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NOTICEBOARD

Membership Subscriptions and Email Collection

The annual membership subscription for 2014 is now due.

The subscription has been maintained at £10:00 per adult for the year, and we do hope you agree it is good value and will renew yours.

You can pay your fees by:

- Seeing me at the next indoor meeting
- Sending a cheque to the Membership Secretary payable to RNHS (see my address on the right)
- Standing order – if you currently pay by standing order you do not need to do anything, but if you would like to set up a regular standing order, let me know and I will send you a form.

We would also like to collect members' email addresses so that we can contact you with urgent information such as changes to meetings. Roy has been collecting these at recent indoor meetings, but if you have not given yours and would like it to be added to the database, please include it on your membership renewal slip, or email it to rnhscontact@btinternet.com.

Please complete the form below and send with your cheque:

RNHS Membership Subscription 2014

Name(s):

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Amount paid:

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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.

OUTDOOR EVENTS

Sunday 5 January **HAMBLETON WOOD – NEW YEAR WALK** **10.00 am**

Led by Linda Biddle, RNHS chairman. Turn right at church in Hambleton village, go down the hill, park on the lefthand side before the gate, meet inside the gate. (OS Landranger Grid ref: SK 897 072)

Queries: please call Linda Biddle on 01780 762108.

Saturday 22 February **AN OUTING TO THE RAPTOR FOUNDATION** **11.00 am**

An outing to the Raptor Foundation, The Heath, St Ives Road, Woodhurst, Cambs PE38 3BT (phone 01487 741 140, www.raptorfoundation.org.uk) with a tour of the park and an indoor or outdoor flying display, depending on the weather. Allow at least an hour to get there. Entry £4.00, lunch £9.00. (Grid ref: TL 336 758)

Queries: please call Dawn Whitefield, Programme Secretary, on 01664 454578.

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.

INDOOR EVENTS

The NEW venue for the RNHS indoor meetings is Voluntary Action Rutland (VAR), Lands End Way, Oakham, Rutland LE15 6RB.

Tuesday 3 December **DORMICE REINTRODUCTION** **7.30 pm**

By Jim Alexander, a retired chief wildlife ranger and now a volunteer, who has been involved from the start of the dormouse project in Bedford Purlieus. This was organised by Natural England and the People's Trust for Endangered Species in 2001, and started by releasing 21 pairs of dormice that had been reared in captivity into Bedford Purlieus woods.

Tuesday 7 January **DRAGONFLIES** **7.30 pm**

A talk about these beautiful creatures by expert Ian Merrill of the British Dragonfly Society.

Tuesday 4 February **A LOOK AT BEETLES** **7.30 pm**

By Tim Newton, RNHS, fanatical beetle expert who is sure to convert you to their charms (if you aren't already converted after the RNHS outing to the Natural History Museum on November 12).

Tuesday 4 March **AGM FOLLOWED BY THE SECRET RIVER NENE** **7.30 pm**

By Sarah Lambert, a keen naturalist who spends a lot of time walking along the river and photographing the many species to be found there. On Saturday 17 May she will be leading a walk for us by the Nene.

HIGH TIDES IN NORTH NORFOLK

A useful website is www.tidetimes.org.uk, which gives high *and* low tide times, sunrise and sunset, moonrise and moonset. (Apologies, no space for usual tide tables this issue.)

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. See www.lrw.org.uk, or phone 0116 272 0444 in office hours, for other events in Leicestershire and Rutland, including guided walks.

Monday 9 December QUIZ NIGHT

7.30 pm

Join us at Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre for this fun quiz. Admission £1. Contact Gabrielle Maughan on 01572 737752.

Use the website www.lrw.org.uk for many other LRWT events in 2014. Below is a sample of what is on offer.

Saturday 18 January WINTER WILDFOWL DAY AT RUTLAND WATER 9:30 am

Join author and expert birder Terry Mitcham (RNHS) for this excellent opportunity to see the wide variety of wildfowl that visit Rutland Water in the winter. Previous highlights have included American Wigeon, Scaup, Eider and Great Northern Diver. Using cars we will check areas away from the reserves if necessary – such as the Dam, Whitwell or Barnsdale to look for any scarce species which may be present.

