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## NOTICEBOARD

*The Editor is enjoying Autumn in New Zealand. This edition of Fieldfare has been assembled by her husband Paul, who is not particularly skilled at herding cats and apologises for any errors.*

### Notes from the Chair

#### Botanical Recorder

Members will be pleased to read that *John Rodgers* has volunteered to take on this position for an introductory period, and would welcome your early spring flower records. In his own words he stresses that he has no expertise, but is willing to give it a try. Many thanks to John for this offer.

If there are difficulties with identification then I'm sure there will be members who can help out – or ask Andy Lear for help. *LB*

#### RNHS fifty next year

We are already making plans for a special guest speaker, and have delayed our weekend away so that it can be held next year.

A relaunch of the society is being planned, coupled with a campaign to broaden membership. An active society is one which attracts attention so we invite your ideas for projects and explorations to commemorate our Golden Anniversary, attract publicity, and secure the next future of the Society for the 50 years. *LB*

#### Digital recording

As a parting message when she retired as Chair last year, *Ann Tomlinson* stressed the importance of moving our systems to digital recording and, in time, facilitating open access. We see this as an essential step to retaining our reputation as an organisation which cares for nature and has the knowledge to support its conservation in the 21st century.

We know many members find the prospect daunting, but most members are able to send emails, and this is the way in which we would hope to be receiving future reports. However members who cannot do this will still be able to send in paper

# Fieldfare

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reports. We are determined that the changeover be made as simple as possible, and intend to first pilot the system in those groups which have fewer species to monitor. This means we can discover any problems and sort them out early before involving other groups.

The system will be introduced and explained at April's indoor meeting. In due course more information will appear on the website, and in the May edition of *Fieldfare*.

## General

**Membership Cards** for 2014 are being distributed with this edition of *Fieldfare*.

### RSPB Wash Birdwatching Cruises 2014 aboard the Boston Belle

This year the RSPB are running a total of fourteen cruises birdwatching on the Wash and Welland River, towards Fosse Dyke, on dates between April and October 2014. All cruises start from Boston and typically last about five hours. RSPB expert guides help with identification, trips usually sighting around 65 bird species – many very close up. In 2013 a total of 105 species were recorded [for list see: [www.southlincsrspb.org.uk](http://www.southlincsrspb.org.uk)]

For dates, times and booking see: <http://southhollandcentre.co.uk/2013/01/31/rspb-boat-cruise/>

### LROS: Adopt a Woodland

LROS is launching this initiative to monitor the birds in mature woodlands throughout both counties. The obligation would be to report observations monthly on all species noted (perhaps on a list with numbers present) and whether they are breeding. A number of Rutland woods are on their 'hit list': Barnsdale Wood, Bloody Oaks Wood, Burley Wood, Clipsham Park Wood, Hambleton Wood, Pickworth Great Wood, Priors Coppice, Stoke Dry Wood and Wardley Wood.

If you visit any of these woods regularly and would like to help, register your wood with Peter Williams: [peterwilliams23@btinternet.com](mailto:peterwilliams23@btinternet.com).

I would also appreciate a copy of your observations. I have registered Tunneley Wood, where 24 species were noted in February.

*Terry Mitcham, 01780 751268*

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## RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY EVENTS

Full details of all these events can be found on our website at [www.rnhs.org.uk](http://www.rnhs.org.uk).

### **Sunday 30 March**                      **COLLYWESTON GREAT WOOD**                      **10.00 am**

*Led by Chris Gardiner, we have permission to investigate this limewood belonging to the Cecil Estate. Park in yard off the A47 almost opposite the Collyweston turning. (OS Landranger 141 Grid ref: TF 005 017)*

*Queries: please call Linda Biddle on 01780 762108*

### **The last indoor meeting before the October start of the new lecture season**

### **Tuesday 1 April**                      **FOREST INVADERS**                      **7.30 pm**

*A very topical talk on trees and problems with alien pests and diseases by Michael Biddle, who works for the Forestry Commission from Bristol, looking at the national spread of infections.*

**venue: Voluntary Action Rutland (VAR), Lands End Way, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6RB**

### **Saturday 19 April**                      **WOODLAND BIRDS AT PRIOR'S COPPICE**                      **9.30 am**

*This should – weather permitting – be a wonderful morning to encounter spring. Meet at the entrance to Prior's Coppice, please park carefully away from the houses. (Grid ref: SK 832 049)*

