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## NOTICEBOARD

### New Chairman! New Venue!

It is a privilege to be writing this as your new Chairman, and I thank everyone for your letters and good wishes, especially Ann who as retiring Chair wrote such a kind and inspiring message in the March edition of *Fieldfare*.

It is an honour, but a somewhat daunting one, to be following in the very estimable and successful footsteps of Ann, and also Phil and Clive, to name but the most recent. I also remember all the other chairmen from Dusty Miller onwards, so I know how hard the task will be – and not one I ever thought would be for me!

I have been an enthusiastic naturalist since my teenage years, brought up in a family where pointing out butterflies, flowers and birds was just a normal part of going for a walk. I became interested in badgers with Anthony before we married, spending many evenings hardly daring to move, being bitten by midges and getting very chilly! As you may have worked out, I have been a keen member of RNHS since 1970 when Rutland Water was being developed (secretary 1984–88), and became the mammal recorder in 1976. Jenny Harris and I became very involved with bats following a bat workers' course in 1989. I ran children's activities on mammals at Eggleton for some years and worked with Watch groups. Over the last two years I have been helping with the project to reintroduce Water Voles at Rutland Water, monitoring the presence of voles around the reserve on a regular basis. Since I retired in 2010 I also volunteer in the Science Discovery centre at Isaac Newton's home in Woolsthorpe by Colsterworth.

I thought that my agenda as new chairman would initially include setting up some sort of digital recording system, dealing with all the records now sitting in peoples' attics, and increasing the membership, and these still remain important aims, but immediately a much more acute problem landed on my doorstep. I thank you for completing the questionnaires about the meeting venue and membership; unfortunately, these are now less relevant. The Manager and Head Teacher of Burley Road School, where we have been meeting for over 40 years, have decided that we no longer count as members of the local community, or at least not as much as other groups which meet weekly. Accordingly they have said that we cannot use the hall in the autumn term. So our first challenge (there are no problems, only challenges!) is finding a new venue for the autumn meetings.

# Fieldfare

**Chairman** Mrs L Biddle  
21 Waverley Gardens  
Stamford PE9 1BH  
01780 762108

**Secretary** Roy Edwards  
4 Windsor Drive,  
Oakham, LE15 6SN  
01572 757205

**Membership Secretary &  
Record cards** Mr G R Worrall  
6 Redland Close  
Barrowden LE15 8ES  
01572 747302

**Fieldfare Editor** Mrs H Ellis  
Old Hunt's Maltings  
Water Street  
Stamford PE9 2NJ  
01780 482048

**Programme Secretary**  
Mrs D Whitefield  
Dairy Cottage, 33 Somerby Rd  
Knossington LE15 8LY  
01664 454578

**Lonsdale Printing**  
01933 228855



*Our new Chairman, Linda Biddle, is on the left. This was an RNHS outing to Chalke Abbey in Derbyshire; the oak is over 1000 years old.*

Your committee is now busy trying to find the most suitable alternative hall, so much investigation is taking place. We will certainly have something arranged before the October meeting, so please make sure you take good note of July and September *Fieldfare* to keep up with developments. We will also put progress onto the website, and perhaps also in the local press.

There is no reason why this change should affect the society adversely, and perhaps it will be an advantage in the long term. I am just sorry that it came so suddenly, and after the last indoor meeting.

Meanwhile we continue working on future programmes and activities for the society, and look forward to meeting you at the summer outdoor meetings. We hope for a better summer than last year. Please do let the Recorders have your observations, so that we can have as complete a picture of local wildlife as possible.

This is your society! It has been a very friendly and successful group for many years, and hopefully for many years to come. Please keep coming to meetings, and give us feedback on how we are doing. I look forward to my adventure as Chair and hope to serve my term with your continuing support.

**Linda Biddle**  
*Chairman*

## **HIGH TIDES IN NORTH NORFOLK**

High tides for Kings Lynn. Times in BST.

<b>June</b>				<b>July</b>			
Sunday	2	02.06	13.59	Sunday	7	06.45	19.10
	9	07.40	20.03		14	10.43	23.16
	16	11.53	–		21	05.39	18.15
	23	06.47	19.16		28	10.55	23.36
	30	00.20	12.15				

Last year in July's *Fieldfare* Gill Chiverton drew our attention to a new solitary bee *Osmia bicolor*, which had been found at Ketton Quarry in April/May. She explained 'the female lays her eggs in an empty snail shell which she then covers up with short grass stalks'. The following article about this and other bees is by Helen Ikin and Steve Woodward of Loughborough Naturalists' Club who 'have been looking closely at bees in Rutland (and Leics). One of our best finds is described in the attached article.'

Also, try googling *Osmia Bicolor* and you will (may!) find a short and amusing film clip of a Snail Thatcher in action.

## 'SNAIL THATCHER' BEE *OSMIA BICOLOR* IN RUTLAND

We have been studying solitary bees in Leicestershire and Rutland since 2010. They are so-called because each female individually makes a nest for her offspring. Many nests are often found together – in a 'bee village' – but the bees work independently, in contrast to the more familiar Honey Bees.

Bumblebees are often recorded by naturalists but we are aware of few validated and published records of solitary bees since Michael Archer (currently President of the Bees, Wasps and Ants Recording Society) published his paper on Leicestershire and Rutland aculeates (Archer, 1990). The reason, no doubt, is that they are such hard work to identify. Archer lists 90 species, yet there is not a single book in print that covers their identification. Unpublished identification keys exist, but they demand painstaking examination of a specimen under the microscope. As we were inexperienced with this difficult group, we sought expert verification of our specimens. Fortunately, Michael Archer kindly agreed to check them for us.

A few solitary bees, however, are distinctive and can be reliably named in the field. Many readers will be familiar with the Tawny Mining Bee *Andrena fulva*, whose bright orange females can be seen in early spring at their burrows on footpaths and in lawns. The black and white *Andrena cineraria* is another common one. The females collect nectar and pollen to store in a chamber within their nests, before laying an egg and sealing up the chamber. This is typical behaviour for solitary bees, though some nest in holes in wood or masonry, rather than in the ground.

Another easily-recognised bee, though less familiar locally, is *Osmia bicolor*. The 10 mm long female has a black furry thorax and beautiful copper-coloured hairs on the abdomen and legs. This bee is not listed by Archer. There are very few records for the Midlands, according to the BWARS web site ([www.bwars.com](http://www.bwars.com)) and we believe that our Rutland record may be the first

for the vice-county. SFW caught a male at Ketton Quarry NR, in the short grassland between the car park and the old quarry workings (SK 978053) on 28 Apr 2010, identified by HI and confirmed by MEA.