We will also be able to visit both sections of the reserve at Lyndon and Egleton. A packed lunch is required.

There is a group limit of 20 and the fee for the day is £12. Booking Essential. Telephone 01572 653024 to book or for more information.

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. For details of other LWT Lincstrust events, see www.lincstrust.org.uk, or phone 01507 526 677 in office hours.

WEATHER SUMMARY Roy Lemmon

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

September 2013

Atmospheric pressure and wind The month started with the highest pressure, 1029.5 mb on the 1st, and it stayed high until the 4th; and from then until the 20th it was generally lower and variable, and then higher more or less to the end of the month. Winds were SW-W from the 1st to the 9th, then NW-N up to the 14th, and then SW-W again, apart from the last 5 days when they were NE.

Temperature After a warm start, the highest daytime maximum of 28.0 °C occurred on the 5th; it was in fact a rather cool month, the seventh coolest in the last decade. This is partly due to the mean minimum, 9.37 °C being the ninth coolest in the same period. The lowest overnight minimum was 5.2 °C, which occurred on the 13th

to 14th, and there were 11 other nights when the minimum was below 9 °C. Nationally there were 43 Septembers in the last 100 years that were warmer.

Rain After a couple of months of near average rainfall, the total this month was 22.4 mm (0.88 inches) or 42% of my long-term mean. Most of this fell between the 9th and 19th, and there were 19 days on which there was no detectable precipitation. Averaged over England and Wales, the total was 2.39 inches or 79% of LTM, which again emphasises the dryness of the area we live in.

Sunshine Averaged over England and Wales, the total was 133.8 hours, some 91% of LTM. In the last 100 years, 63 Septembers were sunnier.

October 2013

Atmospheric pressure and wind Overall a low pressure month with easterly winds to the 4th, the pressure then rose and was higher until the 9th with winds mostly SW-W, but then there was a gradual lowering of pressure to the 18th during which period winds were generally NE-E. Thereafter they were SW-W to the end of the month. The lowest pressure of the month was a rising one of 987 mb at 0900 on the 28th; this was the result of a deep cyclonic system which brought considerable damage and disruption but mostly to the East Anglia-Essex area. Despite the hype in the national media, this was in fact the severest gale across southern Britain only since 19th January 2007 in which 19 people died in the UK.

Temperature The mean minimum this month was 8.91 °C, the second highest in the decade after 2005 (9.5 °C); and the mean maximum 15.94 °C was fourth in the same period after the Octobers of 2011, 2006 and 2005. Both of these figures were well above the corresponding ones for 2012. The

lowest night-time minimum was 2.4 °C on 28th-29th and this was the first ground frost of the season. While the highest daytime maximum was 21.6 °C on the 8th, nationally the highest was 22.4 °C at Donna Nook on the 7th. In the past 100 years only seven Octobers have been warmer.

Rain A very wet month, the total I recorded was 115.1 mm (4.53 inches) and this represents 183% of my long-term mean. Looking back over my 23 years of records this is the wettest October I have recorded, beating 2002 (111.2 mm) and 2000 (102.5 mm). Rainfall was distributed over virtually the whole of the month, only on 9 days was no precipitation recorded and the highest occurred on the 27th (34.0 mm) and also 18.9 mm fell on the 12th. Averaged over England and Wales, the figure was 148 mm (5.82 inches) which is 143% of the LTM. In the past 100 years just 9 Octobers have been wetter.

Sunshine This was 93.1 hours averaged over England and Wales and amounts to 90% of the LTM.

The national figures are from Philip Eden's Weatherwatch 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



September/October 2013

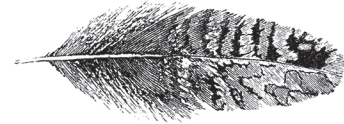
There were no reptile records during these two months, which is not that unusual. All four species of amphibians were seen however, although not always alive.

