorpe, Edith Weston, Gorsefield Wood and Wing.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker.** On 06.05 a male stunned itself on a window at Wing but recovered, hanging upside down from a branch on a nearby horse-chestnut for ten minutes before flying off. Fourteen were noted around Burley Wood on 15.06 and a family party fed on feeders at Normanton in late June.
- Lesser Spotted Woodpecker.** A female was in Burley Wood on 14.05.
- Sand Martin.** Nesting activity was reported at Greetham Quarry in May. Over 400 young had been ringed at RW by late June.
- Swallow.** Breeding birds were reported from Stocken, Barrowden and Seaton Scrap Yard but nos. seem to be down on last year.
- House Martin.** Breeding nos. are much reduced on 2009, although many occupied nests were noted at Thistleton in late May and c.30 fed with Swallows at Stocken on 28.06.
- Meadow Pipit.** Reported only from George Henry Wood, where at least two pairs were nesting in late May.
- Yellow Wagtail.** One or two were noted at LFP, Brooke Priory, near Thistleton, near Langham and RW(Burley Fishponds).
- Grey Wagtail.** One sang regularly from the roofs of buildings in Ironmonger Street, Stamford, during both months.
- Pied Wagtail.** Two successful nests were reported from Stocken, one built on a gang mower.
- Wren.** c.55 were counted around Burley Wood on 19.05.
- Nightingale.** One sang at Gibbet Gorse on 04.05 and 13.05, and several song phrases were heard from a late bird in Greetham Far Wood on 20.06.
- Wheatear.** Singles were at Beaumont Chase Farm on 05.05, and George Henry Wood on 07/08.05. There were four near RAF Cottesmore on the latter date.
- Mistle Thrush.** One sang in Christchurch Close, Stamford on 14.06 and 14 were noted around LFP on 22.06.
- Cetti's Warbler.** One continued to sing by lagoon 3 at Egleton throughout May.
- Grasshopper Warbler.** Singles sang in Pickworth Wood on 09.05 and Greetham Far Wood on 20.06.
- Reed Warbler.** Away from its stronghold at RW, small nos. were found in the Welland valley with seven singing at Thorpe-by-Water on 14.05 and four or five at Geeston on 17.05. Singles held territory at FHP in May and LFP in June and one sang at Burley Wood on 21.06.

Sedge Warbler. Seven were in song at LFP on 13.05, and eleven sang at Thorpe-by-Water the following day. One held territory at FHP in May. Well distributed at both RW reserves.

Lesser Whitethroat. Ten sang in the Leighfield area on 01.05. Singles were widely spread with reports from ten scattered sites.

Whitethroat. Good nos. were widely reported with 31 in the Leighfield area on 21.05, and records from Beaumont Chase Farm (five on CBC plot), three at Barleythorpe and two at Wing Fishing Lakes.

Garden Warbler. Following a later arrival this year there were records from Hambleton Wood, Clipsham Park Wood, Burley Wood (22 on 14.05), Leighfield (sixteen on 18.05), Pickworth Wood, Normanton and Tunneley Wood. One was carrying food for young at Westland Wood on 29.06.

Blackcap. An excellent year for this species with reports from across the county and high counts from Burley Wood (38 singing on 04.06) and Leighfield (25 on 02.06).

Chiffchaff. 38 sang in Burley Wood on 04.06.

Willow Warbler. Nos. seem down on last year with only fifteen singing in Burley Wood on 14.05. At other sites only odd birds were singing in May, e.g. Tunneley and Newell Woods.

Goldcrest. c.32 were noted around Burley Wood on 30.06.

Spotted Flycatcher. First noted at Leighfield on 13.05, with subsequent sightings at Priors Coppice, Clipsham Park Wood, Edith Weston, Burley Wood, FHP, Tunneley Wood and Beaumont Chase Farm.

Long-tailed Tit. A flock of c.50 was counted near Leighfield on 13.06.

Willow Tit. One sang at Leighfield on 02.06, and there was a family party of eight west of Leighfield on 09.06.

Marsh Tit. One sang in Tunneley Wood on 19.06, and twelve were noted around Burley Wood on 27.06.

Nuthatch. Bred at Beaumont Chase Farm. Also noted at FHP and Exton Park woods, Burley Wood (17 on 21.06) and Oakham.

Treecreeper. Bred at Swan Hide on RW Lyndon reserve. 38 were noted around Burley Wood on 30.06.

Jay. Singles at Lady Wood in May were the only records.

Carrion Crow. One persistently attacked its reflection in windows and a metal chimney cowl at Barrowden for two weeks in May. This behaviour has been recorded in other species, such as Pied Wagtails and Chaffinches.

Raven. Pairs were noted over Stretton on 07.05, and Leighfield on 09.05 and 28.06. (The photograph in the last *Fieldfare* was of a brood fledged in Lincolnshire.)

Starling. A 'light ginger' coloured bird with white markings around the neck was with normal birds in Stamford on 14.06. I hope we have not missed a juvenile Rose-coloured Starling !

Tree Sparrow. Up to three were reported from Leighfield in both months. A family party was near Mounts Lodge in mid-June.

Goldfinch. Up to 25 fed on groundsel and other weed seeds at Stocken in both months.

Siskin. A male visited a Wing garden feeder on 10.05.

Linnet. In May up to fifty took dandelion and groundsel seeds at Stocken and there were c.70 at Leighfield on 05.05.

Lesser Redpoll. One flew over Leighfield on 13.05.

Crossbill. Singles were in Burley Wood on 04 and 14.05.

Bullfinch. A pair was regular in a Barrowden garden in both months. Also noted at Clipsham Park Wood and Beaumont Chase Farm.

Wildfowl Counts for Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park

	16.05.10	20.06.10.
Mute Swan	6	5
Greylag Goose	6	3
Shelduck	3	2
Mandarin Duck	1	
Gadwall	16	26
Mallard	52	65
Shoveler	2	2
Tufted Duck	13	13
Cormorant	1	
Moorhen	7	8
Coot	29	35

BOTANY NOTES compiled by Graham Worrall

6 Redland Close, Barrowden LE15 8ES. Telephone: 01572 747302

May 2010

Early in the month the classic spring flowers were still in bloom; **Early Purple Orchid** was found in large numbers, and **Celandine, Primrose** and **Bluebell** were in the local woods. On salty roads **Danish Scurvy-grass** was very common. By the middle of the month **Bulbous Buttercup, Creeping Buttercup** and **Cuckooflower** were in abundance in the unimproved grassy areas. On the lime soils masses of **Cowslips** were observed. May blossom was late this year but in the second half of the month the hedgerows were full of flower, partly because of the modified hedge-cutting regime brought in a few years ago.