*Queries: please call Linda Biddle on 01780 762108*

**Saturday 17 May                      WALK AT THE RIVER NENE                      10.00 am**

*Sarah Lambert the leader, gave a presentation on the Nene at our March indoor meeting. We will be doing a circular walk of the Nene navigation and backwater – about 2 km – which should enable us to see a range of wetland flora and fauna including Banded Demoiselles, Hairy Dragonfly, Herons and Kingfishers.*

*The meeting place is at the southern end of Station Rd, Ailsworth, close to the Nene Valley Railway. There is ample parking on the verges. The route can be muddy in places and there are a couple of stiles. (Grid ref: TL 112 978, postcode PE5 7AH)*

*Queries: please call Sarah Lambert on 07784 169260*

**Wednesday 28 May                      BEAUMONT CHASE FARM WALK                      7.00 pm**

*An evening walk around the farmland of RNHS members, Mary (ex-Programme Secretary) and Joe Nourish – a very beautiful rural landscape farmed with wildlife in mind.*

*Meet at Beaumont Chase Farm, Stockerston Rd, Uppingham, LE15 9HJ. (Take the B664 out of Uppingham towards Stockerston, the farm is on the righthand side before the road drops down a steep hill. (Grid ref: SP 846 988)*

*Queries: please call Joe Nourish on 07976315793*

**Thursday 19 June                      SEATON MEADOWS MEMORIAL WALK                      2.00 pm**

*This walk at Seaton Meadows is being held in memory of Graham Worrall, our longstanding RNHS Membership Secretary, Verge Organiser, and so much more - greatly missed by all. It will be led by the Warden Joe Costley and we should see a good variety of wet meadow plants.*

*Meet just off the B672 at the point where it passes under the Welland Viaduct. (Grid ref: SP 915 979)*

*Queries: please call Linda Biddle on 01780 762108*

**Sunday 22 June                      CLIPSHAM QUARRY                      10.00 am**

*Leaders Barbara and Don Parker, RNHS members, have been involved with this site for over 30 years. We will be looking for Dark Green Fritillaries, Slow Worms, Greater Butterfly Orchids and Wood Vetch, and other items of interest. (This site is not open to the general public.)*

*Directions: Turn off A1 for Stretton, head for Clipsham village. From the east end of the village take the Holywell Road for approximately 1 mile. Then look for the quarry entrance on the righthand side of the road. Make your way to park near the stable building. (Grid ref: SK 981 155)*

*Queries: please call Barbara and Don Parker on 01780 752002*

**Sunday 13 July                      BUTTERFLIES AT FERMYN WOOD                      10.00 am**

*Leader Alistair Lawrence, RNHS Butterfly Recorder, hopes to show us the Purple Emperor butterfly, which is a feature of these butterfly rich woods.*

*At Brigstock, turn off the A6116 onto the Harley Way (towards the National Trust's Lyveden New Bield).*

*Meet at the gate to the Forestry Commission track in Fermyn Wood, almost opposite the flying/gliding club. Park in the gate (not blocking it) or along the road. (Grid ref: SP 965 859)*

*Queries: please call Alistair Lawrence on 01572 770492*

**Saturday 2 August                      OAKHAM CANAL/DAWN'S Paddock                      11.00 am**

*Leader Ian Merrill, who gave an excellent presentation on Dragonflies at our February indoor meeting, will meet us at the Oakham Canal and then go on to Dawn's Paddock. Bring a packed lunch. We will be focusing on dragonflies (hence the timing) but there is much more of interest. Ian is happy to stay until 3.00 pm if there is enough enthusiasm.*

*Directions: Leave the Oakham bypass on the Ashwell Road. Carry on to the crossroads, then turn left. After a short distance, park on the verges. (Grid ref: SK 865 110)*

*Queries: please call Dawn on 01664 454578*

## Saturday 27 September FUNGUS FORAY, MORKERY WOOD

2.00 pm

*Dr Vin Fleming will be leading us on a Fungus Foray. He is a professional mycologist and Chairman and Wildlife Records Officer of the Bourne Group of the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trust.*

*Directions: Going north on the A1, turn right towards Castle Bytham, the wood is on the righthand side. Turn right into the entrance to the wood and meet at the car park. (Grid ref: SK 952 192)*

*Queries: please call Vin Fleming on 01778 570329*

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## LEICESTER AND RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST RUTLAND GROUP

*Rutland Group indoor events are held at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton; admission £1 includes tea/coffee/biscuits.*

*For event details, and other activities in Leicestershire and Rutland, including guided walks see [www.lrwot.org.uk](http://www.lrwot.org.uk), or phone 0116 272 0444 in office hours.*