The only record of Common Frog was of tadpoles in Linda Worrall's pond in Barrowden on 18 October. Tadpoles of Common Toad were seen in Exton Park on 21 September. Adult living toads were seen on the A6003 near Egleton and in my garden in Wing on two occasions in the second half of September. As usual there were quite a lot of autumnal road casualties. In mid-September there were three dead toads in Pilton and Wing,

and in the first week of October there were eight dead toads in Wing. Finally three were found at Leighfield on 20 October. I suppose that some comfort can be drawn from this in that there seem to be plenty of toads to get run over and they are of different age classes.

A Smooth Newt was disturbed at the foot of a tree in my garden in Wing on October 21. A Great Crested Newt was found in a bucket in Egleton at the end of September and a male was found in my cellar on 24 October.

My thanks to T Caldicott, C H Gallimore, T Mitcham and L Worrall who sent in records.



September/October 2013

Good September birds were Spoonbill, Spotted Crake and Buff-breasted Sandpiper, but a stormy mid-October really kick-started the autumn as migrating seabirds were blown inland to our reservoirs – Gannets, a Leach's Petrel, Skuas and a Grey Phalarope were local rarities which delighted many birdwatchers. As noted in the last Fieldfare, wildfowl did not disappoint with an October count topping 25,000 birds at Rutland Water and Whooper Swans and Ring-necked Ducks at Eyebrook. Four Yellow-browed Warblers, elusive as always, made it inland; part of an influx on the east coast, but few winter thrushes arrived, delayed by an abundance of berries on the continent. Finches made a better showing, however, with a good passage of Bramblings and some Siskins and Crossbills.

My thanks to the following for their records: P Bennett, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, D Cottor, Dr C H Gallimore, M & G Griffin, Dr C Jones, A Lamb, A Lawrence, LROS, T Mitcham, I Misselbrook, D Needham, J Nourish, P Rudkin, A R & M A Thorp, M Winslow, L Worrall

Whooper Swan. Six arrived at EBR on 11.10, increasing to 21 on 12.10 with seven to 28.10. At RW there were six on 12.10, 23 on 13.10 and one on 17.10.

Barnacle Goose. Four were at EBR on 08.09.

Brent Goose. One was at RW on 12.10, with five flying over the Dam there next day.

Egyptian Goose. Two were at LFP on 24.10, four were at Martinsthorpe on 30.10, with seven there next day.

Shelduck. A juvenile was at FHP 14–20.09.

Mandarin Duck. A female was on Oak canal on 17.09; and the RW(Norm) pair were reported on 29.10.

Pintail. At FHP there were two on 07.09 and five on 27.10.

Garganey. Noted at RW on many dates to 15.10, with a max of five between 03.09 and 16.09. One was at EBR on 15.10.

Red-crested Pochard. Up to three were at EBR between 18.09 and 20.10. At RW there was a max of seven (27.09) between 24.09 and 23.10.

Ring-necked Duck. A male and female/juvenile were at EBR on 12–13.10, with the female/juv present all month. A female/juv was at RWSA on 15.10 – possibly not the EBR bird.

Scaup. A female was at RW from 11.09 to 24.09, when a male was at the dam. Two were noted on 15.10 with a male on Lagoon 3 on 25.10.

Common Scoter. There were five at RWSA on 12.09 and six on 14.10.

Goldeneye. Early birds were three at RWSA on 15.09 and one at EBR on 29.09.

Red-breasted Merganser. Females were at EBR on 12.10 and RW on 13–14.10.

Leach's Petrel. One at RW(Norm) on 13.10 was the first in Rutland since one at EBR in December 1998.

Gannet. On 11.10 a juvenile was at EBR and seven – six juvs and an adult – passed through at RW.

Bittern. Singles were seen on Lagoon 3 at Egleton on 11 and 24.09 and on 29.10.

Spoonbill. A juvenile was at EBR between 27–30.09.

Black-necked Grebe. There were two at RW on 11.09, with regular sightings there throughout both months, with three on 26.10 and four on 28.10.