Thank you to the Verge Recorders, who have started to send in their reports in increasing numbers.

Records from: R Archer, T Caldicott, A Chiverton, G Chiverton, J Crosby, M Grimes, J Harvey, R Lemmon, A Malcolm, J Mallett, M Winslow, G Worrall

June 2010

By June the season had caught up with the modern average timing. In the first week **Common Spotted Orchid** was found and **Guelder Rose** bushes were a mass of white blossom. Mid month, **Southern Marsh Orchids** were at their best but woodland flowers were in decline because of the shade. At the end of June water plants were in good numbers; **Yellow Water-lily** and **Amphibious Bistort** were noted in the Welland and **Viper's Bugloss** was in flower on poor bare soils.

LEPIDOPTERA NOTES compiled by Jean Harvey

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

May/June 2010

BUTTERFLIES

This report must commence with some recent, surprising and completely unexpected news. On June 29th a report was received that three **Dark Green Fritillaries** had been seen and identified at Clipsham Quarry. A few days later on July 4th, a group of our members who have monitored the quarry for many years now, met there to discover whether these strong-flying butterflies were still present. They were not disappointed as they were rewarded by finding four specimens, two were near each other and two singletons were observed further away later. The only other past Rutland records are for one at Rutland Water in 1993 and three separate sightings at Ketton Quarry in 2003, but to find several at one VC 55 site is unique in recent years.

Large Skippers appeared in good numbers from the middle of June in the quarries, at Rutland Water and at Thorpe-by-Water. **Small Skippers** were also seen in Burley Wood and at Braunston, Egleton and Greetham. Many more records have been received this year for both **Grizzled** and **Dingy Skippers** than in 2009. The maximum numbers for both of these species were 20 at



Ketton on May 21st, other sites being Bloody Oaks Quarry, V4 at Empingham, Great Casterton and Pickworth Road near the A1 for the Grizzled; and Clipsham Quarry, Bloody Oaks Quarry, Greetham and Pickworth for the Dingy.

Brimstones were also seen in numbers at Ketton Quarry in late May and early June, and records came from eight other sites around the County. Both **Large** and **Small Whites** were observed throughout both months and reports were from a wide variety of habitats. **Green-Veined Whites** were only reported from Stocken, Rutland Water and Ketton Quarry.

It would appear that **Orange Tips** have had a very successful season throughout May with a final sighting at Ketton on June 10th. Over 50 of these butterflies were observed along one field margin adjacent to Pickworth Great Wood on May 9th, with many looking very pristine appearing to be only recently emerged. Records also came from twelve other sites. **Green Hairstreaks** were seen in Ketton Quarry on several dates and once at Bloody Oaks Quarry. **Purple Hairstreaks** were

observed in Burley Wood on three dates at the end of June. Five records were received for **Small Copper**: nine were seen at Greetham, five in Clipsham Quarry and other singles at Thorpe-by-Water and at two sites at Leighfield.

A pair of **Brown Argus** were identified in Ketton Quarry, whilst **Common Blue** was the species for which the largest number of cards have been received recently. At Stocken, they were recorded on nine days in June with 35 being seen on the 21st!! They were said to be abundant at Clipsham Quarry, with large numbers also seen at Great Casterton and on V4 at Empingham. A very few **Holly Blues** were seen in the second half of May. **Red Admirals** continue to be scarce in our area with only singles reported from four sites.

Following last years abundance of **Painted Ladies** it comes as rather an anticlimax to report that singles have been noted in only two areas this year, i.e. Stocken and Leighfield. Similarly **Small Tortoiseshells** which were around in April have been limited in June to Rutland Water, Turtle Bridge and (on five dates) Stocken. Only a few **Peacocks** were recorded during the second half of May and the first week of June.

Unusually no records have been received for **Commas** recently. Compared with 2009, no large numbers of **Speckled Woods** have been seen recently. The majority of sightings were for single insects with the exception of Rutland Water where 5 were seen on June 13th, and 10 on 22nd.

One record of 15 **Marbled Whites** at Ketton Quarry was on 25th June and a few were seen at Clipsham Quarry on the 29th. To date only one record has been received for an early **Gatekeeper** at Great Casterton.

Meadow Browns appeared in good numbers during the second half of June, especially in the quarries and at Leighfield. Records for this species came from a variety of sites. **Small Heaths** have been seen by more members than in 2009. The largest number were once again found in Clipsham Quarry, followed by Ketton Quarry and at Tolethorpe and four additional sites. Records for **Ringlets** have been between June 17th and 30th. Over 100 were seen in Burley Wood and 50+ at Ketton Quarry, but as yet only four other sites, compared with 16 in 2009 by the end of June.

MOTHS

Many nights in May were cold for the time of the year, which meant fewer than usual moths were on the wing. National Moth Night this year was May 15th and a trapping session was arranged at Clipsham Quarry. It was an extremely cold night with the temperature falling to 0 °C by midnight!! A tripod light was operated plus 6 box traps and only 22 species were caught. However, amongst these were three new species for the site, these being **Pale Tussock**, **Poplar Kitten** and the **Shears**.

The weather in June improved and especially during the last two weeks more moths were flying. With warmth and winds from the south we hope we may see more migrants in the coming months.

Several interesting moths have been observed recently. **Six-belted Clearwings** were reported from both Clipsham and Ketton Quarries at the end of June. Good numbers of **Hornet Moths** were found in Pit Lane, Ketton. The larvae feed on live wood low down inside the trunks of Poplars before the adults emerge to rest on the tree trunks, usually between 7 and 11 am, otherwise they are seldom seen.

On June 13th we were called to identify thousands of caterpillars which had completely defoliated a Spindle tree. They were of course **Spindle Ermine Moths** which had covered the tree in silken webs, and they were climbing up and down thick silken threads which stretched from the tree top to the ground (see photographs on the next page). It was an amazing sight and since that time, we have been informed that a similar spectacle had been seen near Grebe hide at Rutland Water. We collected a few specimens which pupated immediately in the soil of the container. After only three and a half weeks the next generation of adults have emerged which have subsequently been released.

During the month of June several members have submitted list of moths most of which were found resting or flying during daylight hours. We are very grateful for this information as some of the species seen do not readily come to lights and are therefore often under recorded. **Latticed Heaths** were found in Clipsham Quarry and on V4 Empingham (these come to light occasionally). Other species only seen by day were **Burnet Companions** at Stocken, Great Casterton and Burley Wood, a **Mother Shipton** also in Burley

Wood, and a **Common Heath** in Ketton Quarry. **Chimney Sweepers** were found on grasslands at Greetham, Leighfield, Stocken and Rutland Water. In Burley Wood over 150 Long Horned micromoths of the species *Nemophora degeerella* were observed performing their characteristic swarming 'dance' flight. Here also a **Gold Swift** was noted which is rarely seen nowadays.