It is the extraordinary behaviour of the female, however, that has drawn our attention in subsequent years, between April and June, at Ketton Quarry NR (2010, 11 & 12) and Bloody Oaks Quarry NR (2012). She makes her nests in old snail shells, evidently favouring *Cornu aspersum* and *Helix* spp. at these sites. She makes four or five cells in each shell, sealing each with masticated leaves (Else, 2012). When the last cell is sealed, she proceeds to cover the shell with bits of dry grass. Each bit is flown in from some distance, and carefully inserted into the 'thatch'. One piece measured 90 mm (nearly ten times as long as the bee!) so it was the actually the sight of pieces of hay flying through the air that alerted us to the presence of nesting females. She makes dozens of journeys, often returning to the same place to pick up the next piece, before the snail is completely covered. Presumably, she goes to all this trouble to hide the shell from parasites. At Bloody Oaks Quarry NR, we noticed that these bees are particularly attracted to the flowers of Ground-ivy *Glechoma hederacea*.

On account of this fascinating behaviour, we have adopted the unofficial name 'Snail Thatcher' for this species. We intend to return and try once more to get some good photographs.

**Steve Woodward & Helen Ikin**  
*Loughborough Naturalists' Club*

### References

- Archer, M. E. (1990) The aculeate solitary wasps and bees (Hymenoptera: Aculeata) of Leicestershire [incl Rutland]. *Trans. Leicester Lit. & Phil. Soc.* **84**: 9–25.
- Else, G. R. (2012) *Osmia bicolor* species profile. [www.bwars.com](http://www.bwars.com).

# 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).

## OUTDOOR EVENTS

### **Sunday 9 June                      SAUVEY CASTLE NEAR WITHCOTE                      10.00 am**

*Those of us who attended the last visit to this site in 2007 will remember Sauvey Castle as a hidden gem in the Leicestershire countryside. Here the infant River Chater winds through wet meadows, with a wealth of flowers, amphibians and invertebrates on show. The whole scene is dominated by the remains of an ancient castle. Dr Clive Jones will lead us through this fascinating and delightful site.*

**Directions:** meet at Explorer 233, SK 787 056. Proceed for 6 miles from Oakham along the Leicester road through Braunston and heading to Tilton. After passing a road-turning to Launde on your left-hand side, you will then see Owston Woods on your right and then Withcote Hall on your left. Half a mile beyond this, look out for the Bridleway sign on the left-hand side at the bottom of the dip. Park just before this on wide verges on either side of the road.

**Queries:** please ring Ann Tomlinson on 07889 192 694

### **Wednesday 19 June                      FARM WALK AT CHESTNUT FARM, TEIGH                      6.30 pm**

*Enjoy an evening walk at Chestnut Farm, led by George Morley, an RNHS member. Barn owls and red kites are often seen.*

**Directions:** as you enter Teigh from the Ashwell direction, take the first turn on the left (bridleway) and meet at Sycamore House (George's house) which is the first one on the left; and park in the paddock (SK 865158).

**Queries:** please call Roy Edwards on 07710 290 222.

### **Saturday 6 July                      FARM WALK AT HOME FARM, LAXTON                      10.30 am**

*A summer farm walk of about two hours at Elizabeth and David Simpson's farm, to see conservation working with agriculture. This is a farm with a rich historical background, and our summer visit should allow us to see fields full of farmland birds and wildflowers.*

*Led by Elizabeth, with Linda Biddle/Ann Tomlinson.*

**PLEASE NOTE, THERE IS THE OPTION TO HAVE A DELICIOUS LUNCH FOR £10 PP AT THE FARM AFTER THE WALK. PLEASE RING DAWN WHITEFIELD (01664 454578) AT LEAST ONE WEEK IN ADVANCE TO BOOK A PLACE.**

**Directions:** Home Farm Laxton is situated on the west side of the A43 going towards Corby. About half a mile after you pass the turning for Fineshade, take the turning on the right for Laxton Lodge Gates and Laxton Hall. Once off the main road there is an immediate left turn to take the track parallel to the A43 towards Home Farm (Landranger 141, SP 967 971).

**Queries:** please ring Ann Tomlinson 07889 192 694

### **Friday 2 August                      BAT EVENING AT THE FOX AND HOUNDS, EXTON                      8.15 pm**

*Jenny Harris, RNHS bat recorder and leader, writes: Counting the soprano pipistrelles at the Fox and Hounds, Exton, is a true wildlife spectacle. We shall meet in the pub garden, where the count will start at 8.30 pm. It would be courteous to buy a drink on the way through. In fact, the pub serves very nice food so it is well worth coming early enough to have a meal first: I shall be. Booking for a meal is essential (phone 01572 812403).*

**Directions:** the Fox and Hounds pub is by the village green in the centre of Exton village.

**Queries:** please call Jenny Harris 01572 755 274, 07754 141 785.

### **Sunday 8 September                      PLANT GALLS AT KETTON QUARRY                      10.00 am**

*Seen these weird things in your garden and wondered what they are? Come for a wander around Ketton Quarry Nature reserve to find the varieties of plant galls decorating trees, shrubs and other plants and*



## WEATHER SUMMARY Roy Lemmon

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

### March 2013

**Atmospheric pressure and wind** Apart from the first four days this was a markedly low-pressure month. The highest reading, 1031 mb, was on the 1st, and by the 5th it had dropped to 1006 mb, and then pressures were generally between 991 and 1018 mb for the rest of the month. Winds were predominantly NE–E except for a period, the 15th to 17th inclusive, when they were S–SW; and it was on the 17th and 18th that the lowest pressure of the month, 991 mb, was achieved.

**Temperature** This was a very cold month, both the mean minimum,  $-0.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , and the mean maximum,  $5.87^{\circ}\text{C}$ , were well below those of preceding years at this station. Nationally it was the coldest March since 1962 but in the Midlands, East Anglia and South East England it was the coldest since either 1892 or 1883. The Central England temperature was  $2.9^{\circ}\text{C}$  and makes this the coldest month of the winter for the first time since 1937. These low temperatures were due to a persistent high-pressure area over Scandinavia which gave rise to the NE–E winds referred to above.

**Rain** A very wet month, the total recorded 68.0 mm (2.67 inches) is 188% of my LTM. From my records March rainfall can vary considerably, from 4.0 mm in 2011 to 80.4 mm in 2008 and although there is also considerable variation before this, e.g. 8.6 mm in 1997, and 59.0 mm in 1994, it is perhaps significant that there has been such variation in the last six years.

**Sunshine** Averaged nationally this was 87 hours whereas the LTM for RAF Wittering is 112 hours. This was the gloomiest March for 8 years and in the last 100 years only 15 other Marches were duller.