Red Kite. Four at HM/FH on 26.10 was the peak count.

Marsh Harrier. Noted regularly at RWEg between 05.09 and 29.09 with two on three dates. A juvenile was at EBR between 07–13.09. and a later juvenile at RW on 15.10.

Sparrowhawk. One was in an Oak garden on 03.09.

Osprey. One was at EBR on 06.09.

Kestrel. Singles were reported from BCF and FHP.

Hobby. There were records of one or two up to 24.09 from FH, RW, LFP, Martinsthorpe, and Man. One breeding pair was confirmed, with at least two young fledged.

Peregrine. Singles were at Martinsthorpe on 29.09 and 02.10, with birds at RW on 22.09 and 20.10.

Water Rail. An adult and juvenile were at EBR on 02.09. Seen and heard on Lagoon 3 at Eg from 14.10.

Spotted Crake. The EBR juvenile remained to 06.09.

Avocet. Singles were at EBR on 03.09 and 11.10.

- Little Ringed Plover.** Singles were at EBR on 20.09 and 05.10. At RW there were two on 01 and 18.09 and one on 05.10.
- Ringed Plover.** Regular at RW to 13.10 with a max of 37 on 20 and 27.09 (Old Hall). A late bird was noted on 28.10. At EBR up to three were noted on seven Sept/Oct dates, with the latest on 06.10. Six flew over Martinsthorpe on 12.09.
- Golden Plover.** One at RW on 22.09 was the first with just 11 there on 27.09. c.400 were present on 20.10 with c.200 on 25.10.
- Grey Plover.** Three flew west at RW(Whit) on 24.09. One was in Man Bay on 26.09 and two remained in the NA from 01 to 18.10.
- Lapwing.** At RW there were 954 on 22.09 and 182 on 13.10.
- Knot.** Singles were at RW on 18 and 29.09.
- Sanderling.** Singles were at RW on 01 and 12.09.
- Little Stint.** Two were at RW on 11/12.09 with three on 14.09 and then singles on five dates to 09.10. Singles were at EBR on 20.09 and 06.10.
- Pectoral Sandpiper.** A juvenile was at RW between 11 and 14.09, with a second bird from 09 to 17.10.
- Curlew Sandpiper.** Two or three juveniles were at both reservoirs between 11.09 and 20.09, with one at EBR on 29.09.
- Dunlin.** Regular, in small numbers, at both reservoirs throughout both months. Max counts were 16 at RW on 20.09 and 13.10, and ten at EBR on 21.09.
- Buff-breasted Sandpiper.** One at RWEg on 18/19.09 was the second county record.
- Ruff.** Noted at RW to 26.09 with a max of 17 on 14.09. Regular at EBR to 18.10, with a max of eight on 16.09. One was with a Lapwing flock in Ext Park from 14 to 20.09, and a flock of eleven were on farmland near Preston on 24.10.
- Jack Snipe.** Singles were at RWEg on 2–5.10 and 17.10.
- Snipe.** Nine were at EBR on 08.09 with 17 there on 22.09. Three were at RW on 01.09 with seven on 22.09. One or two were at LFP throughout September with seven over Man on 24.09 and two on pasture at Martinsthorpe next day.
- Black-tailed Godwit.** Noted at RW from 01.09 to 25.10, with a max of six on 18.09.
- Bar-tailed Godwit.** Singles were at RW on 10 and 12.09 with four flying west on 24.09.
- Curlew.** RW birds fed on pasture near Martinsthorpe, with a max. of ten on 27.09 and 30.10. Seven were at RW on 13.10. One was at FH on 30.09 and one flew west at Preston on 14.10, with 12 south at Martinsthorpe on 19.10.
- Common Sandpiper.** Reported from EBR between 01 and 14.09, with four on 09.09. The only RW birds were two on 05.09.
- Green Sandpiper.** Well distributed with birds at RW to at least 25.10, with a max of five on 13.10. Up to five were at EBR to 18.10. Singles were at FHP on 04.09 and Banthorpe Gravel Pit on 07.09, with three there on 14.09. One was at LFP throughout both months to 24.10, with singles over Martinsthorpe on 30.09 and in the Chater valley at Prest on 14.10.
- Spotted Redshank.** One was at RW on 03.09 with two on 05.09, and then one to 10.09 and one on 24.09.
- Greenshank.** Noted at RW from 15.09 to 23.10 with max counts of nine on 26.09 and eight on 02.10. Most other records were of one or two.
- Redshank.** Remarkably scarce this autumn with records only at RW from 13.10 onwards, when seven were counted.
- Wood Sandpiper.** Two were at EBR between 08–13.09, with one 16–20.09 and 27.09. One was at RW 09–14.09.
- Turnstone.** Singles were at RW on 12 and 27.09.
- Grey Phalarope.** One was at RW dam on 13.10 – another storm blown waif.
- Arctic Skua.** One flew over RW Dam on 11.10.
- Great Skua.** A remarkable passage at RW in mid-October saw three flying through with one at the Dam on 11.10, one the next day and at least three and possibly five on 13.10. One was also seen on 14.10.
- Little Gull.** Singles were at RW on 01.10 and EBR on 11.10.
- Mediterranean Gull.** At RW there were singles on 01.09 and 25.10. There were records of singles at EBR on five dates between 06.09 and 27.10 – three adults, one juvenile and a first winter.
- Black-headed Gull.** At FHP there were 115 on 14.10.
- Azorean Gull.** One was at RWSA on 07/08.10.
- Great Black-backed Gull.** A foolhardy bird was feeding on carrion on the A606 near Shacklewell on 03.10.
- Little Tern.** A late bird was on Lagoon 4 at Eg on 20.09.
- Black Tern.** One was at RW from 01 to 07.10.
- Common Tern.** Twelve were still at RW on 22.07.
- Arctic Tern.** A late juvenile was at RW on 12.10.
- Collared Dove.** A max of ten (12.10) frequented an Oak garden.
- Barn Owl.** One at Man on 16.10 was the sole record.
- Little Owl.** One was at FH on 07.09.