Numerous species were observed at Stocken where 300 **Six-spot Burnets** were counted in one field, 106 were on a football pitch, and many **Cinnabars** were noted whilst grass cutting was taking place. A **Green Oak Tortrix** was discovered resting on a tree trunk nearby.

In Oakham a **Lime Hawk Moth** settled on a brick wall in a garden and was later joined by a second where they remained in copulation overnight. Larvae records received have included two **Mullein moths** on Figwort at Barrowden and two **Yellow tails** in Burley Wood.

Three visits to Eyebrook Reservoir in May and one in Mid-June all produced low counts, then on

June 27th the traps around the dam area resulted in 110 species being caught, plus one trap in the plantation with 62 species. The final list for the night listed 120 species overall. These included three new Micros for the site plus a **Little Emerald** and a **Cream Bordered Green Pea** which is a National Notable Species.

At the Barrowden garden trap which is in regular use, recent totals have been up by 10% on last year's results. Important species for this garden have been the **Concolorous** which is a RBD3 nationally but is found occasionally in Rutland, the **Ruddy Carpet** (classified Nb) which is a rare species with only a very few records, including one in Ketton Quarry in 2000.

Finally, Priors Coppice was visited with a tripod and three box traps on June 29th. The result was practically 1000 moths of 114 species, including a **Scallop Shell** which is not often seen in our area, a **Purple Clay** and 13 **Beautiful Hook Tips** (which appear to be having a very good year).

Very many thanks to all who have contributed records, messages and information for this issue: J Ansley, T Caldicott, G Chiverton, J Crosby, R Follows, C H Gallimore, N Gordon, M Grimes, J Harris, Mr and Mrs Joyce, A L Lawrence, R Lemmon, P and E Mann, N Mitchelson, J Myers, E Northen, D and B Parker, P Rudkin, A Russell, P Scott, M Winslow and L Worrall.



Photographs of the amazing multitudes of Spindle Ermine Moths found on June 13. See them in colour on the RNHS website. Photographed by Ron Harvey.



ORTHOPTERA REPORT compiled by Phil Rudkin

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May/June 2010

Nymphs feature strongly in the period under review. However, it is hoped that they will have not been affected by the extremely cold nights of late May. The evening of Saturday 19th June was very cold indeed, followed the very next day, the 20th, by the seeming start of a mini heatwave, for the rest of June.

The tiny Slender Groundhopper has again been well reported, with a welcome new 10 km square, along the old Oakham Canal. In Vice County 55, Helen Ikin, my counterpart in Leicestershire, tells me that this species is also being seen more, especially around ponds and damp areas. My request to our members to report orthoptera observed over the border resulted in a superb photograph, sent to me by email – thanks to our webmaster, Peter Scott, who had found a fully mature adult Common Green Grasshopper, at Beacon Hill, on 7th June. It has been passed on to Helen.

First Rutland orthoptera species heard stridulating was on 24th June.

Many members of our society use the internet website for many things. There are a few websites for the orthoptera (some with Forums). One in particular has much information on the British Grasshoppers and Crickets. Google: Orthoptera. This then brings up a list. Select: 'Orthoptera Recording Scheme'. A section appears, titled: 'Orthoptera and Allied Insects'. Down the lefthand side there are options to choose from, all are of much interest. If members wish to see short videos (some with the insect stridulating), then scroll down to: VIDEO. A short list of species appear. Choose a species and click on it. Then, click on the start symbol, on the top lefthand corner. This takes a few seconds to load. Click on the start again, and off you go. Also, look at the other information down the lefthand side. There is plenty of interest there.

My records for Rutland Water reserves from 2001, then, for the whole of Rutland from 2006 (including members' reports), have slowly been building up a picture of the orthoptera in Rutland. Many habitats have been covered. When the current season ends, hopefully more areas will have been surveyed. I then feel that it will be an appropriate time to produce a map, showing the status of the grasshoppers and crickets in Rutland. As I am not skilled in this department, I will be seeking someone out there who is. Have a think about this and let me know in due course.

Philip Rudkin

BUSH CRICKETS

Dark Bush Cricket *Pholidoptera griseoptera*

May: First sightings were 7 nymphs in rough herbage along ride in Burley Woods, near the Eight Riding Tree, on the 19th (SK 892 098), followed by 17 nymphs, in the same area, on 30th. Gill Chiverton observed 2 nymphs, around the car park scrub, at Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue, on 30th (SK 979 168).

June records: One, nymph, observed in bushes, on Protected Verge 8, Great Casterton, on 7 June (TF 018 107). Finally, during much of June, Tim Caldicott recorded many nymphs in Burley Woods, with a large total of 70+ nymphs, on the 7th. This was to the west of the Eight Riding Tree (SK 890 097).

Speckled Bush Cricket *Leptophyes punctatissima*

The reports for May and June are from Tim Caldicott. This is a good time to locate nymphs. When they emerge as nymphs, they stay around in groups, often at eye level. Although they are tiny, a look through the magnifying lens shows

them as identical to the adults. 26th and 30th May, nymphs found in Burley Woods. And in the same woods during June, regular visits produced nymphs in abundance – 24+, on 15th (SK 890 097).

GROUNDHOPPERS

Slender Ground Hopper *Tetrix subulata*

Two, observed on southeast edge of Burley Woods, 19th May (SK 896 096).

Four, seen on the Brooke Road, Oakham allotments, from 1st to 6th June (SK 860 081).

One, located resting on a pond drainpipe, with water running through the pipe, on 22nd June, near Barleythorpe Hall (SK 846 098).

A new 10 km square was created when one was found on the edge of the old Oakham Canal, near the water, at 4.30 pm, 22nd June, by our Lepidoptera recorders, Ron and Jean Harvey (SK 862 104). Ron sent in a fantastic photograph by email, taken with a digital Canon EOS 7D, using a Sigma 180 macro lens.

GRASSHOPPERS

Common Green Grasshopper *Omocestus viridulus*

I love the scientific name, *viridulus*. It means green, and that reminds me of one of my favourite birds, the Green Woodpecker, *Picus viridis*. This attractive small green grasshopper is easily located when the sun is shining. It has a distinctive reeling song, each reel lasting about 10 to 20 seconds, and stops abruptly. Certainly not so common now as in the past, so the few records that we receive each season are most welcome. It is often the first grasshopper to mature, and also, usually the first to stridulate.

First and only reports from the fields at the rear of the Conference Centre at Barleythorpe: several males stridulating in the long lush grasses, 24th June, and again on the 28th (SK 846 098).

Field Grasshopper *Chorthippus brunneus*

Nymphs, observed during the month of June, up to 29th, on the Brooke Road allotments, Oakham (SK 860 081).