### April 2013

**Atmospheric pressure and wind** Atmospheric pressures were, in general, without a lot of variation this month, the lowest, 994 mb, was recorded on the 12th and the highest, 1034 mb, on the 20th. This latter was however a 'blip' as it was 1024 mb on the 19th and 1023 mb on the 21st. Winds were NE–E until the 13th and this was the coldest part of the month. From then until the 25th they were SW–W and the latter part of the month saw them NW–NE again.

**Temperature** The mean night-time minimum for the month was  $2.45^{\circ}\text{C}$ , easily the coldest April I have recorded in the last decade, the next lowest being  $3.3^{\circ}\text{C}$  in 2009. The lowest minimum I recorded was  $-4^{\circ}\text{C}$  on the first, and these night-time air frosts continued until the 8th, after which there were none until the 19th and 20th and then again on the 30th ( $-2.0^{\circ}\text{C}$ ). Averaged nationally, only 17 Aprils have been colder in the last 100 years. The mean daytime maximum for the month was  $13.86^{\circ}\text{C}$ , the ninth lowest in the past decade, warmer than April 2012 ( $12.88^{\circ}\text{C}$ ) but much below the highest in the decade which was  $19.3^{\circ}\text{C}$  in 2011.

**Rainfall** The total I recorded was 15.0 mm (0.59 inches) or 33% of my LTM. This was about 10% of the rainfall in April 2012 (150.2 mm) but higher than 2011 which was 2.3 mm. Rain fell on just 11 days but on 4 of these it could only be recorded as 'trace' as it was too little to measure accurately. The picture nationally was similar but the total was 1.45 inches, just 57% of the LTM. Just 19 Aprils were drier in the last 100 years.

**Sunshine** This was above average except in the South West of England and in South Wales, and averaged over the two countries was 181 hours or 109% of the LTM.

*The national figures are from Philip Eden's Weather Watch column in the Sunday Telegraph.*

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

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

### March/April 2013

The prolonged winter weather has resulted in there being few records from March (and not a huge number from April either). The legacy of last year's drought, hard though it is to remember, has

been that some ponds appear to have lost their newts as a consequence of drying out. (This may be due to the imprecision of the survey methods used, of course.)

Frog spawn was first observed on 8th March



in an Oakham garden, where more appeared on 16th March. In Barrowden, although frogs were present from 1st March the first clump of spawn did not appear until 16th March and the main spawning did not occur until 7–9th March. Elsewhere spawning occurred in a North Luffenham allotment pond on 9th April and in Wing on 11th April. Old spawn was found at two sites round Rutland Water and in a field pond in Wing at the end of April.

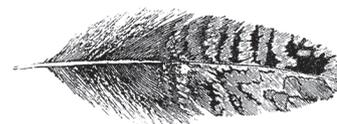
Common Toads were noted to be clasping in four ponds in Exton Park on 15th April and large numbers were clasping in a large pond in Ashwell on 17th April. They were also heard on this date in Manton. Between 11th and 18th April a number of dead toads were found on

the roads in Wing, as well as live toads, and a couple were seen in Bisbrooke. The only record of Smooth Newts, apart from round Rutland Water, was from my garden pond in Wing. Out of 18 ponds and ditches examined at Rutland Water 7 contained Smooth Newts. However 5 ponds where newts had previously been found were apparently devoid of newts. Great Crested Newts were found in 5 Rutland Water ponds, as well as 12 in an Empingham garden pond and they were also present in my garden pond in Wing, although visiting Mallard have made observation nigh impossible. One was still in my cellar on 1st April. The only reptile records concerned a lizard and a female Adder at Ketton Quarry on 13th April.

*My thanks to the following who sent records: T Appleton, A Lawrence, T Mitcham, D Needham, M Tyler and L & G Worrall.*

## BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

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



### March/April 2013

*Two very busy months saw the usual overlap between our winter birds and summer migrants, with the former present well into April. Finches and buntings visited gardens for seed and winter thrushes lingered in higher numbers than usual. Summer visitors trickled in and still seem to be sparsely distributed – local woodlands are certainly not ringing with the songs of many warblers. Despite this, a good variety of migrants appeared – wildfowl, waders and passerines – as the notes show. The rarest was the Ring-billed Gull which roosted at Rutland Water throughout the latter half of April, but the overnight roosting of 800 Black-tailed Godwits there was surely the most impressive event of this period.*

*My thanks to the following for their records: T Appleton, P Bennett, A Biddle, M A Branston, R Brown, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, F Foster, Dr C H Gallimore, M & G Griffin, Dr C Jones, T Land, P Langston, A Lawrence, LROS, R Lemmon, I Misselbrook, T Mitcham, D Needham, D Perril, J S & J Rodgers, P Rudkin, P Scott, T Sherwood, A Slipper, J Stapleton, A R & M A Thorp, C Williams, T Williams, G R & L Worrall.*

**Whooper Swan.** On 12.03 a large movement brought 66 to RW(SA) with over 50 at other sites on the reservoir. 15 remained next day and singles were noted on three dates to 02.04.

**Brent Goose.** One was at RW(Dam) on 19.03.

**Egyptian Goose.** Away from RW up to four were at WFL, Pilt, Martinthorpe and Ext Park. Nesting in Tix churchyard was reported on 30.04.