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## LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST BOURNE GROUP

*Bourne Group indoor meetings are held in the Methodist Church Hall, Bourne, and start at 7.30 pm. Refreshments are available at all indoor meetings. A donation of £1.50 as an admission fee is requested, children free.*

*For details of the LWT Bourne Group's events, see [www.freewebs.com/bournetrust/programme.htm](http://www.freewebs.com/bournetrust/programme.htm).*

*For other LWT Lincstrust events, see [www.lincstrust.org.uk](http://www.lincstrust.org.uk), or phone 01507 526 677 in office hours.*

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## WEATHER SUMMARY Roy Lemmon

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

### January 2014

**Atmospheric pressure and wind** This was essentially a low pressure month, standard pressure at sea level is defined as 1013 hectoPascals, millibars to you and me, and on only three occasions this month was this exceeded. My highest reading this month was 1020 mb on 12th and the rest were of course below this but no particularly 'low' lows were seen, the lowest being 984 mb on the 28th. Winds were consistently S-W apart from the 29th and 30th when they were E and NE respectively; and this brought us cold continental air. It was a markedly cyclonic month and there was thunder and rain over Stamford on the afternoon of 25th.

**Temperature** With a mean minimum of 2.00 °C and a mean maximum of 8.57 °C, this January has been in the middle ranking in the past decade. There were five air frosts on the 11th, 12th and 19th-21st and it was on the 10th-11th that the lowest night minimum of -3.2 °C was reached. The highest daytime maximum of 12.2 °C was measured on the 5th.

Nationally only 13 Januarys were milder in the past 100 years.

**Rain** A very wet month with a total rainfall here of 111 mm (4.37 inches) whereas my long term mean for the month is 50.46 mm. This turns out as 220 % of LTM and is by far the wettest January I have measured in 23 years; the nearest were 79.4 mm in 1999 and 79.5 mm in 2004. Nationally only January 1948 was wetter in a record stretching back to 1766.

**Sunshine** Nationally, i.e. averaged over England and Wales, this amounted to 61 hours or 102 % of LTM. 26 Januarys in the last 100 have been sunnier.

### February 2014

**Atmospheric pressure and wind** Another month characterized by low air pressures, indeed nationally this was not only the most cyclonic February in 142 years of records but it was the most cyclonic month of all months in that period. The lowest I recorded was 978 mb. on both the 8th and 9th and the highest was 1011 mb. on 19th. Winds were S-W throughout the month except for 28th when they were from the NW and there were several days of gales. I only have a hand held anemometer and hence wind speeds are only recorded at 0900 hours, but on 6th, 8th, 9th, 11th,

20th and 23rd maximum speeds were between 19 and 22 knots and wind speeds usually increase during daylight hours.

**Temperature** Another relatively warm month, the mean minimum here was 2.76 °C and the mean maximum was 9.53 °C making this the 9th warmest February in both measurements in the last decade. 2011 had a higher mean minimum, 3.69 °C and 2008 had a slightly higher mean maximum of 9.7 °C. There were four overnight air frosts, the lowest temperature being -1.7 °C on 9th-10th and the highest daytime maximum I recorded was 12.9 °C on 20th. The Central England Temperature for this month was 1.8 °C above the long term mean.

**Rainfall** Again a wet month, the total I recorded was 49.8mm. (1.96 inches) which is 137 % of my LTM of 24 years. From my records totals for this month vary from just 5.0 mm in 1993 to the highest 67.1 mm in both 2009 and 2010. Nationally the lowest this month was Cranwell, Lincs. with 31.5 mm (1.24 inches).

**Sunshine** This was a sunny February, averaged over England and Wales with a total of 92 hours or 113 % of LTM. In the past 100 years 14 Februaries have seen sunnier.

*National records are from Philip Eden's Weatherwatch column in the Sunday Telegraph.*

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

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

### January/February 2014

The mild winter does not seem to have led to any especially early records of amphibian activity. The first record of **frogs** was not until 17th February when a pair was seen by Linda Worrall in her pond in Barrowden, although she had seen a single male a few days earlier. Numbers of frogs increased and a frog-ball of two males and a female was seen on 21st, but as yet no spawn has been produced.

The first newts of the year were seen in my pond in Wing on 11th January, when a male and a female **Smooth Newt** and a female **Great Crested**

**Newt** were observed. Smooth Newt numbers increased steadily to 16 by 25th February. A single Smooth Newt was observed on a path in Linda Worrall's garden in Barrowden on 19th February.