One adult, seen on the southern edge of Burley Woods, 30th June (SK 887 092).

Meadow Grasshopper *Chorthippus parallelus*

Numerous, widespread resident! All reports received were for June. 5 nymphs observed, in the BBQ area of Ketton Quarries (near the car park entrance). Photos sent via email, June 15th. 5 adults, seen in pasture field, and one male stridulating, 30th June. This is a new 10 km square, in field near bridge, on the Lyddington Road, Thorpe-by-Water (SP 892 962).

Numerous nymphs observed in the grasses, on protected Verge 8, Great Casterton, 7th June. Possibly all Meadow Grasshoppers (TF 018 107).

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper *Chorthippus albomarginatus*

Widespread and successful invader! All records are for June. Nymphs, noted all month on the Brooke Road allotments, plus one adult on 26th (SK 860 081). Many observed in Burley Woods during June, finally 10 noted on 30th (SK 890 097).

Many thanks to our reporters: T Caldicott, G Chiverton, J and R Harvey, P Scott.

PLANT GALLS REPORT compiled by Roy Lemmon

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May 2010

The gall reason is now well under way but for the first half of the month it was the old stalwarts, the rusts, that were reported from a variety of habitats and on several dates.

From then on other gallers enter the picture and among these there were galls on Dog Violet at Woodhead Castle on 20th and also on Sessile Oak and Walnut at Stretton on 30th. Also on 30th there were galls reported on Ash and Broad Leaved Dock at Yew Tree Avenue Clipsham. The latter was sent to me for identification, something I am more than happy to assist with and which proved to be a rust, one which was new to me and therefore a double bonus!

June 2010

A good start to the month with galls reported from Stocken and Ketton Quarry on 3rd. The former consisted of two on Oak, which is by far the most commonly galled genus in the country, followed by Salix, the Willows and Sallows.

Those on Oak were made by gall wasps as was one from Ketton Quarry on Ground Ivy, and the Quarry also had a couple of rusts which caused galls. Clipsham Park Wood on 10th gave reports of galls on Broad Leaved Dock, that rust again, Field Maple, Cleavers and Meadowsweet. The latter had three distinct galls including the powdery mildew, which as far as I can see is the only powdery mildew to produce galls, at least in this country. Stocken on 15th was the source of a report of a mite gall on English Elm. Since the Dutch Elm disease epidemic we have tended to ignore Elms but they are still out there and worthy of a look.

Priors Coppice on 17th had galls on Field Maple, Broad Buckler Fern (the Mophead gall), Goat Willow, Meadowsweet and Dog Rose, the latter caused by a rust.

Thorpe-by-Water on 23rd had a gall on White Willow which was sent to me for identification and which proved to be caused by a saw fly. This produces small numbers of reddish domed blisters per leaf and is fairly frequent in this area.

Thanks to G Chiverton, J Crosby, J Harvey and R Lemmon

INSECTS AND OTHERS compiled by Gill Chiverton

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A good number of records to report – damselflies and dragonflies numbers are certainly up on last year, and there are some interesting beetle sightings amongst a very varied collection of insects.



May 2010

Odonata

White-legged Damselflies were noted at Wing Fishing Lakes. **Large Red Damselflies** were noted as 'numerous along hedgerows but less so by the river' at Thorpe-by-Water, 12+ were recorded at Leighfield Fishponds, on two occasions they were recorded in 'good numbers' at Wing Fishing Lakes, one recorded on a house wall at Barrowden, one recorded at Stocken, and 'a big increase this year' was reported from a garden pond at Empingham. **Blue-tailed Damselflies** were recorded in 'good numbers' on two occasions at Wing Fishing Lakes and a 'large increase in sightings' was noted from a garden pond at Empingham. **Red-eyed Damselflies** were recorded at Leighfield Fishponds when 2 were noted on two separate occasions. **Common Blue Damselflies** were recorded at Wing Fishing Lakes and at an Empingham garden pond, 'big increase in numbers this year' was noted. A single **Azure Damselfly** was recorded at Ketton Quarry, they were also noted at Wing Fishing Lakes.

Dragonfly sightings were as follows: a **Four-spotted Chaser** was sighted on two occasions at Leighfield Fishponds, **Broad-bodied Chasers** were recorded at an Empingham garden pond where 12+ were seen to emerge, 2 were recorded at Burley Wood, and 2 were recorded at Leighfield Fishponds.

Hemiptera

A **Hawthorn Shield Bug** *Acanthosoma hemorrhoidale* was noted on a house wall at North Luffenham. Water bugs were recorded at Stocken – 2 **Common Backswimmers** or **Water Boatmen** *Notonecta glauca*, and 3 **Common Pond Skaters** *Gerris lacustris*.

Neuroptera

A **Bluish-green Lacewing** *Chrysopa perla* was recorded at Rutland County Golf Course.

Mecoptera

A **Scorpion Fly** *Panorpa* was recorded at Barnsdale car park RW.

Megaloptera

An **Alder Fly** *Sialidae* was recorded as 'dead' in a pond at Stocken.

Diptera

A **Crane Fly** *Tipula maxima* was recorded at Thorpe-by-Water. Two **St Mark's Flies** *Bibio marci* were noted at Stocken. **Dark-edged Bee-flies** *Bombylius major* – 2 to 3 were noted at Woodhead Castle and a single insect at Stocken. Several **Dainty Bee Hoverflies** *Leucozona lucorum* were recorded at Thorpe-by-Water and one was recorded near the river Chater at Luffenham. **Bumblebee Hoverflies** *Volucella bombylans* were recorded as 'numerous' at Thorpe-by-Water. A **Tachinid Fly** *Tachina fera* was noted at Barnsdale car park RW.

Hymenoptera

A **Hornet** *Vespa crabro* was recorded at Stocken. A **Common Carder Bee** *Bombus pascuorum* was recorded at Burley Wood, and one also recorded at Woodhead Castle. A 'good number' of **Red-tailed Bumblebees** *Bombus lapidarius* were noted at Bloody Oaks Quarry, one was recorded at Burley Wood, and an active nest was recorded under a garden table in Stretton. A **Vestal Cuckoo-bee** *Bombus vestalis* was recorded on Verge 7.

