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Unbelievably summer has come and almost gone, we're in early autumn and looking forward to our season of winter meetings which start with our very own Phil and Daves' *Woodpecker* presentation on October 2nd. I hope to see many of you there, and at Clipsham Avenue for our *Fungal Foray* the following weekend.

The day of the Ketton Quarry visit was damp, and the weather put off many members, but the rain held off so that those who came had a great couple of hours, looking into the small things that can be found without moving far from the path, including the Southern Pill Woodlouse and the Striped Pill Woodlouse – and, easier to identify, Large White and Green-veined White, Common Blue and Brown Argus.

I recently found an old *Fieldfare* from 1986, (written when the secretary wrote the introduction to *Fieldfare* – and who was secretary then?!!) It seemed strange that our (my) concerns then were development in the local area – Anglian water commercialising the reservoir area, and proposed new golf course and hotel complex at Lyndon. This summer very similar problems beset us. The St George's Barracks development promises to urbanise a large part of Rutland, building a town the size of Uppingham between Ketton and Edith Weston.

Unfortunately we have very few records of the area concerned, and there are apparently no rarities so it is difficult to make an objection on natural history grounds, though of course the development will have a major effect on the wildlife of the area. By the time you receive this a major planning meeting will have been held (25th September) but do please make your individual objections if you have them.

On a happier note a new trust has been formed among local people to look after and conserve Clipsham Park Avenue. We wish them well, and will forward any observations we find to them, so that they know exactly what they have to conserve – beginning with our fungal foray on October 6th, led by the VC66 recorder Dr Tom Hering. Linda Worrall tells me that there are some very interesting waxcaps there, or were when last surveyed, so we look forward to investigating.

I'm sad to say that Enid Mann, a long-serving member of both the RNHS Committee and the Clipsham Quarry Group, has died.

Unfortunately the November edition of *Fieldfare* will have to be a greatly reduced publication, as our editor will be away in New Zealand. Unless of course one of you can help! We really do need some new faces and extra energy on our team!

Linda Biddle, RNHS Chair

DIARY DATES

RNHS FIELD TRIPS

Full details of all these events appear on our website at www.rnhs.org.uk. If the weather is bad, check the website or call the 'Queries' phone number for changes.

Saturday 6 October, 10.30 am Fungal foray at Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue

Dr Tom Hering of the Leicestershire Fungi Study Group will lead this fungal foray at Yew Tree Avenue, which consists of a collection of Yew trees about 200 years old lining the carriageway to Clipsham Hall (seen in the distance). The Forestry Commission have a very long lease on these woods and avenue; Clipsham Hall is privately owned. The Yew Tree Avenue car park is one mile north-east of Clipsham village (3 miles east of the A1 at Stretton). Grid Ref: 980169.

Queries: Linda Biddle, 01780 762108

Tuesday 20 November, 11.00 am Natural History Museum, London

To the NHM for a behind-the-scenes tour at 11.30 am (£10), with the rest of the day free. As well as the multitude of delights at the NHM, the 'Wildlife Photographer of the Year exhibition' is on. Please contact Linda Biddle to book and to see if car-sharing or train-travelling can be coordinated.

Contact and queries: Linda Biddle, 01780 762108; abiddle21@talktalk.net

RNHS EVENING MEETINGS

Indoor meetings are held at Voluntary Action Rutland (VAR), Lands End Way, Oakham LE15 6RB. Tea and coffee, free. Visitors are asked for a donation of £2.

Tuesday 2 October, 7.30 pm A season with Woodpeckers

Talk by Phil Rudkin, photos by Dave Needham - a uniquely RNHS double act!

Tuesday 6 November, 7.30 pm Unravelling the mysteries of migration

With Dawn Balmer, Head of Surveys at the BTO (British Trust for Ornithology). This is the first Nola Thurlow ornithological lecture, financed by a legacy from Nola. We will also be launching the 2018 RNHS calendar – the result of the RNHS photographic competition.

Tuesday 4 December, 7.30 pm Members/Recorders evening

Entries are in now for the RNHS Photographic Competition. The winners are being chosen, and the photographs, including some that didn't quite make it into the 2019 RNHS Calendar but are very well worth seeing, will be shown at this meeting. The Calendar will be available to buy. As well, Recorders are bringing various items for discussion.

And finally, there will be mince pies and festive fair!

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST, RUTLAND GROUP

For events in Leicestershire and Rutland see www.lrwt.org.uk or phone 0116 262 9968. Rutland group meetings are held at the Volunteer Training Centre (VTC), Hambleton Road, LE15 8AD. Entry £1.

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST, BOURNE GROUP

For details of all LWT events, see www.lincstrust.org.uk, or phone 01507 526677 in office hours. Bourne group indoor meetings are held at the Methodist Church Hall, Bourne. Refreshments available. A donation of £1.50 is requested, children free.

WEATHER

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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July 2018

Atmospheric pressure and wind Pressures were generally 1015–1026 mb for most of the month but fell away during the last 5 days, with the lowest for the month of 1004 mb on the 29th. What little rain there was fell mostly in this latter period. Winds were variable between NW and E except for the 5 days referred to when they were S–SW.

Temperature A very warm July, the mean temperature, 20.66 °C, was first in the decade 2009–2018, well above 2016, 18.42 °C, which was second.

The mean night-time minimum, 13.19 °C, was third in the decade but was compensated for by the daytime maximum of 28.12 °C, well above 2013 which was in second place with 25.68 °C.

Rain The total here was 13.3 mm (0.52 inches) which is 24% of my long-term mean of 28 years. Thus in the two months of June and July we have had roughly a quarter of the expected rainfall; and this, combined with high temperatures, has had a considerable effect on plant-life, especially herbaceous plants. The most noticeable have been grasses but many other species are also affected and even some trees seem to have been under stress.

August 2018

Atmospheric pressure and wind Pressures this month were quite stable, the lowest was 1006 mb on the 13th and the highest was 1024.5 mb on the 31st. They were mostly 1013–1022 mb during the month. Winds were predominantly SW–NW and on seven mornings I recorded them as ‘blustery’ with speeds up to 11 mph but there were no gales.

Temperature This was a very warm August, the overall mean temperature was 18.52 °C, the warmest in the decade 2009–2018. (In 2016 it was 18.43 °C, and in 2013 18.12 °C.) The daytime maxima were highest early in the month and in the first week I recorded 5 maxima over 30 °C, the highest being 32.0 °C on the 6th. The night-time minima showed considerable variation, the lowest a chilly 5.9 °C on 29th–30th and the highest an uncomfortable 17.6 °C on 19th–20th.

Rain A total for the month of 47.4 mm (1.87 inches), which equates to 75% of my long-term mean of 28 years. While by no means excessive this has come as a welcome break after two very dry months of about 25% of expected rainfall and also of high temperatures. Grassland has soon greened up and I noticed recently that Eyebright (*Euphrasia* sp.) in Ketton Quarry seems to be flowering better than it has all summer.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

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May, June, July, August 2018

This is a report covering four months, due to an inconveniently timed holiday.

Common Frogs keep a low profile in summer, but there were records from Leighfield in all months and also records from Belton and Wing. **Common Toads** were seen in Belton, Ketton, Leighfield and Wing in May and June. Toadlets were seen at two separate sites in Leighfield. In July and August toads and toadlets continued to be seen in Leighfield. In these months one live and two dead toads were seen in Wing – one of the latter, being very large, had attracted the attention of two Red Kites, which were unfortunately inadvertently disturbed from their meal.