Great Crested Newt numbers increased steadily in my pond to 3 on 3rd February, 11 on 20th and 15 on 25th February (8 males and 7 females). Great Crested Newts have also been active in my cellar and have been seen on six occasions in the two months with a maximum of 4 on 20th February. All the cellar dwellers have been male.

*My thanks to Linda Worrall for her records.*

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## BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

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

The year began much as 2013 ended with divers, Long-tailed Ducks, Black-necked Grebes and the Black Redstart still at Rutland Water. Wildfowl numbers remained low but there were a few highlights with Pink-footed and Brent Geese, Ring-necked Duck, Scaup and Smew all present. A few Whooper Swans also passed through. Paired wildfowl and drumming Great Spotted Woodpeckers turned thoughts to spring but there were still some large finch flocks wintering on farmland. Garden bird watching seemed less exciting but it was good to see Blackcaps in Oakham and Reed Buntings joining the usual Chaffinches and House Sparrows in my own garden.

*My thanks to the following for their records: T Appleton, P Bennett, A & J Biddle, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, J Frances, Dr C H Gallimore, G & M Griffin, J Harris, S Hope, Dr C R Jones, P Langston, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, LROS, T Mitcham, E & B Nicholls, J S & J Rodgers, P Rudkin, L Worrall.*

**Whooper Swan.** 11 were at RWNA on 20.01 and 15 flew SW on 04.02. There were five in NA and nine at EBR on 10.02.

**Pink-footed Goose.** Singles were at FHP on 05.01 and RWNA on 17.01, with a pair at Geest on 26.02.

**Greylag Goose.** High counts at FHP were 279 on 05.01 and 262 on 23.02.

**Canada Goose.** Away from regular sites, 34 were at Geest on 26.02.

**Barnacle Goose.** One was at FHP on 05.01.

**Brent Goose.** Five were at RW(Dam) on 12.01.

**Egyptian Goose.** Up to five were noted at Martinsthorpe, Pilt, and Ext Park throughout the month.

**Shelduck.** One was at FHP between 23-31.01 and a pair flew along the Gwash valley on 13.02.

**Mandarin Duck.** A pair were in willows at RW(Norm) on 09.01 and 26.02, with a pair at Geest on the latter date.

**Wigeon.** 12 were on a pool at KQ on 16.01 and 76 were at FHP on 23.02.

**Ring-necked Duck.** The EBR female was seen between 01-12.01 and on 24 and 27.01.

**Scaup.** One or two were at RW (Dam, SA and Norm) throughout both months.

**Long-tailed Duck.** Three remained in RWNA throughout both months.

**Common Scoter.** A male was at RW (Dam) on 13.01.

**Smew.** Up to five were at EBR between 02.01 and 22.01. At RWEg there was a max of seven on 28.01, with four on 16.02.

**Goosander.** A male was at FHP on 05.01. A max of six was noted at RWEg on 03.02. A male was at LFP on 08.01 and four at RW (Mn Bay) on 05.02. Two flew over Martinsthorpe on 22.02.

**Red-legged Partridge.** There was a covey of seven at RWEg on 19.01 and 31.01, with 16 at RWLynd on 07.02. This species is rarely reported from these sites. Seven were by Ing Road on 25.01.

**Black-throated Diver.** One remained at RW (Dam/Whit) to 28.02.

**Great Northern Diver.** One was at RW (Dam and Whit) throughout both months.

**Bittern.** One was at RWEg throughout January to at least 21.02, with one at REB inflow from 20.02 to the end of the month.

**Little Egret.** One was at HM on 23.01 and 04.02.

**Little Grebe.** Nos at FHP peaked at 21 on 17.01.

**Black-necked Grebe.** Four in RWNA throughout both months were joined by a fifth on 28.02.

**Red Kite.** Ones and twos were widely reported with three at FHP on 23.02.

**Sparrowhawk.** There were garden records from Stam on 16.01 and Oak in mid-Jan.

**Buzzard.** Four over Wg on 24.02 was the peak count.

**Kestrel.** Hunting birds were noted at RWEg, FHP, Ext Park, GtCast and Greet Valley GC.

**Merlin.** Singles were at NLuff Airfield on 03.01 and 15.02, and at EBR on 17.01 and 24.01.

**Peregrine.** A juv female was at RWNA on 18.01; and one was at Martinsthorpe on 11 and 20.01.

**Water Rail.** One was by North Brook at FHP on 05.01 and one called on Lagoon 3 at Eg on 28.02.

**Oystercatcher.** One was at Rweg on 03.02, with three on 16.02.

**Golden Plover.** At RW there were c.200 on 31.01, and 100 on 03.02 and 16.02.

**Grey Plover.** Two were at RWEg on 27.01.

**Lapwing.** RW had 2820 on 19.01 and 1941 on 16.02. At EBR there were 570 and 650 on the same dates. A pair were apparently on territory near GtCast on 04.02 and c.300 flew west at Martinsthorpe on 22.02.