Coleoptera

A **Ground Beetle** *Calathus melanocephalus* was recorded at Rutland County Golf Course. **Cockchafers** *Melolontha melolontha* – single insects were recorded on four occasions and 3 insects another time at Barrowden, one insect came to a moth trap at Clipsham Quarry. Approx 12–15 **Click Beetles** *Athous haemorrhoidales* were seen climbing up a piece of wood and then 'launching into short flights', this was then repeated. 'Good numbers' of **Soldier Beetles**, many with black wing cases, c8 *Rhagonycha fulva* were noted at Stocken. One **Soldier Beetle** *Cantharis rustica* was recorded at Verge 7, and one was recorded at Ketton Quarry. **7-spot Ladybirds** *Coccinella 7-punctata* were recorded as

'common' at Empingham and North Luffenham allotments, but recorder noted that 'many had been parasitised'; 'several' were recorded on Verge 7, 4–5 were noted at Woodhead Castle, and 4–5 recorded at Burley Wood. Two **Harlequin Ladybirds** *Harmonia axyridis* were recorded at Stocken, and 'only odd ones' were noted at Empingham/North Luffenham allotments. Two **16-spot Ladybirds** *Tytthaspis 16-punctata* were recorded at Burley Wood. A **Leaf Beetle** *Donacia vulgaris* was recorded on reeds at Wing Fishing Lakes. A **Lily Beetle** *Lilioceris lili* was noted actually on lilies at Barleythorpe. Single records of a **Green Weevil** *Phyllobius pomaceus* were noted at Rutland County Golf Course and Thorpe-by-Water. Single records of a curious looking **Weevil** *Platyrhinus resinosus* came from Wing Fishing Lakes and Burley Wood; it breeds in fungi on dead trees.

Arachnida

A **Nursery Web Spider** *Pisaura mirabilis* was recorded at Barnsdale car park RW. A **Zebra Spider** *Salticus scenicus* was recorded at North Luffenham. A **Woodlouse Spider** *Dysdera crocata* was recorded at Barrowden. A **Large Jawed Orb Web Spider** *Tetragnatha Montana* was recorded at Wing Fishing Lakes, which is interesting because they are often found near water.

Terrestrial gastropoda

A **Large Black Slug** *Arion ater* (red/brown form) was recorded at Thorpe-by-Water. **White-lipped Banded Snail** *Cepaea hortensis* – single snails were recorded at Bloody Oaks Quarry, Woodhead Castle and Stocken. **Garden Snails** *Cornu aspersum* were recorded as 'plentiful' at Stocken.

Oligochaeta

A **Lob Worm** *Lumbricus terrestris* was recorded at Burley Wood near the pond

JUNE 2010

Odonata

White-legged Damselflies were recorded on 3 occasions at Thorpe-by-Water – twice in large nos and then only one or two at the end of the month; records also for one insect at Wing and one at Leighfield FP. **Large Red Damselflies** were recorded at Leighfield FP, one recorded at Thorpe-by-Water and 6+ throughout the month in a Wing garden. **Blue-tailed Damselflies** were noted in 'good numbers' at Leighfield FP and one was noted at Thorpe-by-Water. A male **Red-eyed Damselfly** was noted on 3 occasions at Leighfield

FP. **Common Blue Damselflies** were recorded at Leighfield FP, Stocken, Oakham Canal, Turtle Bridge, and at Thorpe-by-Water numbers increased over the month. **Azure Damselflies** were recorded in 'good numbers' at Leighfield FP and were 'abundant' through the month at a Wing garden pond. Single **Emerald Damselflies** were recorded at Burley Wood and Leighfield FP. Three **Banded Demoiselles** were recorded at Turtle Bridge, and 2 or 3 and later in the month 16–20 (more males than females) were recorded at Thorpe-by-Water.

Dragonfly records were as follows: one male **Emperor Dragonfly** was recorded on 2 occasions at Leighfield FP. The first **Brown Hawker** record of the season came from Thorpe-by-Water. **Southern Hawk** were noted at Leighfield FP and Priors Coppice. A **Common Hawker** was recorded at Stocken. **Black-tailed Skimmers** were recorded at Leighfield and Burley Wood. **4-spotted Chasers** were recorded at Stocken, at Leighfield FP where the highest count was 10, and at Burley Wood. **Broad-bodied Chasers** present in twos and threes all month at Leighfield FP, and in twos and threes all month at Burley Wood, one was noted at Barleythorpe, one at Ketton Quarry, and a pair noted on 2 occasions at Wing. The first **Ruddy Darter** record for the season came from Leighfield FP.

Hemiptera

Three **Woundwort Shield Bugs** *Eysarcoris fabricii* were recorded at Leighfield FP. Six **Common Froghoppers** *Philaenus spumarius* were recorded at Stocken. A **Common Backswimmer/ Water Boatman** *Notonecta glauca* + nymphs were noted at Stocken.

Diptera

Six **Spotted Craneflies** *Nephrotoma appendiculata* were recorded at Stocken. 4–6 **Pellucid Hoverflies** *Volucella pellucens* were recorded at Wing. A **Horsefly** was noted at Stocken.

Hymenoptera

Seven **Honey Bees** *Apis mellifera* were recorded at Stocken, and at Barrowden one honey bee trapped in a blind unfortunately stung its rescuer. Seven **Garden Bumblebees** *Bombus hortorum* were recorded at Stocken. Four **White-tailed Bumblebees** *Bombus lucorum* were also at Stocken. 'Several' **Common Carder Bees** *Bombus pascuorum* were noted at Priors Coppice. 'Several' **Red-tailed Bumblebees** *Bombus lapidarius* were foraging along Verge 8, and 6 were noted at Stocken.

A **Wool Carder Bee** *Anthidium manicatum* was recorded at Stocken.

Coleoptera

A **Devil's Coach-horse** *Staphylinus olens* was recorded at Stocken. A **Cockchafer** *Melolontha melolontha* was noted at Barleythorpe. Two **Click Beetles** *Athous haemorrhoidalis* were recorded at Stocken. **7-spot Ladybirds** *Coccinella 7-punctata* were the most commonly recorded ladybirds this month – 2 were noted on Verge 8, one was noted at Ketton Quarry, and a total of 38 (23+6+9) were recorded at Stocken. Four **2-spot Ladybirds** *Adalia 2-punctata* were noted at Stocken. Three **22-spot Ladybirds** *Thea 22-punctata* were also at Stocken.

A **Wasp Beetle** *Clytus arietis* was recorded at Stocken.

Arachnida

A **Crab Spider** *Misumena vatia* and a **Wolf Spider** *Pardosa pullata* were recorded at Stocken. A **Harvestman** *Phalangium opilio* which was infested with mites was also noted at Stocken.

Gastropoda

A **Large Black Slug** *Arion ater* was recorded in Clipsham Park Wood. Three **Brown-lipped Banded Snails** *Cepaea nemoralis* were noted at Ketton Quarry.

Thanks for so many interesting records go to: M Branston, T Caldicott, A & G Chiverton, J Crosby, C Gallimore, R & J Harvey, R Lemmon, P Rudkin, P Scott, M Tyler and L & G Worrall

GLOW-WORM NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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May/June/early July 2010

Unless there's been a shortage of snails or they sealed their shells in the heat and dryness, this breeding season has probably been clement for g-ws and their new offspring.