Kingfisher. Singles were at RW on 01 and 22.09. Two were at Rygate Lake in Ext Park on 07.09, and one was on Oak canal at Oak on 24.09.

Green Woodpecker. Records were received from Stoke Dry Wood, near Walk Farm, FH and TunnW.

Great Spotted Woodpecker. Noted at BCF, Barns Avenue and TunnW in Oct.

Raven. Noted at or over nine sites, with four over LFP on 09.10 the max count.

Willow Tit. One or two were at LFP, Martinsthorpe and Pilton in both months.

Marsh Tit. Up to three were at Wing, TunnW and RW in both months.

Skylark. 53 flew over Martinsthorpe on 05.10, with 70 south at LFP on 20.10.

Sand Martin. Seven were at FHP on 16.09, with three at Banthorpe Gravel Pit on 20.09.

Swallow. High September counts included 300 at LFP on 11.09, 500 flying SW there on 15.09 and 17.09, and 260 at Martinsthorpe on 09.09. The last were five over Man on 22.10.

House Martin. c.100 were at Martinsthorpe on 02.09 with 120 SW there on 21.09. 100 were at Lynd on 16.09 and 30 at Wg next day. The young of a third brood in a Bden nest fledged on 05.10 and four were at Martinsthorpe on this date. Just out of county, three were at Stockerston church on 22.10.

Cetti's Warbler. One sang at RWEg on 01 and 27.09.

Yellow-browed Warbler. An impressive four were located by call and one seen briefly – an Oak garden on 30.09/01.10, EBP by Stoke carpark on 13/14.10, a site near Emp on 17.10 and near Tim Appleton's cottage at RW on 25.10.

Chiffchaff. No September records were received but there were seven at Martinsthorpe on 05.10, nine at RWGun and two at Martinsthorpe on 26.10.

Willow Warbler. The last bird was one in song at LFP on 22.09.