**Ringed Plover.** Two were at RWEg on 11.02 with three noted on 16 and 18.02. Six were on Lagoon 4 on 28.02.

**Curlew.** Present at RW throughout both months, with max counts of 21 on 12.01 and 18 on 16.02.

**Bar-tailed Godwit.** One was at RWEg between 28.01 and 16.02.

**Dunlin.** Reported from both reservoirs with a max of 30 at RWLynd on 07.01 and ten at EBR on 16.02. High water levels have created difficult feeding conditions for some waders.

**Green Sandpiper.** One was at EBR on 21.01. At RW there was a single on 19.01 and two on 18.02.

**Redshank.** Ten were at RW on 19.01 with eight on 16.02.

**Jack Snipe.** Two were found on the RW count on 16.02.

**Woodcock.** Between 01.01 and 17.02 one or two were flushed at Martinsthorpe, Leigh, Norm, Hamb and Rid. Three were in TunnW on 17.01 and ten were flushed during a shoot (but not shot) in CottessW on 13.01.

**Snipe.** At RW there were four on 19.01, and 30 on 16.02.

- Kittiwake.** A first-winter was at RWNA on 01.01, with one at the Dam on 16.02.
- Mediterranean Gull.** Singles were at RWEg on 21.02 and EBR on 26.02.
- Iceland Gull.** A first-winter was at RWEg on 11.01.
- Glaucous Gull.** An adult roosted at RW on 07.01.
- Stock Dove.** Widespread in low nos but a regular roost of 100 plus on Brown's Island at RWEg and eight attracted to feeders at Norm in Feb. Song at FHP from mid-Feb.
- Collared Dove.** Regular in an Oak garden in both months with a max of 12 on 03.01.
- Barn Owl.** Singles were near LyndW on 12.01, RWEg on 18.01 and near Rid on 10 and 26.02.
- Tawny Owl.** Present at two nestboxes in PGW on 19.02 – a pair in one and a single in a second box. One called at Bden on 20.02. One was drowned in netting over a pond in Emp on 28.02 - a sad end for such a useful bird.
- Short-eared Owl.** Singles were at RWEg on 28.01 and near the Sailing Club on 16.02.
- Kingfisher.** Singles were at RW(Dam) on 05.01 and 19.01 and EBR on 16.02.
- Green Woodpecker.** Noted at KQ, FHP, TunnW and near Greet Valley GC.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker.** Drumming first heard at PGW on 10.01 and subsequently at FHP, TunnW, CPW, Eg village, and Upp. One visited feeders at Clips on 04.02 with one also regular at TunnW feeders.
- Raven.** Regular at two potential breeding sites. Calling in Ext Park on 05.01 and often heard over Beaumont Chase Farm in both months. A pair were over Martinthorpe on 27.01 and Upp on 03.02, with singles over CPW on 19.01, Leigh on 25.01 and 10.02.
- Willow Tit.** One or two were noted at Pilt, Martisthorpe, Leigh and RWLynd.
- Marsh Tit.** One or were regular at TunnW feeders with others noted at RWEg/Lynd/Ggorse and LFP.
- Skylark.** Four were in song by Ing Road on 25.01, with ten on stubble near GtCast on the same date.
- Long-tailed Tit.** 12 were in a Wg garden on 14.01, with up to three in gardens at Oak on 01 -02.02 and Clips on 04.02. 14 were at RWLynd on 19.01, and the species seems to have wintered in good nos.
- Cetti's Warbler.** One was at the RWLynd 'waderscrape' between 01.01 and 14.02.
- Chiffchaff.** Two were at Ggorse on 10.01, with one at Martinthorpe on 20.01. One was at Whit on 13.01. Song was heard in HambW on 02.02, and two were again at Ggorse on 19 and 24.02.
- Siberian Chiffchaff.** One was found in bushes by RW(Dam) on 13.01 where it seen until at least 10.02. It, or another, was at RWWhit from 22.01 to 21.02.
- Blackcap.** One was in an Oak garden in Jan. A second Oak garden had a male from 31.01 to 28.02, with two on three dates and a female from 14-28.02.
- Nuthatch.** Noted at regular sites - Ext Park, TunnW (at feeders), FHP and CPW but also in Oak and, after a very patient wait of 37 years, at feeders in a Wg garden. Virtue clearly rewarded !
- Treecreeper.** One roosted in a Wellingtonia in a Wg garden on three Jan dates to 28.01.
- Starling.** A late afternoon flock of 'several hundred' were watched over Bden before moving off in a south-westerly direction to roost on 10.02.
- Blackbird.** c.52 were noted along the south shore at RW on 13.01.
- Fieldfare.** c.450 fed on pasture in Ext Park on 11.01. A leucistic bird fed with a large flock near Tick Park on 22.01. On 25.01, c.50 fed on stubble north of Mounts Lodge and up to 50 were regular along the North Brook near HM.
- Redwing.** c.120 were on pasture behind Lagoon 2 at RWEg on 18.01, and 52 were on pasture west of PGW on 19.02.
- Robin.** c.34 were noted along RW south shore on 13.01.
- Black Redstart.** The female at RW (Dam) was present throughout both months.
- Stonechat.** A pair were regular at RWEg from 10.01 to at least 27.02. A third bird was on the tertiary treatment works on 19.01.
- House Sparrow.** 28 were in an Oak garden in Jan.
- Tree Sparrow.** 12 were on EBR feeders on 12.01 and three at RWLynd feeders on 07.02.
- Grey Wagtail.** Singles were in two Oak gardens in Jan. One was at Eg Birdwatching Centre on 13.01, with one at FHP on 04.02 and Geest sewage works on 26.02.
- Pied Wagtail.** c,20 were noted along the shore at RWNorm in Feb.
- Chaffinch.** The Leigh roost held large nos in both months with a minimum of 330 on 25.01, and a peak of 560 on 08.01.
- Greenfinch.** A max of 12 (29.01) visited an Oak garden. 72 were at the Leigh finch roost on 26.02.