Ketton Quarry old BBQ area SK977055 9.5: PS photographed a large plump larva on wooden steps.

Barrowden Verge 17, Back Road SK945003 14.6: North verge: AP reported 4 between side end of Drift Close houses and field entrance at west of same field.

15.6: North: G&LW and AP found 2 as above; 7 in first few metres of field (wheat) alongside thick hedge, ditch and field margin running north; 1 alongside same hedge in adjacent field (rape) to west, none in field behind verge hedge. South verge: 1 in gateway to paddock opposite Drift Close. 10.40-11.00 pm. Most females seemed rather small.

21.6: North: LW found 1 in wheat field entrance, none in adjacent field. South: front swathe cut, also paddock entrance and further east, by unknown hand.

30.6: North: MA noted 1 opposite paddock entrance and 3 towards field entrance. It is understood that further development of Drift Close is not to take place.

Barrowden Verge 3, Luffenham Road (The Drift) SK948005 15.6: East: 1 just south of 'Barrowden' sign, 11.05 pm. None on West verge.

21.6: West: Just 1 in usual place above and opposite village sign. East: None; front swathe cut up to village sign with resulting thick lying hay, contrary to usual arrangement with Highways not to cut in June and July.

Essendine, Verge 5 and mainline cutting top TF043129 1.7: A & GC saw a total of 9: NE Verge (mainline side) 1; Cutting bank same side 1; Field on far side of railway 1; Cutting top 6 and probably more present, as grasses very tall. No sightings were made north of small bridge over line.

South Luffenham Level Crossing SK945027 29.6: PS checked in hope, and from 10.00–10.45pm was rewarded with 8 glows: Public footpath westward, on south side of railway, 5; along railway line next to path: 1; East side of road south of crossing, 1 on verge and 1 along edge of crop inside field by railway. This is the largest number seen here for many years, though in the 1940s it was possible to walk from the South Luffenham level crossing to Barrowden, over field paths and lanes with glows all the way.

Outside Rutland

Norfolk

On 6th June a BBC East Ceefax page carried a request from the Norfolk Biodiversity Information Service, which collects and manages wildlife records and has started a survey to find glow-worm hot spots in Norfolk. They say there are not many records of the beetles in the county, even though they are thought to be present. A brief description of how the light is produced at mating time followed, and wildlife watchers in Norfolk were urged to try to spot g-ws during June and July. It was therefore very good to see a

glow-worm on BBC Springwatch, based this year in Norfolk.

Rosenac, La Charente, France

PJR had an amazing encounter with a male on 29.6. He was recording Tree Frogs and a Midwife Toad at the edge of the village and it was dark. Suddenly he noticed that the small round recording light had faded out. He thought the battery was flat. Then the light came on again. He shone his torch on the recorder – and there was a male glow-worm crawling over the light, trying to mate. As he says, amazing!

Thanks indeed for all contributions: M Allsopp, A & G Chiverton, A Pridding, P J Rudkin, P Scott, L & G Worrall.

MYCOLOGY NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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May/June 2010

May had a cool start, a very hot spell in the middle and ended warm with light rain. June began hot, then thunderstormy, then hot and dry with occasional showers. St George's Day is April 23rd, but on May 6th and 20th we had his Mushrooms at Bloody Oaks Quarry and Stocken, noticeably small at both, and a few more at Stocken in June. Dryad's Saddles and Chicken of the Woods in Burley Woods at the end of May were good to note, and after a little rainfall in June some fungi became Stars in more than one way, thanks to the recently recommended English names. Galling microfungi were widely noted.

RESERVES

Hambleton Wood SK904071 6.5: Smut *Entyloma ficariae* on Lesser Celandine; Rusts *Kuehneola uredinis* on Bramble stems, *Melampsora populnea* on Dog's Mercury (galler), *Puccinia sessilis* (aecia) on Lords-and-Ladies, *Uromyces muscari* epiphyllous on Bluebell.

Bloody Oaks Quarry SK971108 6.5: A group of 15 St George's Mushrooms *Calocybe gambosa* in grass to the east of the pill box, close to the ground and somewhat stunted perhaps due to drought, RL thought; Smut *Entyloma ficariae* on Lesser Celandine; Rusts *Melampsora populnea* (aecia) on Dog's Mercury (galler), *Puccinia punctiformis* (galler) hypophyllous on Creeping Thistle with spermogonia (state-o) smelling of

honey, *P violae* (galler) widespread on Hairy Violet with many plants infected, *P sessilis* on Lords-and-Ladies; Slime Mould *Reticularia lycoperdon* on an old cut stump of Hawthorn.

Ketton Quarry Woodland SK974055 3.6: Rust *Puccinia punctiformis*, a galler, on pale and stunted Creeping Thistle.

KQ Valley SK976050 3.6: Rust *Microbotryum lichnidis-dioicae* on anthers of White Campion.

KQ North Glade SK975076 3.6: Rust *Puccinia poarum*, a galler on Colt's-foot, where there were orange-red circular lesions.

Priors Coppice SK831052 17.6: Disco *Scutellinia ampullacea* var *parvula* on bare ground, 1 apothecium only. Rusts: Anther rust *Microbotryum lichnidis-dioicae* on stamens of Red Campion (RL says he doesn't see this as often on this host as on White Campion, but notes it's more difficult to spot against a red flower!), *Phragmidium mucronatum* on Dog Rose, a galler with bright orange aecia mainly on petioles, and the galler *Triphragmium ulmariae* mostly on veins and petioles of Meadowsweet.

WOODS

Woodhead Castle SK997116 20.5: Asco *Calloria neglecta* on old dead Nettle stems, Rusts *Melampsora populnea* (aecia) on leaves of Dog's Mercury (galler), *Puccinia punctiformis* (aecia) hypophyllous on Creeping Thistle (a galler) and *P sessilis* on Lords-and-Ladies.

Burley Wood SK889095 13.5: King Alfred's Cakes *Daldinia concentrica* fruiting on Ash, Asco *Rhopoglyphus filicinus* on last year's stems of Bracken; Turkeytail *Trametes versicolor* on broadleaved wood; Smut *Entyloma ficariae* on Lesser Celandine; Rusts *Kuehneola uredinis* (aecia) on Bramble stems, galler *Melampsora populnea* on Dog's Mercury (aecia), galler *Triphragmium ulmariae* (aecia) on leaves and petioles of Meadowsweet, *Uromyces muscari* telia epiphyllous on Bluebell.

BW SK 894098 10.5: Fresh big yellow clusters of Chicken of the Woods *Laetiporus sulphureus* low down on smallish dead or dying tree, probably Oak.