Smooth Newts were found in four ponds at Rutland Water at the beginning of May, and they were found in considerable numbers in a disused swimming pool in Wing in June. One was also disturbed from its shelter under a plank in my garden in Wing in August. One **Great Crested Newt** was found in a pond at Rutland Water in May; and five were seen in a garden pond in Belton by a former recorder for the Society, this being a first record for Belton.

There were only two records of **Viviparous Lizard**, the first in June was basking in a bunker on Luffenham Heath Golf Course, and the second, in August, was on a verge in Ryhall Heath, this being the first record from that area since 1971.

Grass Snakes were quite widely reported in all four months from Barnsdale, Barrow, Barrowden, Exton, Ketton, Leighfield, Rutland Water Nature Reserve and Wing. In Wing two large females were found dead with bite marks on their flanks, one in the act of laying. Two other Wing casualties were small snakes found by the roadside in May and August. In Barrowden an eighteen-inch long snake had been caught by a cat and subsequently died.

My thanks to all those who sent records: T P Appleton, D Ball, L Biddle, N Burrows, T Caldicott, J & R Dejardin, P Gallimore, M Grimes, V Hemsley, P Killips, P Langston, D Needham and L Worrall.

BIRDS

RECORDER Terry Mitcham

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July/August 2018

A busy two months produced four rarities – a **Purple Heron**, a **Glossy Ibis**, three **Spoonbills** (a good period for herons!) and a **Red-necked Phalarope** plus a county first in the shape of a **Barred Warbler**, ringed on the Egleton Reserve. Both reservoirs attracted plenty of waders and wildfowl numbers increased, with **Gadwall** and **Tufted Ducks** especially numerous. **Hobbies** were well recorded and autumn migrants began to arrive with **Redstarts**, **Whinchats** and **Wheatears** all reported.

My thanks to the following for their records: T Appleton, D Ball, T Caldicott, D Cole, Dr C H Gallimore, M & G Griffin, J Harris, P Langston, LROS, T Mitcham, B Moore, M & J Nourish, L Park, J S & J Rodgers, P Rudkin, RWNR, D Saunders, L Worrall.

See also Wildfowl Counts page 8.

Garganey	Regular at RWEg from 10.07 with seven on 24.08. There were two at EBR on 07.08 and at FHP on 27.08.
Pochard	A female and seven ducklings were at RWEg3 on 01.07.
Red-crested Pochard	Singles were at RWEg3 on 02 and 09.07, with two in South Arm on 27.08.
Tufted Duck	Bred at RWEg and FHP where a female had six ducklings on 11.08.
Common Scoter	A male was in RWNA on 12.07 and a female from 03 to 15.08.
Red-legged Partridge	Ten were near Lynd on 21.08.

Grey Partridge	One was near Burl on 06.07. There were three adults and 12 young near Eg on 16.07 and a pair were near Mounts Lodge on 17.07.
Great Northern Diver	There was an unseasonal record of one in RWNA from 12.07 to at least 27.08.
Little Egret	Away from the reservoirs there were two at LFF for most of Aug with six flying over Leigh on 06.08. There were three at FHP on 27.08 and five at Banthorpe GP on 28.08.
Great White Egret	Present at RWEg/NA from 17.07 to at least 14.08, with two on 29.07 and 08.08.
Purple Heron	A juvenile was at RW, mainly BFP, from 23.07 to 23.08, at times proving very elusive.
Glossy Ibis	One was at RWEg/Man Bay between 16 and 29.07.
Spoonbill	Three flew over RWEg1 on 01.08.
Great Crested Grebe	There were eight nests at EBR on 08.07.
Red-necked Grebe	One returned to RWNA on 15.08 and was present to the end of the month.
Black-necked Grebe	Noted at RW from 13.08 with one in SA and two there next day. One was in NA on 20.08.
Red Kite	At least five pairs were confirmed breeding – surely an underestimate judging by their current distribution. Two were flushed from eating a large dead Common Toad at Wg on 29.07.
Marsh Harrier	Fairly regular at RWEg from 01.07 with three noted on 27.08. One flew east at Gun on 28.07.
Sparrowhawk	Records came from Barrow, Eg and Stam.
Buzzard	Fledged young called in Ext Park and at Wg in Aug.
Osprey	The RW Project had nine breeding pairs, producing 14 young. One or two were at LFP from 11 to 29.08 and one was north of HM on 27.08.
Oystercatcher	Nine were at RW on 17.07.
Golden Plover	Singles flew over Pilt on 30.08 and Leigh next day.
Lapwing	Post-breeding counts were disappointing. 67 were at Wg Burrows on 08.07. There were 59 at EBR on 15.07 and 231 at RW on 17.07. August counts were 75 at EBR on 12 and 196 at RW on 14.
Little Ringed Plover	At EBR there were three on 22.07 and two on 09.08. RWEg had five on 17.07 and three between 04 and 14.08.
Ringed Plover	Up to three were noted at RW between 09.07 and 20.08. There were higher nos at EBR, with birds present between 07.08 and 27.08 and 12 counted on 20.08.
Whimbrel	All records were of overflying singles – Man on 22.07, RW on 27.07 and 08.08, Man on 08.08 and Leigh on 25.08.
Curlew	One flew over BW on 06.07 and there were three over Gun on 10.07. Two were at RW on 17.07 and one called over Gun on 28.07.
Black-tailed Godwit	There was a good passage at both reservoirs. At RW birds were noted between 01.07 and 27.08 with max counts of 91 on 05.07 and 85 on 17.07. EBR had records between 02.07 and 27.08, with a peak of 11 on 09.08.
Knot	One was at RWEg1 on 17.07.
Ruff	Only low nos were at both reservoirs with EBR having only one or two between 01.07 and 27.08. RW had up to three (26.08) in the same period.
Sanderling	One was in RWNA on 12.08 with two in SA next day and one at the dam on 24.08.
Dunlin	Up to six were at RW between 09.07 and 14.08, with EBR having birds between 20.07 and 27.08 with a peak of 15 on 12.08.
Little Stint	One was at RWEg1 on 19.08.
Red-necked Phalarope	A long-staying bird was at RWSA, and viewable from Goldeneye hide between 12 and 20.08 – an unusually long period.
Common Sandpiper	A peak of eight was recorded at RW on 19.07 with birds noted between 07.07 and 26.08. At EBR there were reports between 28.07 and 27.08 with a max of six on 01.08.