**Goldfinch.** A roost at Man attracted c.100 on 26.01 and 05.02. c.50 were at RW(Heron Bay) on 27.02.

**Brambling.** A small roost at RWNA between 02.01 and 04.02 peaked at 27 on 17.01. The Leigh roost was active between 08.01 and 26.02 attracting a max of 175 on 10.02. Other records were three at Lincs. Gate on 11.01, one over Martinsthorpe on 04.02 and two over RWLynd on 14.02.

**Siskin.** Most records were of RW flocks: 12 at Eg on 19.01; 70 at Lynd on 28.01; and 35 near Heron Bay on 27.02. The only garden record was one at Oak on 19.02 and there were c.30 at Martinsthorpe on 25.02.

**Linnet.** c.60 were on stubble north of GtCast on 25.01.

**Lesser Redpoll.** At RWLynd there were two on 19.01 and 10 on 16.02, with a larger flock of c.45 on 27.02. Up to seven were at feeders in a Clips garden between 26.01 and 04.02, when two were near HM.

**Common (Mealy) Redpoll.** Two were at RW on 01.01.

**Bullfinch.** Ten were noted on a walk at CPW on 19.01. A flock of 14 was seen in GPW on 26.02.

**Yellowhammer.** Flocks reported included 70 at Martinsthorpe (01.01), 80 north of GtCast (25.01) and ten in Ext Park (26.02).

**Reed Bunting.** Up to four fed in a Stam garden from 27.01 and throughout Feb. 50 flew from the reed bed roost at RWLynd 'waderscrape' on 14.02 and 36 on 21.02.

**Wildfowl counts: Banthorpe Gravel Pit [BG], Fort Henry Ponds & Exton Park Lake [FH/EP], Holywell Lake [HL], January/February 2014**

	BG 16 Jan	BG 17 Feb	FH/EP 17 Jan	FH/EP Feb	HL 05 Jan	HL 16 Feb
Mute Swan	2	2	8	7	2	1
Black Swan	-	-	-	-	-	1
Greylag Goose	22	55	1	106	18	67
Canada Goose	-	2	2	-	4	11
Egyptian Goose	-	-	2	-	-	-
Wigeon	-	-	37	113	-	2
Gadwall	-	-	127	87	48	24
Teal	63	32	16	6	38	4
Mallard	26	32	143	86	128	36
Shoveler	-	-	1	2	-	
Pochard	-	1	1	-	-	
Tufted Duck	17	28	60	57	30	18
Cormorant	-	2	-	2	-	-
Little Grebe	-	-	21	7	4	5
Moorhen	-	3	21	17	21	18
Coot	-	2	91	80	22	25
Kingfisher	-	-	-	-	-	1