**Shelduck.** Two were at LFP on 31.03 with two pairs at EBR in April and singles at FHP on 05.04 and 30.04.

**Mandarin Duck.** Pairs were at RW(Norm) on 19 and 21.03 and on the R.Chater near Pilt on 12.04.

**Wigeon.** 110 were at FHP on 31.03 and six at RW(Eg) on 26.04.

**Gadwall.** The highest March count at FHP was 165 on 21.03.

**Pintail.** Four were at RW(Egl) on 30.03 with seven there on 09.04.

**Garganey.** A pair was at EBR on 28.04.

**Red-crested Pochard.** A male was at RW(NA) on 05.03.

**Pochard.** 24 were at FHP on 02.03.

**Scaup.** Noted at RW between 06.03 and 05.04 with six on 13.03.

**Long-tailed Duck.** The long-staying RW bird was seen to at least 16.04.

- Common Scoter.** 14 were at RW(Main Water) on 25.04.
- Smew.** 12 were at RW(Egl) on 12.03 reducing to one on 12.04. Singles were at EBR on 15.03 and 01.04.
- Red-breasted Merganser.** The RW female remained to at least 23.04.
- Goosander.** Up to six were on Rygate lake in Ext Park between 01 and 15.03.
- Grey Partridge.** Three were near Man on 01.04 with a pair north of GtCast on 24.04.
- Pheasant.** A female was in a Bden garden on 15.04. A nest containing 16 eggs, two of which were bluish in colour, was found at Hamb on 26.04.
- Black-throated Diver.** One was at RW(SA) on 17.03.
- Great Northern Diver.** The RW bird was seen to 29.04.
- Little Egret.** Two flew over Oak Canal on 12.03 and four were on arable land at FHP on 31.03.
- Bittern.** Three were at RW(Egl) on 06.03 with one or two reported irregularly to 23.04. One by the small lake in Ext Park on 31.03 was a real surprise and a first record for the site.
- Slavonian Grebe.** One was at RW(NA) to 02.04.
- Great Crested Grebe.** A pair appeared at FHP on 05.04 with two pairs on 21.04. Breeding last occurred here in 1989.
- Black-necked Grebe.** One was in RW(NA) to 02.04 with two seen on 31.03.
- Red Kite.** The highest count was of seven near Pickworth on 05.03.
- Marsh Harrier.** A male was at RW(SA) on 27.03.
- Sparrowhawk.** One visited an Oak garden on 28.03 and 04.04.
- Buzzard.** Displaying pairs or singles birds were noted over many woodlands – no high counts were received.
- Osprey.** The first RW bird (03-97) returned on 17.03 and by 30.03 both RW pairs and four others were back with a pair at a third site in April. One was at HM on 17.04.
- Kestrel.** Regular at FHP/Ext Park with records also from Greet Valley GC, Bden, Kett Quarry Reserve and Kett Priory, where a dead bird on 08.04 had probably flown into overhead wires.
- Merlin.** One was at RW(Egl) on 06.03.
- Hobby.** One at RW(NA) on 14.04 was the first with one or two there to the end of the month. Singles were at Cottes, Man and Pilt from 25.04.
- Peregrine.** March records were from RW, Wg and Hamb. One was over BW on 10.04.
- Water Rail.** Singles were at RW(SA) on 26.04 and LFP on 28.04.
- Moorhen.** A nest with two eggs, seen on 24.04, was left suspended 18 inches above an ox-bow pool on the R.Chater
- Crane.** Four flew north over RW(Egl) on 21.03 with two south there on 29.03.
- Oystercatcher.** 18 were at RW on 10.03 with 16 in mid-April.
- Avocet.** One on 11.03 was the first returning bird with nos increasing to 11 by 24.04.
- Little Ringed Plover.** One was in RW(NA) on 29/30/03 and three were present in mid-April.
- Ringed Plover.** Regular at RW from 09.03 with a max of 17 on 29.04. One was at EBR on 25.04.
- Golden Plover.** 60 were on Pick Plain on 05.03 and 14 flew south over FHP on 09.03. Two were at RW in mid-April.
- Grey Plover.** Singles were at RW on 30.03, 07.04 and 17 to 20.04.
- Lapwing.** March counts included 145 on Pick Plain (05.03), 1327 at RW (10.03), 110 at EBR (10.03) and 142 in Ext Park (15.03). Three pairs were on Territory in Ext Park by 24.04.
- Knot.** One was at RW(Egl) on 26 to 30.04.
- Dunlin.** Present at RW from 09.03 with max counts of 41 on 10.03 and 51 on 25.04. Ten were at EBR on the latter date.
- Ruff.** Two were at RW(Egl) from 22 to 28.04.
- Jack Snipe.** Two were at RW(Eg) on 30.03 with one to 01.04.
- Snipe.** Up to three were noted at BGP (Banthorpe Gravel Pit), EBR, FHP and LFP to 14.04. Two were photographed in a snowy Ext garden on 24.03. RW had six on 10.03 and in mid-April.
- Woodcock.** Singles were at PGW, TunnW, BarnsW, BCF and BW to 10.04.
- Bar-tailed Godwit.** Two were at RW(Egl) on 14.04 with one on 22 and 24.04.
- Black-tailed Godwit.** At RW one was present on 11/12.03 but 800 Icelandic birds roosted on lagoon four on 25/26.04 – far exceeding the previous record there of 150 on 27.04.95. Three were present on 28.04.
- Whimbrel.** Two were at RW on 20.04 and 29.04.
- Curlew.** 13 were at RW on 10.03 with the evening roost there increasing to 44 on 29.03. Singles were over Pilt on 04.04 and Leigh on 25.04. A pair were at Cottes Airfield on 15.04.
- Common Sandpiper.** Noted at RW from 14.04 with a max of six on 16.04. One was at LFP on 25 and 28.04.
- Green Sandpiper.** Four were at RW on 10.03 with singles on two other March dates and 15.04.

**Spotted Redshank.** One was at RW(Egl) on 19.04.

**Greenshank.** Singles were at RW(Egl) on 14, 20 and 22.04.

**Redshank.** At RW there were five on 10.03 and eight in April. One was at BGP on 28.03 and three at EBR on 14.04.

**Turnstone.** One was at RW on 09.03.

**Kittiwake.** One or two were at RW between 01.03 and 17.03 with six at the Dam on 06.04.

**Little Gull.** Singles were at RW(Egl) on 13.04 and 28 to 30.04.

**Mediterranean Gull.** Single adults were at EBR on 15.03 and RW on 19.03. Three were at RW(Eg) on 16.04.

**Ring-billed Gull.** A first-summer bird roosted at RW(Eg) from 28 to 30.04.

**Caspian Gull.** One was at RW(Egl) on 01.03.

**Iceland Gull.** An adult was at EBR on 07.04.

**Black Tern.** One was at RW(Egl) on 25.04.

**Sandwich Tern.** One was at RW(Egl) on 14.04.

**Common Tern.** The first bird was seen on 10.04 with c.15 present by 23.04. Two were at EBR on 25.04.

**Arctic Tern.** Ten were at RW on 16.04 with 30 on 22.04 and one or two to 29.04. One was at EBR on 28 to 29.04.

**Stock Dove.** 28 fed on arable land on Pick Plain on 05.03.

**Collared Dove.** Seven were in an Oak garden on 01.03.

**Cuckoo.** An early bird was reported from north Stamford on 06.04. The first Rutland bird was at BW on 19.04 with the next at WardW the next day and others at PGW, DP and RW(Eg) by the end of the month.

**Barn Owl.** Well reported with birds at an encouraging eight sites, including four likely breeding sites. A dead bird was found beneath a nest box at one site on 21.03 – no doubt a casualty of severe weather.