Green Sandpiper	Noted at four sites. At RW present from 04.07 to at least 14.08, with 17 on the latter date. EBR had birds between 02.07 and 31.08 with a max of five on 20.08. Two were at LFP on 14.07 with five on 30.07, and present throughout August with three on 14. There were four at FHP on 27.08.
Spotted Redshank	Singles were at RWEg on 04 and 18.08.
Greenshank	Present at RWEg from 01.07 to at least 26.08 with a max of five on the first date. At EBR there were records from 02.07 to 27.08, with three on 08.07 and 27.08. Singles called over Leigh on 09.07, Gun on 07.08 and KFP on 14.08.
Wood Sandpiper	At EBR there were two on 28.07 and one on 03.08. Two were at RWLynd on 01.08 with one to 15.08.
Redshank	Eight were at RW on 17.07.
Snipe	One was at Banthorpe GP on 13.07. There were five at RW on 17.07 and nine on Eg3 on 22.07. Singles were over Leigh on four dates between 04 and 31.08, and five flew over Pilt on 18.08.
Little Tern	One was at RWEg4 on 03.07.
Black Tern	Two at EBR on 26.07 and one at RWSA on 27.08 were the only records.
Common Tern	32 were at EBR on 15.07 and 68 at RW on 17.07 with 71 at RW on 14.08.
Arctic Tern	A juvenile was at EBR on 20.08.
Mediterranean Gull	A juvenile was at RWEg4 on 14.07 and an adult the next day, with a juvenile on 21.07.
Yellow-legged Gull	23 were at RW on 17.07 and 14 on 14.08.
Caspian Gull	Singles were at RWEg4 on 20.07 and RWLynd on 12.08.
Stock Dove	47 flew south-east over Leigh in small groups on 27.08.
Turtle Dove	One was at RWEg on 02.07.
Barn Owl	Broods of three and one were ringed at our nest boxes on 06.07 with a clutch of four eggs in a third box. One other box was occupied by an adult and a box at TbyW also fledged young.
Little Owl	Calling birds were heard occasionally at Barrow in both months.
Tawny Owl	Records of calling birds came from BW, Barrow, Leigh (three on 27.08), Man (three on 29.08) and PC (three on 02.08).
Swift	Screaming parties were noted in July at Stam, Upp, Emp and Bden. Passage was noted from 28.07 with c.130 south at Gun. Last reported over Oak (reduced nos this year) on 06.08 but noted over Eg on 18.08 and Pilt on 28.08.
Kingfisher	Few records received – one at LFP on 11 and 30.07 and two along the R.Chater at Man on 24 and 26.07.
Green Woodpecker	An adult and three fledged young were at Geest on 06.07. Regular at Barrow and FHP in both months and one near Kett on 02.08.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	The only records were of a juv feeding regularly at a Barrow feeder in August and one in suburban Stam on 27.08.
Kestrel	Five were around Leigh on 29.08.
Hobby	One breeding pair was reported. One or two were noted at the following sites in Aug: RWEg, FHP, Gun, Pilt, LFP and Man.
Peregrine	In August one was over GHW on 20.08, and three, thought to be a pair and a juv, were over Barrow.
Ring-necked Parakeet	Singles were in Oak on 12 and 30.08 and near Leigh on 14.08.
Jackdaw	c.750 flew south near Pilt on 17.08.
Raven	At FHP four flew south on 14.07 and there were two there on 21.07 and 27.08.
Willow Tit	Noted at Leigh throughout July and on 21.08 (two) and 29.08.
Swallow	52 were at LFP on 11.07. Several pairs were monitored at Bden but only single broods were noted. c.40 were in the area on 05.08. On the same day there were c.100 at LFP with 300 on 23.08 and 130 on 28.08.
House Martin	Following low nos earlier in the year there were c.50 over Bden on 11.07 and 40 on 05.08. Three nests were monitored. c.30 were around Emp church on the evening

on 07.08 but dispersed by 20.15 hrs. One nest was noted on a Wg house – for only the third time in 42 years.

Willow Warbler	In July up to six sang around Leigh to 31.
Garden Warbler	August records from Leigh/LFP were singles on 13, 21 and 27.
Barred Warbler	One was trapped and ringed at RWEW on 31.08 – a first record for Rutland
Whitethroat	17 were around Leigh on 18.07, with 14 on 25.07 and 14 at Gun on 27, with ten in one elder bush.
Grasshopper Warbler	A presumed passage bird sang at EBR on 20–21.07.
Sedge Warbler	Singles sang at FHP on 07.07 and by the R.Chater near Man on 24.07. Up to three were noted at Leigh/LFP between 25.07 and 27.08.
Reed Warbler	A singing bird was at LFP between 25.07 and 14.08.
Mistle Thrush	Between 23–23.08 there were 17 at GHW, attracted by ripening Rowan berries.
Spotted Flycatcher	Birds were noted throughout July and to at least 23.08 at the following sites: BW (two), Wg Grange, Prest, Rid, Gun (two), LFP (four), Norm, Pilt (four), Lynd (seven), Wg churchyard (two), Ext Park, BCF and Leigh (five).
Redstart	Most records were from the Leigh area with mostly singles on 12 dates between 20.07 and 31.08. Two were noted on 29.08. A single was at Luff Airfield on 17.08.
Whinchat	One at RWLynd on 05.08 was the first returning bird, with others near Pilt on 23.08 and Luff Airfield on 25.08.
Wheatear	One was at Luff Airfield on 08.08 with eight there on 25.08. Other singles were at EBR on 20.08, Leigh on 27.08 and RW Dam on 31.08.
House Sparrow	It was encouraging to receive a record of c.100 near Pilt on 15.08. ‘Never seen so many sparrows’, said the observer.
Tree Sparrow	One at a Barrow garden feeder on 08.08 was the only record.
Yellow Wagtail	The only records relating to breeding were five in a bean field near Rid on 05.07 and up to 16 in similar habitat near Gun on 27 and 28.07. Other records were of flyovers between 18.07 and 31.08, with 17 over Pilt on 15.08 and 26.08, with ones and twos over Leigh and Man. Four were at FHP on 28.07 and seven on RW Dam on 31.08.
Tree Pipit	Between 11 and 27.08, 19 were noted over Leigh/Pilt on six dates. One was at Luff Airfield on 17.08.
Meadow Pipit	One or two were at RW Dam on 31.08.
Bullfinch	There were 18 around Leigh on 20.07 and 20 on 21.08.
Common Crossbill	Calling singles were over BW on 06.07, Man on 24.07 and Leigh on 03.08.
Goldfinch	c.60 were near LFP on 09.07 and c.80 at GHW on 27.08.



Raven. Photo, P Scott.

Wildfowl Counts for July and August

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry Ponds /Exton Park Lake		Banthorpe Gravel Pit	
	17.07	14.08	15.07	12.08	14.07	11.08	13.07	11.08
Mute Swan	423	381	103	105	7	20	2	3
Greylag Goose	846	814	72	311	5		3	
Canada Goose	739	1215	109	219	5			
Barnacle Goose	1	1						
Egyptian Goose	53	78						
Shelduck	6	3						
Mandarin Duck	2				1	1		
Wigeon	10	13						
Gadwall	1921	845	1	110	13	12		
Teal	52	284	12	5	2	6		
Mallard	1149	1315	234	469	85	161		1
Garganey	2	5						
Shoveler	26	98		7	2			
Pochard	24	50		1				
Tufted Duck	2364	3179	49	28	20	3		
Great Northern Diver	1	1						
Cormorant	234	432	23	5				
Bittern		1						
Little Egret	71	54	13	15			2	
Great White Egret	1	2						
Grey Heron	17	22	3	5	1	3	3	
Glossy Ibis	1							
Little Grebe	40	104			1	3		
Great Crested Grebe	280	472	38	53				
Black-necked Grebe		1						
Water Rail	10	1						
Moorhen	112	98	1	3	18	24	1	3
Coot	1118	1389	142	207	38	57	2	3
Kingfisher		1						

BOTANY

RECORDER John Rodgers

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July/August 2018

After a period of drought which has left the countryside looking dried-up, it is good to see the hedgerows full of fruits; elderberries, blackberries, beech nuts, ash keys, hips and haws. Is this harvest related to the wet spring, or the earlier hot spell in June, or is it simply due to a cyclical variation of good and bad years? Whatever the reason, it is a welcome sight. It's a shame that there don't seem to be many

people making use of this munificence – nobody seems to be picking blackberries or sloes.