**Wildfowl counts: Rutland Water [RW] & Eyebrook Reservoir [EB]; January/February 2014**

	RW 19 Jan	RW 16 Feb	EB 19 Jan	16Feb
Mute Swan	198	78	77	41
Greylag Goose	555	251	115	64
Canada Goose	559	351	51	42
Barnacle Goose	8	10	–	–
Egyptian Goose	21	27	–	–
Ruddy Shelduck	–	–	2	–
Shelduck	21	18	–	2
Mandarin Duck	2	2	1	–
Wigeon	2981	2295	595	564
Gadwall	502	213	16	38
Teal	1278	681	461	264
Mallard	617	450	93	68
Pintail	56	2	–	–
Shoveler	37	38	12	2
Pochard	90	73	2	4
Tufted Duck	1278	992	24	75
Scaup	4	3	–	–
Long-tailed Duck	2	2	–	–
Goldeneye	282	312	39	34
Smew	4	4	1	–
Goosander	16	9	–	–
Black-throated Diver	1	1	–	–
Great Northern Diver	1	1	–	–
Cormorant	108	114	9	8
Bittern	1	–	–	–
Little Egret	5	3	3	3
Grey Heron	12	7	4	6
Little Grebe	62	110	–	–
Great Crested Grebe	254	208	2	4
Black-necked Grebe	4	4	–	–
Water Rail	–	1	–	–
Moorhen	84	54	3	–
Coot	1406	1082	4	10
Kingfisher	1	1	1	–

## BUTTERFLY NOTES compiled by Alistair Lawrence

11 Edmonton Way, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6JE. Telephone: 01572

Unsurprisingly, given the amounts of rainfall during during January and February, there have been no reports of any butterfly sightings in Rutland or records received.

I should like to take this opportunity to thank all members who contributed butterfly records in 2013 and hope that the new season gets underway soon. I should also mention, especially for the benefit of newer members, that when completing record cards please do not forget to include the six-figure grid reference for the location of the sighting.

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## INSECTS AND OTHERS compiled by Gill Chiverton

20 Victoria Road, Stamford PE9 1HB. Telephone: 01780 753820

Because the January weather was so mild I had hoped to be writing-up some insect records for that month but none were received.

### February 2014

#### HEMIPTERA

**Common Backswimmer** *Notonecta glauca* – seen occasionally at the start of month in garden pond at Barrowden. Numbers increased on milder days.

#### HYMENOPTERA

**Honey Bee** *Apis mellifera* – one insect noted at Ketton in the middle of the month.

**White-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus lucorum* – small numbers of insects noted on 4 occasions on Winter Honeysuckle flowers at Barrowden.

**Buff-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus terrestris* – a single insect noted on Winter Honeysuckle flowers at Barrowden.

#### COLEOPTERA

**7-spot Ladybird** *Coccinella 7-punctata* – one insect noted, inactive, in sun on bramble at Woodhead Castle. Two observed hibernating in garden at Oakham.

#### GASTROPODA

The following records for land snails were received:

*Ena obscura* – one was noted hibernating under a piece of bark, and in contact with the soil, at Bloody Oaks Quarry. These snails are found especially on calcareous soils.

*Discus rotundatus* – several noted together under a large log, and again in contact with the soil, at Woodhead Castle.

**Pellucid Glass Snail** *Vitrina pellucida* – one noted under bark, and again in contact with the soil, at Bloody Oaks Quarry. In this species the shell is translucent to transparent, hence it's name.

*Oxychilus alliarius* – one shell was noted in beech litter at Ketton Quarry.

*Cochlodina laminata* – several specimens of this spiral-shelled species, again noted under a log and in contact with the soil, were observed at Woodhead Castle.

**Monacha cantiana** – one empty shell noted at Woodhead Castle.

**Hairy Snail** *Trichia hispida* – one specimen of this species, under bark and in contact with the soil, noted at Bloody Oaks Quarry.

**White-lipped Snail** *Cepaea hortensis* – an empty shell noted at Woodhead Castle.

Strictly speaking this last record should be in next month's *Fieldfare* as it was recorded on March 4th. However, it was really interesting to receive a record for **Honey Bees** *Apis mellifera* which noted many active at a nest in a mature hedgerow oak at Ryhall Heath. An indication of the warm start to this year.