**Little Owl.** A pair was at Tick Park throughout March with singles at EBR on 23.04 and FHP on 30.04.

**Tawny Owl.** Calling birds were at Bden, Ext Park, Leigh, Pilt and TunnW.

**Short-eared Owl.** At NLuff Airfield there were four on 17.03, two the following day and three on 20.03.

**Swift.** The first bird was over RW on 20.04 with one at Pilt on 24.04 and up to eight at RW sites to 29.04.

**Green Woodpecker.** This noisy species always attracts attention and there were reports from 11 sites – with the most vocal birds in BW,

where birds were calling in 3 areas of the wood.

**Great Spotted Woodpecker.** Birds visited feeders at Upp, Norm, Tick Park and Oak. Drumming birds were noted at PGW(3), Westland Wood (2), TunnW (1), CPW (1) and BW (2), where display and a potential nest-site were noted.

**Jay.** Regularly noted at Hamb, Ext Park and FHP.

**Jackdaw.** c.600 flew from a roost at RW on 30.03.

**Carion Crow.** A Bden bird regularly put overflying Red Kites to flight from its nest during late April.

**Raven.** Display was noted at two likely breeding sites with confirmed breeding at a third. April singles were noted over RW and Pilt.

**Goldcrest.** There were garden records from Oak and Upp (where fat balls were the attraction). Six were singing in comp. 6 in BW on 19.04.

**Great Tit.** c.8 pairs were noted in CPW on 24.04.

**Willow Tit.** Song was reported from PGW on 02.03. Two were at Leigh on 07 and 13.04.

**Marsh Tit.** One or two were regular at TunnW feeders to 05.04. Other records were from PGW, BarnsW, WFL, RW and CPW.

**Sand Martin.** One at RW on 18.03 was the first, the next not arriving until 02.04 – a very slow start ! Eight were at EBR on 07.04 and at RW nos. increased to c.130 by 12.04.

**Swallow.** First seen at RW(NA) on 05.04 with one at EBR and six at RW on 07.04. Breeding sites at Bden and Wg were reoccupied on 13 and 14.04 respectively.

**House Martin.** The old report was of one at RW on 03.04.

**Long-tailed Tit.** There were garden records from Oak on 13 and Bden on 14.04.

**Wood Warbler.** One sang along Hamb Road at RW on 23/24.04.

**Chiffchaff.** One was at RW(Eg) on 13.03. The first song was at FHP on 15.03 and Norm on 17.03 with little subsequent activity due to cold weather – only two other March records. One or two were singing in Ext Park woods, BW, CPW and FHP from early April, with nos remaining low to the end of the month.

**Willow Warbler.** First reported from RW(Egl) on 07.04 with the next at FHP on 15.04. From 19.04, birds were at regular breeding sites, with nine singing in BW on 19.04 and c.12 at CPW on 24.04.

**Blackcap.** One or two were in Oak and Man gardens from 11.03 to 28.04, late for so-called 'winter visitors'. Apple attracted a male at Man, with ivy berries and sunflower hearts proving popular in April, when a female also appeared. Song was first heard at RW(Ggorse) on 12.04,

again quite late from records in recent years. Small nos were widespread by the end of the month.

**Garden Warbler.** From 23.04 one or two were at RW(Egl) with one at EBR on 25.04.

**Lesser Whitethroat.** The first records were from EBR on 23.04 and Pick Road, GtCast the next day. Five sang at RW(Eg) on 29.04.

**Whitethroat.** One singing at RW(Egl) on 15.04 was the first record with the next at EBR on 20.04. Fairly widespread by the end of the month.

**Grasshopper Warbler.** Three were singing in CPW on 24.04 with one at RW(Eg) next day.

**Sedge Warbler.** Seven were singing at RW on 16.04 with one or two at FHP and Leigh by the end of the month.

**Reed Warbler.** Two were singing at RW(Egl) on 20.04.

**Nuthatch.** Feeders at Tick and TunnW were visited throughout March. Records came from FHP, Wg, Ext Park, and BW, where eight were noted on 19.04.

**Treecreeper.** A very well reported species with birds noted at eight sites. Three were at Hamb on 14.03 and three sang at CPW on 24.04.

**Starling.** c.100 fed on pasture at LFP on 17.03.

**Ring Ouzel.** A male was in Ext Park on 17.04.

**Fieldfare.** The largest March flocks were 40 on Pick Plain (05.03), c.80 over TunnW and 120 in Ext Park (15.03), 92 at RW (Dam, 30.03) and 35 near Lyndon (31.03). 60 were near Ryhall on 08.04 with large flocks of 200 near Pilt on 10.04 and 250 at Leigh on 13.04. The last were c.40 near LFP on 28.04.

**Redwing.** Five were at BGP on 13.03 and c.12 on Egl Meadows on 30.03. 67 were at Hamb on 12.04.

**Nightingale.** Two were at Greet Wood Far on 21.04, with two in song there on 30.04. A female was calling in HambW on 29.04, the only record from RW.

**Black Redstart.** A female-type was in Ext Park on 31.03.

**Redstart.** Single males were at RW(Egl) on 15.04 and TunnW on 17.04.

**Whinchat.** A male was at RW(Egl) on 28.04 with four there on 30.04.

**Stonechat.** Singles were at NLuff Airfield on 18.03 and RW(Egl) on 21.03.

**Wheatear.** A male was at RW(Dam) on 19/20.03 with the next in Ext Park on 31.03. A max of nine were at RW to 29.03. Two were in Ext Park on 17.04 and one near Lynd on 24.04.

**House Sparrow.** c.12 were regular at an Oak garden in March.

**Tree Sparrow.** Small nos were along the roadside near Upp on 17.03.

**Yellow Wagtail.** First noted at EBR on 07.04. Nos built up at RW from 12.04, with 70+ there on 16.04 and 34 at the Dam next day.

**'Channel Wagtail'.** This is the intergrade between our Yellow Wagtail and the continental Blue-headed Wagtail. Singles were at RW on 10 and 18.04.

**Blue-headed Wagtail.** One was at RW(Dam) on 16/17.04 and 23.04.

**White Wagtail.** There was a strong passage of this, the continental race of the Pied Wagtail, at RW between 14.04 and 30.04, with a max on lagoon four of 54 on 18.04.

**Tree Pipit.** One flew north at Ketton on 13.04.

**Meadow Pipit.** c.35 flew over RW(Egl) on 11.04 and c.80 flew over Leigh on 13.04.

**Chaffinch.** The Leigh roost held c.240 on 02.03 and c.135 on 31.03. A max of 18 was noted in an Oak garden on 24.03.

**Brambling.** Up to six fed on Eg Meadows to 07.04. The Leigh roost was active to 20.04 with a max of 40+ on 17.03. Between 04.03 and 16.04 one or two fed in gardens at Man, Oak and Whiss – again very late compared to previous years.