The hot weather wasn't very encouraging for being out and about, and when you did brave the heat everything was brown and dry. However we have had a few records; comprehensive lists from Ketton Quarry (Linda Brown), and the roadside verge from Greetham to Thistleton by Jane and Duncan Ball. Martin Grimes found some more unusual plants from Stretton Woods and Ryhall Heath – among them **Greater Burnet-saxifrage**, **Cornmint**, **Lesser Spearwort**, **Hoary Groundsel** and **Martignon Lily** which was perhaps an escapee from somebody's garden. Terry Mitcham recorded **Bullace** or **Wild Plum** at Quarry Farm. You couldn't miss the trees, because of the fruit, he said. We haven't had records of this for about ten years and then it was from the Uppingham area. No doubt the trees are always around, but not so apparent if they haven't much fruit.

Further afield, I read in *British Wildlife* of a rather magnificent sight on a Leicestershire verge (position undisclosed). Alongside Bee Orchids and Greater Butterfly Orchids was a statuesque Lizard Orchid. Quite a find!

Many thanks for records received from: J & L Ball, L Brown, M Grimes, V Hemsley, T Mitcham.

MOTHS

RECORDER Paul Bennett

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July/August 2018

With a prolonged spell of settled weather the late summer has been a good one in terms of moth numbers, especially July where humid nights produced high counts in the Lyndon Centre trap. It should not be inferred from this however that this has been the perfect season for the moths themselves as the very hot and dry conditions have produced two problems. Firstly, plants have either shrivelled up early or damp areas have dried out forcing many moths to fly further in search of their preferred habitats and foodplants for egg laying, therefore a higher percentage than normal of those moths seen in traps could have flown in from further afield. One great benefit of this is seeing some moths that only rarely occur locally; for instance **Webb's Wainscot** and **Bulrush Wainscot** are both highly dispersive wet habitat species that occurred for the first time this year in the Lyndon trap, whereas **Gold Spot**, another species preferring damp conditions and seen in small numbers at Lyndon this year, was found in a garden trap in Cottesmore and in my own trap in Stamford, both well away from large wet areas. Secondly, dry ground can become heavily compacted making it difficult for those moths pupating underground, which are many, to emerge from their cocoons. This may be the cause of the slightly later emergence and in smaller numbers of such common species as **Large Yellow Underwing** and **Orange Swift** or, in the case of **Smoky Wainscot**, no records at all this year compared to over 20 last year at Lyndon.

The Lyndon trap was run on 8 occasions, with the highest total being 384 moths identified on 20th August, with 117 **Setaceous Hebrew Character** being the first century count of one species at the site in 6 years. The highest species total was 80 of 274 moths on 15th July. 7 species of macro moths were probably new for the site including **Green Arches** and **August Thorn** in addition to the Wainscots previously mentioned. Other species of note were 9 **Elephant Hawk-moths** on 3rd July and 8 **Red Underwing** on the wall of the visitor centre on 30th July.

Other garden and day-flying records of note included a **Purple Thorn** and a **Tawny Speckled Pug** in a Whissendine garden, a **Maggie Moth** seen at Leighfield, and a **Dusky Sallow** feeding on Knapweed by a roadside near Ketton. **Lime Hawk-moth** and **Privet Hawk-moth** were both found in an Uppingham garden, with two reports of **Hummingbird Hawk-moths** in Manton and near the dam at Rutland Water respectively. **Silver Ys** were also seen regularly.

Thanks to the following for submitting records: V Arnold, P Bennett, T Caldicott, R Edwards, M Grimes, T Mitcham, J & A Pearce, B Webster, Valerie (no surname).



Setaceous Hebrew Character,
Photo, R Edwards

BUTTERFLIES

RECORDER Richard Brown

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July/August 2018

The 31 species reported in Rutland to the end of August 2018 are listed in this table, which shows the first record date for each species. X indicates the subsequent months in which the species has been recorded.

RNHS records 2018 to end of August

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug
1 Brimstone			16th	X	X	X	X	
2 Comma			16th	X	X		X	X
3 Small Tortoiseshell			16th	X	X	X	X	
4 Peacock			21st	X	X		X	
5 Large White				14th	X	X	X	X
6 Green-Veined White				14th	X	X	X	X
7 Holly Blue				19th	X		X	X
8 Orange Tip				19th	X	X		
9 Red Admiral				19th	X	X	X	X
10 Small White					1st	X	X	X
11 Speckled Wood					3rd	X		X
12 Green Hairstreak					5th			
13 Grizzled Skipper					6th	X		
14 Common Blue					8th	X	X	X
15 Dingy Skipper					9th	X		
16 Small Heath					14th	X	X	X
17 Small Copper					18th	X	X	X
18 Brown Argus					21st	X	X	X
19 Large Skipper					29th	X	X	
20 Small Skipper						7th	X	
21 Painted Lady						8th	X	X
22 Meadow Brown						10th	X	X
23 Dark Green Fritillary						14th	X	
24 Black Hairstreak						14th		
25 Marbled White						16th	X	
26 Ringlet						19th	X	
27 Silver Washed Fritillary						25th	X	X
28 Purple Hairstreak						25th	X	
29 Gatekeeper						30th	X	X
30 White Admiral							1st	
31 Essex Skipper							16th	

Species not yet observed

Still no sign of White Letter Hairstreak, and no records of any Chalkhill Blues. And needless to say, no records of Purple Emperor – disappointing after the flurry of reports last year.

Species with a relatively poor season Fritillaries have not been recorded in great numbers this year. The maximum number of **Dark Green** was 20 at Clipsham in June, with a maximum of 5 observed at Ketton and 3 at Bloody Oaks. **Silver Washed** were seen in large numbers at Bloody Oaks in July, but were disappointing at both Ketton (maximum 8 in August) and at Clipsham (maximum 4 in June).

Similarly the summer Skippers have been few. I have only 10 observations of the **Large Skipper**, with a maximum of 4 individuals. For the **Small Skipper** I have only 3 observations, though one with about 40 individuals. And there is only a single observation of one individual **Essex Skipper**.

The only White to have a good season has been the **Small White**, steadily recorded from May onwards, with huge numbers – up to 150 – seen in July at Martinsthorpe, when they were thought to be on migration. **Marbled White** have been seen in fair numbers – up to 60 at Clipsham, but far fewer than usual at Ketton. **Green-veined** have only been seen in small numbers throughout the season. **Large Whites** have only been recorded on 10 occasions, mostly singletons.

Notable records

Striking recent records include a second **White Admiral**, and no less than 5 separate observations of **Purple Hairstreaks**, with up to 5 individuals at any one time. **Common Blues** have been seen in large numbers throughout August – with 50 plus at Ketton on 6th August. Also welcome news were the steady records for **Small Copper** – 6 sites with 1– 3 individuals at each, and also **Small Heath** – records from 8 sites, with up to 8 individuals at the sites.