*Many thanks to the following for records received:  
A Lawrence, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, D Needham & L Worrall*

## MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

21 Waverley Gardens, Stamford PE9 1BH. Telephone: 01780 762108

### January and February 2014

**Otters** have been around as usual at this time of year, leaving spraint on mink rafts at RWNR, under bridges at Fort Henry, and at Greetham valley golf course. Part of a large Bream was found near the 'fort' at Fort Henry, and 40 yards away on the opposite bank of the upper lake the remains of the fish was left, a good meal for the otter!

In early January a **Stoat** was seen in the garden of the Stone House, Wing, and at Leighfield fishponds another stoat ran across the road at the end of February. A single **Weasel** was seen near the entrance to Dawn's Paddock, the only report for that species this month. **Badgers** have been found as road casualties on the A606, in several places, and at Stoke Dry on A6003. Evidence of their presence may not have been welcome in Dr Gallimore's garden, where diggings and latrines were found, but evidence of much activity at setts near Pickworth, digging and paw prints in the mud shows they are active and the young will be getting outside the setts shortly.

**Foxes** have been seen at RWNR, in woods and reedbeds near Heron bay, at Red Hill, near Barrowden, and scent marking found in two areas at Clipsham park wood.

At Barrowden Linda Worrall has had frequent visits from **Hedgehogs**. In January on three occasions they came looking for nuts, and regularly throughout February droppings found indicated more than one animal had called by! A **Long tailed Field Mouse** also visited Linda, foraging among the pots under the car port, and helping itself to nuts put out for the hedgehogs. In Oakham Jenny Harris's garden was also visited, by a hedgehog which had been eating bird seed. We do not normally have so much activity in January and February, but the weather, though wet has been remarkably mild, so these animals will have been able to forage for worms, and many should have survived the winter well. Evidence of **Mole** activity, in the shape of many molehills was found at Clipsham Park, along the Yew Tree Avenue, and at Essendine, on Verge 5 Pickworth Road.

Following my remarks about the shortage of **Hare** sightings, Phil Langston and friends have been noting all hares seen at Greetham valley golf course. During February on one occasion none were seen, on most days one was seen, and once two were reported. Happily more are evident

at Martinsthorpe, where around 30 were found on arable fields, and on the Park farm plateau at Ridlington they are numerous, and have been nibbling at green marker canes put out to mark a grid for an archaeological survey! In the Pickworth area one was seen near Lodge farm, and two in the area behind the church. Two leverets were also seen in late February. **Rabbits** were reported from Woolfox lodge, A1 slip road, Ketton Quarry and RWNR at Gunthorpe and near Heron bay.

A **Roe Deer** was seen sitting in a ride of Tunnely Wood in February. At Greetham golf course 3 **Fallow Deer** were seen in early February, and later a group of 6 does and a buck were observed. In January a group of 10 were seen standing in the middle of a field between the A1 and the road from Tickencote to Crossroads farm, huddled together, looking confused and threatened by the traffic on both sides. At Fort Henry in late January a group of around 35 crossed the North Brook below the bridge, and continued west across arable fields. **Muntjac** are present in much of RWNR, footprints being found in mud alongside the shoreline. One was seen in the reedbed near Heron Bay in late January, and another at Wing Road, Manton by the roadside at night in February.

*Thank you to those of you who sent in records this month: AJ Biddle, Mark Branston, T Caldicott, Charles Gallimore, J Harris, C Jones, P Langston, R Lemmon, PJ Rudkin, T Mitcham, L Worrall*



**PLANT GALLS REPORT** compiled by Roy Lemmon  
87 Empingham Road, Stamford PE9 2SU. Telephone: 01780 762051  
January and February 2014

Unusually, at what for plant galls is normally a dead time of year there was just one record for this period. A visit to Woodhead Castle produced a **rust** on Bramble, not very spectacular, but technically a gall. Mostly these rust spores have dispersed by this time but these were lingering on.

As the season appears to be early, certainly earlier than last year, it will be worth keeping an eye open for any galls, let me have your records, they all count.

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**Five compilers have no reports for this *Fieldfare*:**

**BAT REPORT** compiler Jenny Harris

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**BOTANY NOTES** compiler John Rodgers

8 Summerfield, Oakham, LE15 6PZ. Telephone: 01572 757278

Although card records can be sent, John Rodgers our new recorder would prefer, where possible, records by email to:  
barrut405@hotmail.com

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**MOTH NOTES** compiler Jean Harvey

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**MYCOLOGY NOTES** Compiler Linda Worrall

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**ORTHOPTERA REPORT** compiler Phil Rudkin

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