**Greenfinch.** Small nos of singing birds were noted at BCF, CPW and Stam Garden Centre from mid-April.

**Goldfinch.** Six in an Oak garden in March was the peak count.

**Siskin.** c.30 were at CPW on 05.03 and 12 were by Ext Park lake on 22.03. Gardens at Man, Stam, Upp and Oak attracted birds to 30.04 with a max of nine of 23.03 at Oak.

**Linnet.** c.40 were in the Egl Reserve carpark on 10.03.

**Lesser Redpoll.** One or two were in an Oak garden on 28/29.03 and 19 to 27.04, with up to four in a Man garden between 14-26.04. Up to ten were at TunnW, Hamb and RW(Egl) between 28.03 and 22.01, with c.35 in LyndW on 30.04.

**Common Redpoll.** Singles were at RW (Whit) on 07.03 and RW(Norm) on 09.04.

**Crossbill.** Noted in the Pilt area between 14.03 and 27.04 with c.20 on the latter date. One flew over Leigh on 20.04.

**Hawfinch.** Two remained at RW(Egl) to 29.03 with one seen irregularly to 02.04.

**Snow Bunting.** One was at RW(Egl) briefly on 20.03.

**Yellowhammer.** c.20 were at Leigh on 02.03 with c.40 near Mounts Lodge the following day.

**Reed Bunting.** Regular in a Stam garden throughout both months with a max of five in mid-March. Up to six visited an Upp garden

and two were in a Man garden on 23.03. The BTO have noted this late staying across the country this winter and attribute it to a shortage of food in the countryside.

## March/April 2013 Wildfowl Counts

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir 10.03	Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park		Holywell Lake 10.03	Banthorpe Gravel Pit	
	10.03			09.03	15.04		13.03	15.04
Mute Swan	79	95	45	6	6	3		1
Greylag Goose	60	173	11	84	17	2	24	10
Canada Goose	178	64	4	4	2	28		1
Barnacle Goose	2	1						
Egyptian Goose	22	47						
Shelduck	27	50	7					
Mandarin Duck		3						
Wigeon	2285	53	662	65	2	2		
Gadwall	203	73	22	131	37	14		
Teal	363	79	84	5	4	7	28	6
Mallard	382	317	10	54	33	89	14	
Pintail	2	2						
Shoveler	20	12						
Pochard	31			1		4	23	
Tufted Duck	879	606	118	79	69	24	6	5
Scaup	7	1						
Long-tailed Duck	1	1						
Goldeneye	395	73	52					
Smew	10		3					
Red-breasted Merganser	1	1						
Goosander	5			6				
Great Northern Diver	1	1						
Little Grebe	22	4		2				
Great Crested Grebe	109	94	12		2			
Slavonian Grebe	1							
Black-necked Grebe	1							
Cormorant	120	145	25	3	1			
Bittern	2							
Little Egret	9	5						
Grey Heron	5	10	3	1			1	1
Water Rail	10	12						
Moorhen	74	36		21	6	8	3	2
Coot	698	257	25	68	47	38	2	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>5895</b>	<b>2213</b>	<b>1083</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>226</b>	<b>222</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>31</b>

## **BOTANY NOTES** compiled by Graham Worrall

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

### **March/April 2013**

It is obviously the cold spring which kept flowers from developing and report cards to only one for March. Even Roy Lemmon could only report a few flowers out on a **Gorse** bush in Ketton Quarry on the 14th.

April equally started very slow: the first record was on the 7th of the month for a small patch of white **Sweet Violets**, one **Lesser Celandine** and **Daisies** found by Jenny Mallett on her first examination of Verge 4 in Empingham. **Colt's-foot** was next seen on the Oakham Canal by John and Jan Rodgers on the 10th.

From the 18th, things got better! Notable finds were **Few-flowered Garlic** at Ketton, **Cowslip** on Verge 4 at Empingham on the 21st and also on Verge 5 at Essendine on the 18th. Roy Lemmon and Martin Grimes found **Spurge-laurel** in flower on Verge 7 (Casterton to Pickworth road) along with **Goldilocks Buttercup**, also found on Verge 4 at Empingham on the 21st. On the 27th April Roy Edwards, on his first look this year at Verge 6, Exton, found **Moschatel** (Town Hall Clock) – the first report of this species on this verge for 11 years.

Let us hope that the remainder of the spring is more normal, if late.

*Thanks to: R Edwards, M Grimes, R Lemmon, J Mallett, J & J Rodgers*

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## **BUTTERFLY NOTES** compiled by Alistair Lawrence

11 Edmonton Way, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6JE.

Telephone: 01572 770492



### **March/April 2013**

The unseasonable long cold spell of March and early April meant there was little butterfly activity to observe and record. This all changed during the second half of April when the warm and sunny weather resulted in a surge of butterfly sightings throughout Rutland. However, it has been noticeable and of some concern, that the very late blooming of many spring flowers has resulted in there being little nectar initially available for the newly emerging butterflies.

**Brimstone** The earliest records come from Tickencote and Barrowden where a single male and single female were respectively seen on 5 March. 8 specimens (7males and 1 female) were observed at Ketton Quarry on 13 April and 10 at Uppingham on the 20th. Other April sightings come from Ashwell, Burley Wood, Clipsham Park Wood, Langham, Lyndon reserve, near Tinwell and Oakham.

**Small White** Three sightings of this butterfly were recorded during the last week of April at Barnsdale Gardens, Barrowden and Clipsham Park Wood.

**Green Veined White** There is a single record of this species at Ketton Quarry on 25 April, whilst several were seen in an Uppingham garden about the same time.

**Orange Tip** Several specimens of this butterfly were seen in gardens at Tickencote and Uppingham in late April.

**Peacock** These have been seen regularly on the wing during April, with 8 being recorded at Ketton Quarry on the 25th. Other sightings come from Ashwell, Barrowden, Burley Wood, Clipsham Park Wood, Langham, Egleton and Lyndon reserves, Tickencote, Oakham and Uppingham.

**Comma** Records have been received for this species from Barrowden, Burley Wood and Ketton Quarry, with 3 being seen at the latter on 14 April.

**Small tortoiseshell** The first record of the year for this butterfly comes from Barrowden on 5 March, when one was seen in a garden. Two were observed in Langham on 20 April, and on Verge 7 on the 25th. Other sightings come from Ketton Quarry and Oakham.

*My thanks to the following contributors: G Chiverton, J Foster, C Jones, A Lawrence, J Mallett, P & E Mann, D Needham, D Perril, P Rudkin, and L & G Worrall.*

*PS I am pleased to report the first sighting this year of a Grizzled Skipper at Ketton Quarry on 2 May!*

## **MOTH NOTES** compiled by Jean Harvey

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

### **March/April 2013**

The cold winter weather continued throughout March with only a few moths visiting the Rutland Water reed-bed trap.