Migrants

It has not been a notable year for migrants. **Painted Ladies** were only seen at 10 sites, mostly singletons, with a maximum of 10 at any one site. Similarly there appears to have been no influx of **Red Admirals** – there are just ones and twos monthly since April. The single record of a **Clouded Yellow** was just across the border into Leicestershire.

Thanks to the following for their July–August observations: V Arnold, D & J Ball, C Baxter, L & A Biddle, T Caldicott, D Cotter, M Grimes, R Lemmon, D Needham, P Rudkin, M Rumbelow and L Worrall.

PLANT GALLS

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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July/August 2018

Reports were relatively few and also contained lower numbers of galls than normal; this was especially noticeable in July although things did improve in August. This is probably due to the very hot and dry weather we have experienced this time.

In the last report, I mentioned that there had been no reports of the stem gall on Creeping Thistle so far, but this was rectified by a report from Ketton Quarry on the 12th July and since then there has been an increasing frequency of this species. A report from Prior's Coppice on the 17th July yielded some 27 galls, including two on Wych Elm; elms are in short supply these days so this is a welcome sighting.

August produced reports from eight sites and at the end of the month a report from Rutland Water Lax Hill gave another 27 species. It is significant that while galls on Oak are still being reported, both numbers of species and numbers within a species are low. In other years it has been common to find the underside of Oak leaves virtually covered in common spangle galls, whereas this year there are usually only a few per leaf. The silk button gall, also on Oak, is quite scarce this season and this is unlikely to be rectified.

Thanks for their reports to M Grimes, Dr C Gallimore, R Lemmon.

July/August 2018

As I reported last season, the Rutland Orthoptera Final Distribution Maps (published in the 2017 Annual Report) were sent to the National Orthoptera Recording Scheme. The maps will be included in the forthcoming National Atlas publication. This means that my team of reporters and myself have achieved our goal of elevating the crickets and grasshoppers of Rutland to the highest ever level in the Society's history. Apart from the odd historical sightings, and the excellent work in the late 1990s by Ron and Jean Harvey, the real intensive research began in 2001, when I was appointed to be the Orthoptera Recorder for the Rutland Water Nature Reserves. I agreed to do the job as long as the sightings from the Reserves could be included in the Society's records. This was readily accepted. In 2007, the Society split up the Insects section, and created new categories. I was then appointed by the RNHS as the County Recorder for the Orthoptera. That represented 16 years of recordings (the Final Maps were completed up to 2017).

Therefore, I decided to spend some time doing a thorough survey of the Orthoptera of Fineshade Forest. On 30 June, David Needham and I were invited to take part in the Fineshade Forest Recorders' day, with 6 other recorders. The idea was to update the invertebrates of Fineshade Forest.

This was too early to find the orthopterans by sound, so we had a young conservationist, Lizzy Warring, doing much needed 'netting', and many orthopteran nymphs were recorded.

So I returned there on 7 August, and carried out a four and a half hour survey, picking up the songs of the mature adults. On 15 August, I returned to Fineshade again, and spent the day with the organiser, Barrie Galpin, who drove me around to remote parts of the forest, where we found Orthoptera species (which were added to the list of invertebrates).

Nevertheless, most of the regular Rutland sites were not neglected, and all was well. I carried out three full surveys at Rutland Water, two at Egleton Reserve, and one at Lyndon Reserve.

It is pleasing to have found a new site, on 2 August, when Vic Arnold and I checked out the Green Burial Site at Ketton. We were delighted to record five orthopterans for our records!

Clive Jones regularly finds single Oak Bush Crickets each season in his large garden in Uppingham. Is there a small colony somewhere in the tree-lined garden?

During one of my visits to the Wildflower Meadow at Quarry Farm, Stamford, on the afternoon of 16 July, I caught a female Long-winged Conehead final instar nymph; its lovely black stripe along the upper body (dorsal), shining brightly. I took it home in the bug pot, and put it in the garage at 5.30 pm. Later that evening, I checked it out, and was surprised to observe the creature 'arching' its back, and noticed strange flaps appearing. Next morning, I prepared my camera, and went into the garage to take out the specimen for photography. To my amazement, there in the pot was an adult female in mint condition, fully winged, black stripe disappeared; I suddenly realised that I had witnessed an instar happening the night before. Wonderful! Photograph sent to our editor!



NEW female Long-winged Conehead!
Photo, P Rudkin

Tim Caldicott and Martin Grimes sent in their regular sightings for July/ August, Martin especially from the east and west sides of the Lyndon reserve, Rutland Water, and Tim from his strongholds at Leighfield and Manton.

Finally, the reason why the occasional spread of the rarer orthopterans happens is illustrated by an article in a recent edition of the *Atropos* magazine called 'Vehicle-assisted Dispersal of Southern Oak Bush-Cricket'. This tells the story of a female, which clung tightly to the driver's side-wing mirror. The driver was doing 70 mph along the A1, north of Huntingdon, for at least 10 miles before pulling in to a service station, where he released the creature onto a verge. He photographed it, and sent

the image to the Orthoptera Recording Scheme bosses for identification. Thanks to Vic Arnold and Martin Grimes for spotting this article and sending me a copy!

Bush Crickets

Oak Bush Cricket, *Meconema thalassinum*

Good to receive a sighting from Barrowden! At 11.30 pm, 3 July, one was observed on top of the owner's car. New site: SK 948002. Reports continue to come in from the garden of Gower Lodge, Uppingham. One female, on 10 August, followed by one male, on 27 August. With this regular happening each season, it is possible that there might be a small colony present. This species does not stridulate, so often goes under-recorded.

Dark Bush Cricket, *Pholidoptera griseoptera*

No new sites this period. Recorded at usual sites: Walk Farm, Great Casterton, The Drift (East end) at Ryhall Heath, Lyndon Reserve east of the centre, Hambleton Peninsular Road.

Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Metrioptera roeselii*

Abundant and noisy everywhere, out-competing other orthopterans with its sizzling stridulating. Regular haunts visited include: The Drift at Ryhall Heath, Lyndon and Egleton Reserves, Walk Farm, Bloody Oaks verge. One new site: abundant at the Green Burial Field, Ketton, 2 August. SK 975037.

Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus discolor*

Abundant everywhere: regular haunts visited: Lyndon and Egleton reserves, Rutland Water, Walk Farm, Great Casterton, Leighfield Fisphonds, and Quarry Farm, Stamford, where a female final instar nymph changed overnight to a full adult, 16 July.

Two new sites: large colonies in grasses, Green Burial Field, Ketton, 2 August, SK 975037; one female, final instar nymph, Gunthorpe, 7 August, SK 863056.

Short-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus dorsalis*

Abundant in all the inhabited locations on the Egleton Reserve Surveys, 15 July and 30 August.

Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima*

Abundant in regular haunts: Lyndon Reserve, Rutland Water, Bloody Oaks verge, the minor road hedgerows towards Egleton church, Walk Farm, Great Casterton. There were no Speckled Bush Crickets located on the Egleton reserve during both surveys, 15 July and 30 August; could the new population around the Bird Watching Centre gardens (imported with shrubs from Ashwell Gardens a few years ago), have died out? However, Roy Frost heard two stridulating males, outside Marquee 3, just south-west of the Bird Watching Centre, on 16 August, as he wandered around the Bird Fair.