BW SK 898099 30.5: Three fresh clusters of Chicken of the Woods high up on an Oak.

22.5: Mature clump of Dryad's Saddles *Polyporus squamosus* low down on dead tree. Thanks TC for this welcome group of polypores.

Clipsham Park Wood SK970173 10.6: Plentiful asco *Leptosphaeria doliolum* on old stem of Hogweed, with 3-septate, pale golden brown spores; anamorph state of powdery mildews *Blumeria graminis* on Cock's-foot and *Sphaerotheca spiraeae* on Meadowsweet, with dense white mycelium on stems, leaves and flower head, causing considerable galling; RL notes this seems to be the only powdery mildew to cause galling in this country. Rust aecia: *Puccinia phragmitis* on Broad-leaved Dock, and bright orange *Triphragmium ulmariae* on Meadowsweet causing distortion on stems and leaves.

GARDENS, FIELDS, VERGES

Near Brooke SK848056 21.5: One mature clump of Dryad's Saddle *Polyporus squamosus* low down on Ash stump.

Stocken SK957174 17.5: Several groups of Deer Shield *Pluteus cervinus* smelling subtly of radish on mixture of worm compost and bark chippings near pond. One of the names for this fungus was Fawn Pluteus; the new recommended English name 'Deer' comes from *cervinus*, the Latin for deer, possibly from its colouring, and 'Shield' comes perhaps from the shape.

20.5: Group of 13 young St George's Mushrooms *Calocybe gambosa* in garden, small with strong mealy smell which continued into their cooked

state, though with garlic added JC found them delicious; over a dozen King Alfred's Cakes *Daldinia concentrica* growing on dead Ash stumps.

8.6: On a rare rainy day, 9 fresh Turkeytail brackets *Trametes versicolor* (formerly Many-zoned Polypore *Coriolus versicolor*) sported on the rotting wood of half-barrel garden planters.

14.6: After light overnight showers a total eruption of 14 Common Inkcaps *Coprinus atramentarius* over three places, one very fresh St George's Mushroom in short grass and in a long-uncut area a particularly nice find of 15 Star Pinkgills (Striated *Nolanea*) *Entoloma conferendum*. Their previous Latin name *Nolanea staurospora* was useful because the spores are nobbly star-shaped, but at least 'Star' is preserved in the new recommended English name, while the Latin has been revised. Investigations into classification are ongoing!

21.6: In a field, several old, brownish, cracked caps of St George's Mushroom. Nice when an old name survives.

Verge 7 TF000116 27.5: Galler White Blister *Albugo tragopogonis* (oomycete) on Goat's-beard, Anther Rust *Microbotryum lychnidis-dioicae* on White Campion, Rusts *Puccinia malvacearum* (galler) on several infected plants along verge and sweetly honey-scented *P punctiformis* spermogonia on Creeping Thistle.

Verge 16 Bloody Oaks SK973113 24.6: A striking Lurid Bolete *Boletus luridus* 2 m from mixed broadleaves, red reticulation on stipe and tiny pores glowing orange-red but immediately turning deep blue-green when pressed.

Barrowden SK948002 11.6: Slime Mould *Stemonitis fusca* on cut end of dead wood on logpile, a small, fragile milky disc which by **13.6** had turned spongy brown, then it disappeared. This myxomycete was also present in 2004 and 2007.

Note: The May Fieldfare recorded a rust on Barren Strawberry in **Clipsham Park Wood** on 6th April; it was *Phragmidium fragariae*.

PS: There's a meeting of the Leicestershire Fungi Study Group at Prior's Coppice, Sunday September 5th at 10.00 am – ring Richard Iliffe if you'd like to join in – please see events in Noticeboard, page 3.

Many thanks for sightings: T Caldicott, J Crosby, R Lemmon, G Worrall, L Worrall.

MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

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Please note that this is the report for March and April, the report for May/June will be included in September's report.



March/April 2010

At Rutland water an **Otter** was observed swimming alongside the reed bed on the North side of Lagoon 1 on March 1st and 2nd. It climbed out onto an abandoned tern raft, and scent marked it on both occasions. A **Polecat/ferret** was killed on Wardley Hill on March 17th, and another around the same date was killed just outside Uppingham on the Corby road. The second of these was brought to me and looked exactly like a wild polecat. I have been trying to get it DNA tested to see if it is the genuine article. I suspect it is probably an escape but will continue to try to find out more.

A **Weasel** was seen crossing the road at Water Lane, Ashwell, and another in early March crossed the Egleton Birdwatching Centre approach road just east of the car park and was observed as it prospected for food around the base of trees. At the end of the month a weasel dashed across the road N of Whissendine and another was seen in a garden at Ashfield in Oakham. In April two were seen, one crossing a minor road near Braunston, and another was found dead on a footpath at Ranksborough.

A late report from January mentions a **Stoat** with ermine tail at Egleton reserve and five were seen in April; two at opposite edges of Burley wood, one running down a track at Leighfield. At Church Road Ketton a stoat ran round the trunk of a Wisteria, slid around the edge of a wall, and disappeared into the garden of the house alongside the bridge. At Wing Dr Gallimore reports seeing a stoat in the bridleway next to his house, and at Bottom Street.

A **Mink** has been reported for the first time in some months, a road casualty SW of Ketton on the A6121.

A total of 12 **Foxes** have been spotted, three in March and three in April at Burley Wood, one crossing Wardley Hill, one running across pasture at Beamont Chase Farm, and another crossing Red Hill near Barrowden. In Pickworth Wood a fox and two cubs were seen in the main ride towards the end of April.

Badgers are busy as usual at this time of year, and latrines give a guide to the edges of their territories. One was found at Burley Wood, and

a new sett was also discovered on Hambleton peninsula. A badger was seen running down the roadside verge near Gorsefield Wood and another crossed the Seaton Road at Barrowden. Sadly, 12 badger road casualties were found, but a Red Kite was able to take advantage of at least one of these, seen feeding on the carcass on the A606.

In March **Hedgehogs** returned to the Worrall's patio, droppings deposited as evidence, but on 27th March two, one small, one larger one, were seen together, and again two were seen on the 4th April. On 17th April several hedgehogs of varying size were found, and the following evening courting behaviour (huffing and puffing) was heard. In April three hedgehog road casualties were found in Oakham, and Jenny Harris also found droppings on her lawn.

Grey Squirrels were reported from Barnsdale in March and April, also Gibbets Gorse, Burley-on-the-hill and Clipsham Park Wood.

Wood Mice have been regularly seen feeding on nuts put out for birds and hedgehogs by members in their gardens, and evidence in the shape of hazelnut shells confirms their presence in Burley Wood. On Thistleton verge nature reserve, a nest hole was seen under a cardboard box. The mouse disappeared down the hole when the box was lifted.