On April 12th we took a chance and put out three over-night traps at Eyebrook Reservoir. With a minimum temperature of only 3.1 °C we had 24 moths of 8 species. All were common for the time of year. On April 24th we returned to the site when the minimum temperature was 11.2 °C. The result this time was 72 moths belonging to 13 species, one of which was noteworthy! It was a Dotted Chestnut, a Nationally Scarce (group

B) species and a 'first' for Rutland, looking fresh after having over-wintered as an adult. Members may remember that a year ago I reported that one had been seen in a Leicester garden in March 2012 and we now know that two further records followed in VC55 later that spring. One was also reported over the border in Northamptonshire. The species was recorded in Southern Britain originally and has expanded its range northwards since 1990. To find it at Eyebrook was rewarding and we were lucky to have chosen a mild night in view of the recent weather conditions. Let us hope that it will be seen again in our area.

*My thanks once more to Ron Follows.*

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## **ORTHOPTERA REPORT** compiled by Phil Rudkin

10 Brooke Avenue, Stamford PE9 2RU. Telephone: 01780 762998

### **March/April 2013**

As we know from Roy Lemmon's Weather report, March 2013 (in East Anglia) was the coldest March for over 100 years. April 2013 was cold but more variable, and the winds mainly continued

North-East throughout – but there were a few warm sunny days. No orthoptera reports were received during this period.

There has to be a start surely for the May/June season! Let us hope so!

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

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

### **March/April 2013**

*There were no reports for these two months but the season is now beginning and I shall be happy to receive any reports.*

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## **INSECTS AND OTHERS** compiled by Gill Chiverton

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

*See page 3 for some more information on the bee identified by us in 2012's July Fieldfare – let's hope we see more of it this year!*

### **March 2013**

#### **HYMENOPTERA**

**Early/White-tailed Bumble Bee** *Bombus Lucorum* – a single bee was seen feeding on winter honeysuckle (recorder notes 'ice and snow still on ground'). A Bumble Bee sp. was also noted earlier in the month, both at the same location in Barrowden.

#### **COLEOPTERA**

One **7-spot Ladybird** *Coccinella 7-punctata* was recorded at Yew Tree Avenue, Clipsham.

### **April 2013**

#### **HEMIPTERA**

**Pond Skater** *Gerridae sp.* – one observed in a garden pond in Oakham.

## DIPTERA

**Common Bee-fly** *Bombylius major* – two were recorded at Ketton Quarry on the 13th. Three were noted over the month at Barrowden and during the second half of the month they were noted as common in a garden at Uppingham and numerous on Verge 7.

## HYMENOPTERA

**Parasitic Hymenoptera** – **Ichneumon** *Ichneumon nigerrimus* – six females were found and recorded hibernating in various parts of an old hollow tree-stump in Burley Wood.

**Ichneumon** *Ichneumon suspiciosus* – one female found hibernating under bark in Burley Wood.

**Social wasps** – **Hornet** *Vespa Crabro* – a solitary queen was found still in hibernation under loose bark in Burley Wood. **Common Wasp** *Vespula vulgaris* – a queen was noted on japonica flowers at Barrowden.

**Tawny Mining Bee** *Andrena fulva* – one recorded at Barrowden. **Spring Flower Bee** *Anthophora plumipes* – these were noted on two occasions at Barrowden, with 12 being the largest number recorded. They were also recorded as being particularly common in the second part of the month in a garden at Uppingham. **Honey Bee** *Apis mellifera* – several were recorded in a garden at Barrowden.

Bumble Bee species and honey bees were noted as numerous at Barrowden on the 15th and most bee records received were noted around this date. Four Bumble Bees were noted at Oakham on the 13th and a further 4 were recorded on 25th and 27th.

An **Early Bumble Bee** *Bombus lucorum* was recorded on the 10th at Oakham. **Buff-tailed Bumble Bee** *Bombus terrestris* – a large queen bee was noted in the sun at a Barrowden garden. **Red-tailed Bumble Bee** *Bombus lapidarius* – noted in two locations at Oakham and Barrowden.

## COLEOPTERA

**Green Tiger Beetle** *Cicindela campestris* – one specimen of this beautiful coloured beetle was recorded at Ketton Quarry.

The following **Ground Beetles** were all recorded on an RNHS outing to Burley Wood on April 14 – one specimen of *Platynus assimilis* was found in leaf litter (a small pale brown beetle with almost translucent legs); a few specimens of *Agonum gracile* were still hibernating beneath loose bark; one specimen of *Pterostichus niger* was taken from under loose bark (the typical 'big black ground

beetle', often seen); two specimens of *Pterostichus madidus* were found in grass and moss near some discarded bricks; about five specimens of *Loricera pilicornis* were found beneath loose bark (these have hairy antennae); one specimen of *Carabus violaceus* was found beneath loose bark on a fallen tree-trunk (violet ground beetle).

The following **Ground Beetles** were all found in Lyndon Churchyard – one specimen of *Notiophilus rufipes*; one specimen of *Notiophilus biguttatus* found under some stones (a very common species); one specimen of *Bembidion quadrimaculatum* was running over bare soil (<4 mm long, this beetle is black with 2 yellow spots on each elytron).

**Burying Beetle** *Silpha atratus* – the most prolific beetle species of the RNHS Burley Wood visit, when more than 25 were seen, each one hibernating under loose bark.

The following **Rove Beetles** were recorded on the RNHS Burley Wood visit – two specimens of *Ocypus brunippes* were found under old bricks in moss (one was emitting a pungent smell as it released its chemical defences); *Othius punctulatus* – one specimen was found in damp soil under bricks (a rather stunning beetle coloured black with red elytra); *Philonthus decorus* – one specimen of this medium-sized beetle which to the naked eye appears black but under magnification actually has a lovely green/bronze head and thorax; *Gabrius splendidulus* – one specimen found in the debris of rotten wood under loose bark (a tiny species).

**Rove Beetle** *Ocalia badia* – 3 specimens were found under a stone on the gravel path in Lyndon Churchyard (less than 3 mm long, this beetle is all black except for entirely yellow legs).

**7-spot Ladybird** *Coccinella 7-punctata* – 3 were recorded in an Oakham garden. **Pine Ladybird** *Exochomus quadripustulatus* – one specimen was recorded in Burley Wood.