New sites: three stridulating males, located with the bat-detector at 35 kHz, The Drift, Ryhall, on 11 July, TF 029128; one observed on a wheelie bin in back garden, Reeves Lane, Wing, on 17 July, SK 882032.

Large colonies in Ash, Lime and Hawthorn, at the Green Burial Field, Ketton, on 2 August, SK 975037.

One adult male observed on hedge top, 10 August, Pilton, SK 905033.

Grasshoppers

Common Green Grasshopper, *Omocestus viridulus*

Only one record this period of a declining species in Rutland. One stridulating male, west of Lax Hill, Egleton reserve, in parched sheep pasture, 17 August. This is a regular site.

Field Grasshopper, *Chorthippus brunneus*

One report only and this is a new site: three, observed in corn field, Ryhall Heath, 11 July. TF 019123. This is a common species, but hard to locate. Lovely photograph, sent in by Martin Grimes.

Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus parallelus*

Abundant everywhere! One new site: 10+ stridulating males, some females observed, 2 August, the Green Burial Field, Ketton, SK 975037.

Regular haunts visited: Egleton and Lyndon Reserves, Rutland Water, Bloody Oaks verge, Bloody Oaks Reserve, Walk Farm Great Casterton, Quarry Farm Stamford, The Drift Ryhall Heath.

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*

Abundant everywhere! One new site: 12+ stridulating males, Green Burial Field, Ketton, 2 August, SK 975037. Regular haunts visited: Rutland Water, Lyndon and Egleton Reserves, Bloody Oaks Quarry Reserve, Bloody Oaks verge, Quarry Farm Stamford, Walk Farm Great Casterton. Photograph sent in from Martin Grimes, from the Lyndon reserve.

Many thanks to our small team of reporters for their splendid contributions: V Arnold, C Baxter, T Caldicott, R Frost, C Gallimore, M Grimes, C Jones, P Rudkin, L Worrall.

GLOW-WORMS

RECORDER Linda Worrall

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July/August 2018

I have no further records of sightings, but checked a very useful website which you might care to access: ukglowworms.blogspot.com – glowworm survey report. There are many entries, from larvae in January to adults in August. The usual website, glowworms.org.uk, has much general information too.

You will doubtless be pleased that the blogspot website's first adult female sighting in 2018 was one at Fineshade on 28th May, as noted also in the July *Fieldfare*. Corfe Castle, Dorset, had a sighting shortly afterwards. There are reports from England, Wales and Scotland during June and July, several from previously unknown locations. Some were in danger from building development. Numbers counted were not high, threes and fives sometimes, but I was stunned that on 4th August an estimated 100 females were at Perran Sands, Cornwall – not nearly as many as the 400 counted by RNHS at Barnack Hills and Holes in the early 1990s, though!

The last entry was on 27th August of one female at Coldwaltham church, West Sussex – the south of England does seem to have more than elsewhere. Our latest record was of four at Ketton Quarry on 6th July, but local August sightings have seldom occurred.

I think we must wish our local larvae 'good hunting' and a safe winter. This summer will not have been the only unusually hot one for the ancient species, nor for the snails which they eat. However, safety now requires they also have a quiet life, build numbers and breed with other colonies. That is difficult.

OTHER INSECTS AND INVERTEBRATES **RECORDER Gill Chiverton**

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July/August 2018

Odonata DRAGONFLIES

Migrant Hawker <i>Aeshna mixta</i>	July	One noted at Leighfield
Southern Hawker <i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	July	One noted at Leighfield and one in Barrowden garden
	Aug	Singles noted over month in Barrowden garden and one seen at Ketton Quarry

Brown Hawker <i>Aeshna grandis</i>	July	Seen on 2 occasions in Barrowden garden
	Aug	One recorded at Ketton Quarry
Emperor <i>Anax imperator</i>	July	One female seen at Barrowden and one male noted on two occasions at Leighfield
Four-spotted Chaser <i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i>	July	One seen on hedge at Leighfield
Common Darter <i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	Aug	50+ recorded at Ketton Quarry
Hemiptera BUGS		
Hairy Shieldbug <i>Dolycorus baccarum</i>	Aug	One seen at Ketton Quarry on 5th and two noted there on 12th
Coleoptera BEETLES		
Orange Ladybird <i>Halyzia 16-guttata</i>	July	One noted at Leighfield
22-spot Ladybird <i>Psyllobora 22-punctata</i>	Aug	Large nos recorded at Holygate road, Leighfield – 53 on 3rd, 75 on 9th and 39 on 21st.
Eyed Ladybird <i>Anatis ocellate</i>	July	One noted at Burley Wood
7-spot Ladybird <i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i>	July	One noted at Ketton Quarry
	Aug	Seven seen on 5th at Ketton Quarry and one single on 12th
Harlequin Ladybird <i>Harmonia axyridis</i>	July	One recorded at Ketton Quarry
Diptera FLIES		
Hoverflies Syrphidae		
<i>Sphaerophoria scripta</i>	Aug	One noted at Ketton Quarry
<i>Eristalinus sepulchralis</i>	July	One seen in Manton garden
<i>Helophilus hybridus</i>	July	Five recorded over month at Leighfield
<i>Volucella inanis</i>	July	One noted at Manton
<i>Volucella inflata</i>	July	One noted at Leighfield
<i>Volucella bombylans</i>	Aug	One seen at Ketton Quarry
<i>Volucella zonaria</i>	Aug	One noted on two occasions at Manton
<i>Brachypalpoidea lentus</i>	July	One seen near Chater at Leighfield
Hymenoptera ANTS, BEES, WASPS and RELATIVES		
Tree Wasp <i>Dolychovedpula sylvestris</i>	Aug	Noted at Holygate road at Leighfield
Tree Bumblebee <i>Bombus hypnorum</i>	July	Noted on twice at Manton and 4 noted over month at Leighfield
Red-tailed Bumblebee <i>Bombus lapidarius</i>	July	One worker nectaring on Vge5 at Essendine and one at Ketton Quarry

OTHER ARTHROPODS

Isopoda Woodlice

Common Pill Woodlouse

Armadillidium vulgare

Aug Noted at Ketton Quarry

Common Striped Woodlouse

Philoscia muscorum

Aug Noted at Ketton Quarry

Many thanks to the following recorders:

A Biddle, T Caldicott, G Chiverton,

R Lemmon, D Needham and L Worrall.

Pill woodlouse. Photo, L Biddle



MAMMALS

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July/August 2018

Many apologies to those of you whose reports from May and June I unfortunately omitted from my report in July *Fieldfare*. They have been included here, and I will try to make sure that I don't miss any in future!

Four reports of **Badgers** include three road casualties. A badger dug out a wasps' nest in the driveway of the Stone House in Wing. Five reports of **Stoats** this time, one in July, crossing the road between Empingham towards the A1, and in August one in the garden of the Old School Clipsham, one just on the Edith Weston side of the Lyndon crossroads, and two from Cottesmore, crossing the road one day, and sadly dead in a similar spot a couple of days later. In a Normanton garden a **Weasel** was seen at the edge of the lawn, then ran into a paddock, and one crossed the road on the Oakham side of Cottesmore later in August.