Short-tailed Field Voles have been busy near the gate at Burley-on-the-Hill, making tunnels in the tussocky grass, and **Bank Voles** have made their home in the wall near Dr Gallimore's house in Wing, one or two seen almost every day.

Mole activity has been evident at Barnsdale wood, Bloody Oaks Quarry, Lyndon reserve, Prior's Coppice and at Clipsham Park Avenue where the whole area between the Yew trees is (was?) covered with a very large number of molehills.

Rabbits are commonly seen, and have been recorded at Verge 7 (Pickworth to Great Casterton), Yew Tree Avenue, Clipsham, Bloody Oaks Quarry and the Thistleton roadside verge.

Fifteen reports of **Brown Hares**, with a total of 27 animals observed, came from many areas of the county, including Burley Woods, Walk Farm, Pickworth track, Greetham and Ashwell.

As usual, very large numbers of **Fallow Deer** are recorded, from Barnsdale, Burley, Pickworth, Tunnely Wood, Clipsham Park and Little Haw Woods. **Muntjac** have been seen at Burley, up to six in one in one day, Oakham, Bisbrooke,

Manton, the old Oakham canal and Exton Park, where an adult and two small fawns were seen in woodland. Finally, a male **Roe Deer** was flushed in Tunnely Wood.

Thank you all for your records: T Caldicot, J Comber, Dr C Gallimore, J Harris, Phil Langston, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, C Nelson, J Nourish, J Ostler, L Reidie, P J Rudkin, A R & M A Thorp, P Tomalin, G & L Worrall

BAT REPORT compiled by Jenny Harris

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March to June 2010

The first few months of the year were cold compared with recent years, and there were a number of frosty nights in early May. The first record of the year was of bats flying around The Stone House, Wing, on 24.3, and there were subsequently droppings below the eaves of the new extension there. On 16.4 a single bat was seen flying round a well-treed garden in Woodland View, Oakham, on a clear evening, and bats were seen there and in nearby 41 Woodland View (my garden) subsequently, although mostly later in May and June. In May there were bats in a garden in Redland Close, Barrowden, with two seen on 14.5; and six or seven on 22.5. These latter bats did not stay long before 'zooming river-wards'.

Pipistrelle spp *Pipistrellus species*

The first 'grounded' pipistrelle of the year was a male **common pipistrelle** found on the ground near Whissendine Church and taken to the Oakham veterinary practice. Apart from being under-weight it was otherwise in good health and was released about 10 days later when it had regained weight. Common pipistrelles were seen throughout April from 19th in Barmstedt Drive, Oakham, daily from 14.5 to 19.5; and on a number of occasions in June. The first report of a **soprano pipistrelle** was also in Barmstedt Drive, on 14.5. Bats that may have been pipistrelles were seen in 'G' Wing at HMP Stocken, with three on 18.5 and one on 20.5; they were described as being small, dark bats with narrow, pointed wings and twisting flight and on 18.5 were feeding on moths attracted to a light in 'G' Wing garden. This description could also describe whiskered bats that have also been recorded at the prison.

In Ketton, on 14.5, common pipistrelles were coming up the Valley one after the other, obviously dispersing from a roost nearby. Soprano

pipistrelles were also heard in the wood leading through onto Pit Lane from the Valley. On 3.6 **soprano pipistrelles** were the first species to emerge under the tree canopy at the eastern end of Burley Wood, and were foraging low over the bramble under-storey. Common pipistrelles emerged much later and seemed to be fewer in number. Sunset was at roughly 9.15 pm, and at around 9.45 pm a **Nathusius' pipistrelle** was heard and seen quite clearly flying round an ash tree. It was difficult to tell if this was a series of bats emerging, but my feeling was that a single bat was flying round and round, calling loudly but not feeding (no feeding 'buzzes'). Its flight was noctule-like (although it was much smaller), composed of a number of wing-flaps followed by a short glide, then flapping again, putting me in mind of display flight.

There were a further three grounded bats during June. A male was found dead in a house in Morcott on 1.6, which appeared to have died of starvation and dehydration; this also appeared to be the fate of a male found in Church Street, Langham, on 8.6. Another male was found at Cumberland Walk, RAF Cottesmore, on 23.6; from the numerous small puncture wounds in its wing membranes, it appeared to be a cat victim. It was not otherwise hurt and will be released when the holes are sufficiently healed. All these were adult common pipistrelles.

Several roosts were counted for the National Bat Monitoring Programme and results for two of these are available. At Lyndon Road, Manton no bats were present during the June count period, but a further visit will be carried out in July. At Whitwell, the soprano pipistrelle roost held at least 485 bats on 7.6, but on 22.6 an astonishing 526 bats were counted and the counters, Vic Arnold and myself, had to give up at 10.20 pm as it was becoming too dark to see and in any

case bats were returning to the roost so it was impossible to continue counting properly. This is the largest colony ever counted in Leicestershire and Rutland (VC55). None of the bats seen were considered to be juveniles, as they can usually be picked out by their erratic flight and habit of flying round the roost as if to familiarize themselves with its surroundings. Pipistrelle maternity roosts were also present at Whitwell Watersports Centre, two sites in Braunston-in-Rutland and a site at Gunthorpe. Several soprano pipistrelles emerged from a roost known to be used by long-eared bats on 15.6.

Brown Long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*

The first record was of several bats foraging over the bramble under-storey in compartment 26 at Burley Wood on 3.6. There were possibly as many as 22 bats at a roost at Barnsdale on 15.6, although they were several soprano pipistrelles also emerging, which confused the counter initially. On 26.6 seventeen long-eared bats emerged from this roost, the pipistrelles having moved elsewhere.

Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*

The maternity roost at Whissendine Church was counted. On 13.6 a light had been left on inside the church and only 28 bats emerged, but on 20.6, 33 bats emerged between 10.15 pm and 11.15 pm. This is well down on last year's count of 55 bats.

Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*

Foraging Daubenton's bats were heard at the bridge over the R. Chater at Aldgate, Ketton, on 14.5. Bats that sounded like Daubenton's bats were heard near the main gate into Burley Wood on 3.6.

Barbastelle bat *Barbastella barbastellus*

A barbastelle bat was heard briefly near the main gate, on Stamford Road, into Burley Wood on 3.6. It seemed to be heading out of the wood at about 10.45 pm.

Noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula*

A consultant reported hearing three passes by noctule bats over Ketton village in May. One was heard briefly in Burley Wood on 3.6.

Thank you for records from: A and J Comber, J Crosby, Dr C Gallimore, Mrs J Harris, and L and G Worrall.