**Lily Beetle** *Lilioceris lili* – 4 pairs were recorded from a garden at Barrowden; 6 specimens were recorded in a garden at Oakham, and another single specimen also noted in Oakham. **Bloody-nosed Beetle** *Timarchus tenebricosa* – at least 15 specimens (including 3 mating pairs) were found on the Thistleton Lane verge at Greetham near to where the Viking Way leaves the road; they have also been recorded to be numerous again this year in Dawn's Paddock.

**Weevil** *Sitona lineatus* – one specimen was recorded at the RNHS Burley Wood visit when it landed on a member's sleeve.

## GASTROPODA

**Garlic snail** *Oxychilus alliarum* – there were many garlic snails observed under loose bark during the RNHS visit to Burley Wood.

*Many thanks to the following recorders: G Chiverton, M Grimes, J Harris, C Jones, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, D Needham, T Newton, D Perril, D Whitefield, L & G Worrall*

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## MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

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

### March/April 2013

Our first lovely report is of four **Otters** seen swimming in Leighfield Fishponds at the end of March, soon hiding beneath the water.

Another great piece of news is that **Water Voles** have been rediscovered on North Brook on the Exton estate, following a survey being carried out by Sara Botterel from Nottingham Trent University with help from Terry Mitcham, as part of the Water Vole reintroduction. It's about 4 years since we last had confirmation of Water Vole presence there, and I had been concerned that they had disappeared. These are certainly the original population, probably the only ones in Rutland, but I now say that with less conviction than before! Perhaps the time is right to do a survey of the county streams and rivers. Watch this space!

Water Voles at Rutland Water seem to have survived the long winter well, and a lucky observer was able to see one swimming outside the Egleton Centre in April.

**Badgers** are active near to many known setts, and latrines found regularly in hedgerows. A new permissive path has been opened near Pickworth and a large sett is obvious at the edge of one field. Badgers are very successful, and are causing some problems to farmers as their large setts make some areas dangerous to animals and machinery. There have been 4 badger road casualties reported, and a large one found dead on a path at Pickworth was picked clean, apart from the paws and head. It had not been there for long, so something had benefited from its demise!

In March a **Fox** was seen by North Brook at its inflow to the top lake at Fort Henry. A large fox was seen in a clearing in Holywell Wood, close to where one was seen in February. In April two were reported from Burley Wood, and just before the RNHS field meeting at Burley Wood a fox crossed the road in front of our car. Others

were seen at Whitwell and near Shoveler Hide at RWNR. **Stoat** reports include three from the Pilton area, one crossing the road by the A1 slip road at Stretton, and another on the cycle track on the south shore of Rutland Water. A large, recently dead, stoat was found on the roadside at Thistleton.

**Hares** are still regularly seen and 8 were observed on an arable field north of Westland Wood, with much chasing and boxing from two pairs. At RWNR hares are reported from the Heron Bay area, and also from Barnsdale. Others have been seen near Glaston, Tinwell and South Luffenham.

**Rabbits** are also commonly seen (though not often reported) and this month reports come from the Heron Bay area, Lyndon, and Pickworth.

In March Linda Worrall found the remains of a **Hedgehog** in her garden, but the first live one was seen eating peanuts on the patio on 20th April – much later than usual in our very cold spring. Droppings and live hedgehogs were seen in the garden until the end of the month. The first road casualty was spotted by Terry Mitcham at Tolethorpe, and two were fed, weighed and marked in his Stamford garden. A second casualty was found on Top Street Wing, and at Oakham Jenny Harris noticed droppings in her garden from the second week in April.

**Grey squirrels** are reported from RWNR in the Heron Bay area, at Lyndon, one eating catkins on a silver birch tree near the sand martin bank, and at Barnsdale a total of 8 were seen, one being chased from a tree by a mistle thrush.

Just one **Common Shrew** was found, dead on the path near Badger Hide.

At Barrowden a **Bank Vole**, almost as wide as it was long (maybe pregnant?) emerged from the bank of a former pond with a thud, but bundled itself back into the bank on seeing the observer. The depression is filled with yellow iris and figwort, and the top is covered with thick

lungwort, good for making runs.

Two **Roe Deer** were seen at Westland Wood in mid April. **Muntjac** are now very commonly seen, present in RWNR almost everywhere, 2 reports from Heron bay, 2 from Barnsdale, one from Wader scrape hide near Manton, 2 from the reed beds and Green bank. In Burley Wood a total of 19 were seen during April, and one at Little Haw Wood in March. Another in full view on the verge of Barrowden road, South Luffenham, retreated into the hedge as approached. Numbers of **Fallow**

**Deer** seem to have recovered at Clipsham Wood, 5 and 11 seen in early March, rising to 46 in April. Quite large numbers have been seen also in Little Haw Wood, Burley, Pickworth and Osbanall. 3 were seen in March at Barnsdale and one buck only in April. On the RNHS Burley Wood visit on April 14th a group of 24 were seen, and later as we returned to our car we saw a further 12. A Muntjac was also observed by members in the wood, standing its ground and barking.

*Many thanks to all members who sent in reports, particularly those RW Breeding Bird Survey recorders who have been sending me their observations, and which have enhanced our reporting this time.*

*Records received from: A Biddle, M Branston, T Caldicott, G Chiverton, C Gallimore, M & G Griffin, M Grimes, J Harris, T Mitcham, P J Rudkin, A R & M A Thorp, L & G Worrall*

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

41 Woodland View, Oakham, LE15 6EJ. Telephone: 01572 755274

### **March/April 2013**

It was another quiet period with few bat records for the period covered by the report, and my diary reminds me that we had quite a number of snowy or freezing days in March, with cold winds in April. On the plus side, there have been no grounded bats in our area during that time. Small bats were seen in flight at RWNR on 1.3, with one seen foraging at 4.00 pm along the track west of Lagoon 1, and another flying round the work yard at Fishponds Cottage at approximately 4.30 pm on the same date, roughly an hour and a half before sunset. On 5.3, after a sunny, warm day, a small bat was flying along the road between Egleton and the A6003 in the shelter of tall trees; on the same date two small bats were flying around trees

at Fishponds Cottage, Rutland Water. On 18.3, there were fresh droppings in Stretton Church, thought to be those of **brown long-eared bat**.

In April the only records from members were from Linda and Graham Worrall's garden in Barrowden, on 23.4 when two bats were flying together, and 30.4 when one was seen. However, bats have undoubtedly been out and about, especially in sheltered habitats. Members of Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group carried out a survey in Barnsdale Wood and set out a remote recorder on 25th to 29th April. Soprano, common and Nathusius' pipistrelles were heard both during the survey walk and on the remote detector, together with noctule and Daubenton's bats.

*My thanks to J Bryan (DBCG), D Cole, R Follows, G Gray (DBCG), J Partridge, L & G Worrall.*

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