Foxes have been taking advantage of food put out by members for hedgehogs. At Whissendine one was seen in the garden, mid-July, eating hedgehog food, and at Langham, a single nervous dog fox was recorded on the trailcamera as it ate food put out for the hedgehogs, and a small hedgehog walked up to him and into the picture. Later in August a fox was eating hedgehog food at Langham, and was filmed as another fox came in and frightened the first one away. Both looked fairly young and healthy specimens, and were quite nervous.

There has been only one report of evidence of **Otters**, prints in mud at wet meadow RWNR, and no observations this time. **Water voles** have been active at many of the sites at RWNR, but in several places the water level was so low that the rafts were high and dry, so there was no sign of water voles! Many holes of **Short-tailed field voles** were present in the garden of the Willows, at Barrow, and later all the strawberries disappeared, eaten off, I guess by the same animals – although Bank voles also eat plants, and could have been the guilty parties! A **Rabbit** was also seen in the garden in early August. Three **Common Shrews** were found dead at Clipsham Park Wood in mid-June, presumably victims of the heat or lack of water.

Brown hares have been seen at Exton, Barrow, Hambleton, Pickworth and one on two consequent days in a similar location at Ryhall Heath, perhaps the same one.

At Barrowden a **Hedgehog** was found dead under a leylandii in July, with no apparent signs of cause of death. Two live ones were recorded on a trailcam in a Barrowden garden, visiting regularly for food during July and August. In another garden a 6-inch one was found, and it fed ravenously, waking in daytime to feed; another larger one was nearby on the following day. Hedgehogs fed regularly at Barrow, from May until July, and at Whissendine, and Heron Road Oakham, one or two were also regular visitors. At Langham only two hedgehogs put in appearances on the trail camera during July and two **Fieldmice** were seen on 6th and 7th July. A **Rat** was also recorded at Whissendine at the end of July.

Molehills were recorded in Barrow in June and in August, but two remaining **Moles** seen were dead, at Oakham Canal, and near the moth trap at RWNR. As usual

Muntjac have been often seen. In June one at Wing, probably pregnant, was eating ivy, ash leaves and irises for about 10 minutes, and at Pilton a fawn was seen between the railway and the Chater. Other muntjac were seen on the shore of Manton Bay, Taylor's Farm Pickworth, Gunthorpe, and another heard calling in late August at Barrow. Unusually we have no records of fallow or roe deer this month.

Thank you to all who sent in reports: C Bacon, D & J Ball, P Bennett, A Biddle, C Gallimore, Gay Griffin, M Grimes, P Langstone, Roy Lemmon, M Manson, M Markham, Liz Nicholls, J Pearce, L Worrall

BATS

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July/August 2018

People often ask me how the bats are doing, but this year it has been particularly hard to tell. There seemed to be a period in July when there was lots of insect debris on the car windscreen, a hopeful sign for all insectivores, but as the hot, dry weather continued this insect bounty disappeared. Only once did I record any bats foraging in my own or neighbours' gardens and, from the dearth of records, other members had the same experience.

Away from churches bat records have been scarce and several colonies, including some counted for the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) in the past, have not been present during 2018; some appear to have been stressed by the heat.

There were few grounded bats in our area during these months, suggesting that infants and juveniles have done well; however, a bat carer in Lincolnshire proposed that the very cold weather earlier in the year followed by some very wet weather in spring, may have caused females to abort early foetuses or not to become pregnant at all this year. Female bats store sperm after autumn mating, only becoming pregnant when insect abundance enables them to put on weight and ovulate. I don't know if they can prevent this happening, but bats are remarkable creatures!

With Neil Hughes, our former Police Wildlife Officer, I visited Barrowden and Empingham churches, and, over the border, attended BCT's Bats in Churches presentation at Cold Overton church. Like Braunston-in-Rutland church, Cold Overton church has been studied by expert bat ecologists, and it is likely to get Lottery money to alleviate the bat issues. The ecologist's presentation was excellent, followed by watching the bats emerge from the roof. Interestingly, although flood-lighting illuminates the south face of the church the bats, which usually avoid emerging into lit areas as a predator-avoidance strategy, have adapted to the lights by emerging early before the lights go on, and come out from a gap which is in shade when the lights do come on. The presence of thick tree canopy enables them to dash into cover to avoid predation.

Daubenton's bat

During the Bats and Glow-worms walk at Ketton on 6.7, the number of Daubenton's bats seen foraging over the River Chater was lower than usual at both the Sinc Bridge in Aldgate and the Station Road bridge, possibly because of the low water level. There were no other records during the period.

Natterer's bat

At Stoke Dry church in June the two NBMP counts were as follow:

13th 11 bats First bat emerged at 9.58 pm

25th 34 bats First bat emerged at 9.45 pm

Ann Tomlinson, who has been carrying out the counts for some years, reported that the low first count could have been because new, undiscovered emergence sites were not covered. Recruiting additional counters, she was able to cover more exits on 26.6, hence the higher count. She also discovered that just before the second count the lead had been stolen off several sections of the roof. Following this theft, a security light nearby was altered to illuminate the south side of the church, and

this was lit continuously from 10.0 pm onwards. This was an understandable action to try to prevent further lead thefts but coincided with the time the bats emerge to feed. Ann found that on 26.6 no bats either emerged or foraged on the south side of the church after the light came on, whereas in the past both Natterer's and pipistrelles foraged extensively over the churchyard after emergence. Further visits on the evening of 9.7 and during the day on 1.8 enabled Ann, Ebbs Daly and myself to discover additional exits and roosting sites within the church. The bats at Stoke Dry are under some pressure now, but it is hoped that some agreement can be arrived at to safeguard both the Natterer's colony and the church roofs.

At Whissendine Church one NBMP count was carried out in June, with 39 Natterer's recorded on 25.6. The colony here has reduced from a high of 80 bats in 2003, following introduction of flood-lighting in the churchyard that illuminates the church interior.

Soprano Pipistrelle

Soprano pipistrelles were heard in Aldgate, Ketton, on 6.7 and emergence was observed at a maternity roost. More than 400 bats were seen emerging from this roost, in a converted former industrial building, during a count by Ann Tomlinson, Ebbs Daly and myself.

On Monday 9.7, 15 juvenile bats were found inside an office of a factory in South Street, Uppingham. Neil Hughes, formerly our Police Wildlife Officer, found juveniles at various stages of development, eight of which had already died (having perhaps been in the building over a hot weekend), but seven were alive. Neil located the roost entrance on the south side of the building after seeing droppings on a car conveniently parked beneath. Hanging over the edge of the factory's flat roof, aided by the factory manager, Neil 'posted' the juveniles into a gap under flashing, which they readily entered; the whole process being repeated on 10.7 when another juvenile was found. On 25.7 Neil and I did an emergence survey to assess whether there were other roost entrances and found bats emerging round a large metal pipe which was part of the air-conditioning system. A total of 54 bats emerged, confirmed as soprano pipistrelle from their echolocation calls. The bats seemed to be roosting in the cavity wall, squeezing out round the pipe, which bridged the cavity from the office to the outside. Neil also advised the factory manager how to stop bats getting into the office in future.

A juvenile male soprano pipistrelle was found inside a shopping bag at a house in Chater Close, Manton, but it died, probably from dehydration, before I collected it. The finder told me she sees lots of bats flying round the house and on 24.7, at 3.55 am, she saw one fly into the gable end of her neighbour's house. That evening, from 9.40 pm, she and her husband counted 19 bats emerging; more could still be heard inside the roost. These bats may be part of the colony recorded at Manton Hall in 2017.

Common Pipistrelle

A few bats of this species were heard foraging in Ketton, over Station Road and Aldgate, on 6.7. At Stone House, Wing, 20 bats were recorded on 9.6 and bats were present throughout the season, with numbers abundant earlier in the year. At Morcott, in spite of regular checks, Dave Cole reported that no bats were using the roost this year. Was the south-facing roost perhaps too hot for them? In August, common pipistrelles were heard foraging on the south side of Empingham church and a small number may have emerged from the church itself, where droppings had been found inside. There were three grounded common pipistrelles during the period. On 21.7 a juvenile male was found in Murrays Estate Agents in Oakham. Although initially weighing only 3.7 g its weight increased rapidly following rehydration and some mealworms to 4.2 g by 23.7; as it might still have been dependent on its mother it was released that evening among trees in Oakham churchyard where it flew off strongly. Another male was found on 15.8 in a garden in The Sidings, Oakham, weighing 4.4 g, uninjured but unable to fly. It was released on 28.8; immediately a feeding buzz on the bat detector told us it was catching insects. In Barrowden a male juvenile was found indoors on 22.8, weighing 3.8 g. By 31.8 he was flying well (in my lounge), his weight up to 4.8 g. Released back in Barrowden, he quickly flew up to canopy height of tall trees before disappearing.

Brown long-eared bat

This species is likely to be more widespread than the records suggest, as they are not often picked up by bat detectors. Low numbers of moths earlier this year have also probably been challenging for brown long-eared bats, which are specialist moth-feeders. Four bats were counted for the NBMP at the roost in Wing and a few droppings found in Empingham church were probably those of this species. A relatively slow-flying bat with broad wings flew over the stage at Tolethorpe during a performance on 24.7 which may have been a brown long-eared, as the species are known to breed in the roof of Tolethorpe Hall. There were quite a few moths around that evening.

The only grounded bat during the period was a male found inside a house in Whitwell on 8.8. Its weight of 4.8 g was very low but small holes in both wing membranes suggested that it had been a victim of cat strike. It died overnight.

My thanks to D Cole, C Gallimore, J Harris, and A Tomlinson for records, and to A Tomlinson and Ebbs Daly for help with surveys.

Reports on RNHS events in July and August

Sunday July 8, 10 am

Woodwalton Fen

The weather has been hot and dry for several weeks, and perhaps was too hot for many of our members to venture south to Woodwalton Fen.

Nevertheless a select group met with Henry Stanier, BCN Wildlife Trusts' Monitoring and Research Officer at 10.00 am on the new bridge at the entrance to the reserve, watching fish below and damselflies floating around above them.

The Reserve is an historic site, the second of the nature reserves set up by the Rothschilds, the first being Wicken Fen, and later given to public ownership. The area is being redeveloped as a nature reserve, and purchase of surrounding land will hopefully eventually result in a link to Holme Fen to make a much larger area for the benefit of wildlife.

Our first dragonfly was a **Brown Hawker**, zooming overhead, followed by a **White Admiral** butterfly circling the oak trees as we strolled along the pathway between tall reeds alongside a waterfilled dyke. **Azure Damselflies** and a **Large Skipper** flitted between the reeds alongside the path, and a **4-spot Chaser** rested on a frond, wings shining in the sun. Sharp-eyed members spotted a **Short-winged Conehead** on a blade of grass, which obligingly stayed to be photographed. Male and female **Ruddy Darters** were spotted and a **Garden Warbler** sang his melodious bubbling song.

A freshly-emerged lemon-yellow **Brimstone** butterfly looked conspicuous, but disappeared as soon as it settled onto the leaves of a willow tree, becoming an indistinguishable part of the foliage. We found a quiet haven from the sun in a shady area by the Rothschild's summer house, a lovely thatched cottage built on piles in the fen. We were able to see how much the peat has shrunk in the years since the cottage was built, at least 3 or 4 feet, and marked on one of the pillars were the flood levels for various years. **Purple Hairstreak** butterflies flitted above the treetops, occasionally stopping long enough to be caught in binoculars, while a **Red Admiral** and **Peacock** flew around the thatch. Crossing a small dyke a female **Southern Hawker** patrolled and damselflies mated in the 'heart' formation. We saw **Frogbit**, a floating leaved plant, with three-petalled white flowers, the leaves used as resting places for damselflies, and also yellow-flowered **Bladderwort**, and later we observed the bladders in the fernlike fronds below the clear water. A cricket was spotted after Henry found the call using the bat detector, and was identified clearly as a **Roesel's Bush Cricket**. Pale pink **Hemp Agrimony** flowered beside the path, as tall as the reeds, and **Marsh sowthistle** towered above our heads. The time had passed all too quickly, and we returned to the bridge, where we were treated to the sight of a **Blue Emperor** dragonfly patrolling the drain. A **Scarce Chaser** perched on a reed, identified by his blue eyes, showing a dark area between wings and tail,



Purple Emperor, Photo. D Cotter



Woodwalton Fen edge, Photo, L Biddle

where females had held on to him during mating, the blue colouration worn away. We were not finished yet – **Red-eyed Damselflies** sat on water lily leaves, and a **Black-tailed Skimmer** whizzed past. The fish, perch and rudd?, were still busy just beneath the surface. Finally we said our goodbyes and left the peaceful reserve for home.

On investigating photographs later a member spotted yet another species – a large spider – possibly a Fen Raft Spider, skulking beneath one of the leaves on a picture of damselflies mating on a lily pad.

Thanks to Henry for leading us with his knowledge and observation skills on an amazing morning, making us wonder why we hadn't visited sooner!

Linda Biddle

Sunday August 12, 10.30 am

Ketton Quarry (Species List)

Butterflies

Large White
Green-Veined White
Common Blue
Brown Argus

Bees

Honey Bee
Red-Tailed Bumble Bee
Common Carder Bee
Cuckoo Bee – yellow stripe on thorax
+ 2 other cuckoo bees

Hoverfly 2 species – 1 striped abdomen pointed

Orthoptera

Roesel's Bush Cricket
Lesser Marsh Grasshopper
Meadow Grasshopper, long-winged form

Other Insects

Moth – *arista* sp
Hairy Shield Bug
7-spot Ladybird – no other species
Southern Pill Woodlouse
Striped Pill Woodlouse

Galls

Dasineura kieffmania
Elbrophera Cardui
Robin's Pincushion
Dasineura crataegae
Cecidophyes labiatiflorae
Tar spot – Ascomycete
Pea Gall on Rose
Common Spangle on Oak



Photo, R Edwards

Flowers and plants

Viper's Bugloss
Teasel
Marjoram
Wild Parsnip
Marsh Thistle
Agrimony
Restharrow
Woodruff
Lesser Willowherb
Common Vetch
Knapweed
White Bryony
Guelder Rose
Carline Thistle
Ragwort
Scabious
Eyebright

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Fieldfare:

Is published six times a year. It is free to members, and available online or printed.

Printed at Lonsdale Direct, telephone 01933 228855

RNHS is a Registered Charity: Number 514693