Blackcap. There were five at RWHamb on 26.09 and a female type was near Pilt on 12.10.

Lesser Whitethroat. Singles were near Martinsthorpe on 27.09 and 31.10 – a very late date.

Whitethroat. The last bird was at Martinsthorpe on 27.09.

Sedge Warbler. One was at FHP on 04.09 and there were three at LFP on 03.09, with the last on 20.09.

Reed Warbler. Last noted at LFP on 17.09.

Nuthatch. Visited Norm feeders in September and also noted at TunnW, FHP and BarnsW.

Starling. c.1900 flew generally west along the Chater valley on 20.10, with 1100 on 24.10. 700 headed west over Martinsthorpe on 26.10.

Blackbird. 24 probable migrants were at Martinsthorpe on 23.09.

Fieldfare. Five over Martinsthorpe on 10.10, 27 over Stamford Meadows on 19.10, and one at RWHamb on 31.10 were the only reports.

Song Thrush. 28 were noted around Martinsthorpe on 08.10 with a similar number on 31.10.

Redwing. One over Martinsthorpe on 29.09 was the first. On 11.10 there were c.240 west at Martinsthorpe, with 200 there on 19.10 and 320 over LFP on 24.10. 30 were over Stamford on 20.10 and 32 were at RWHamb on 31.10.

Mistle Thrush. Ten took rowan berries at Wing on 13.09.

Spotted Flycatcher. One or two were reported at Pilt, Lynd, LFP, Norm and Man up to 22.09.

Redstart. Singles were near Martinsthorpe on 04 and 09.09.

Whinchat. One was in Ext Park on 04.09, with a single at LFP on 08.09, and one or two at Martinsthorpe the following day.

Stonechat. A female was at EBR inflow on 04.10, and a pair at RWEg from 17.10 to at least 28.10.

Wheatear. One or two were at Martinsthorpe, EBR, RW and NLuff Airfield on five dates between 05.09 and 27.10, but there were five at Cottes Airfield on 17.09.

Yellow Wagtail. Southerly passage was noted over Martinsthorpe to 01.10, with a max of 24 on 12.09. One at RWEg on 06.10 was the last record.

Grey Wagtail. Observed on five dates between 10 and 17.09 over Martinthorpe, LFP and Wg with six at LFP on the last date. Singles were at FHP on 21.09, Ext Park on 04.10 and RWNA on 13.10.

Pied Wagtail. c.100 were in a reed bed roost at LFP on 24.10.

Meadow Pipit. Three west at LFP on 03.09 were the first autumn migrants, with three over Ext Park the next day. c.113 flew south at Martinsthorpe on 21.09, and there were c.40 at FHP on 30.09.

Rock Pipit. RW attracted migrants between 24.09 and 15.10, mainly at the Dam and with a max of at least seven on 13.10.

Brambling. Reported from 11.10 at six sites, with max counts of 60 at Norm Park Hotel on 14.10, and 27 at LFP on 20.10.

Goldfinch. Flocks of 100 and 150 on 04.09 flew south at Martinsthorpe. The peak garden count was ten in Oak on 20.10.

Siskin. One south at LFP was the first migrant. 40 were near Pilt on 03.10 and a similar number flew SE at Martinsthorpe on 19 and 31.10.

Crossbill. At Martinsthorpe two flew over on 26.10 and three on 31.10.

Reed Bunting. Ten noted at Martinsthorpe on 08.10.

Rutland Water, Eyebrook Reservoir and Exton Wildfowl Counts Sept/Oct

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry Ponds/Exton Park	
	22/09	13/10	22/09	13/10	21/09	14/10
Mute Swan	494	371	88	67	13	13
Whooper Swan				21		
Greylag Goose	696	223	317	235		
Canada Goose	1084	284	220			
Barnacle Goose	10	11				
Egyptian Goose	105	95				
Mandarin Duck	2	1				
Wigeon	2637	8098	165	246	6	12
Gadwall	844	1958	38	88	51	99
Teal	816	1291	192	288	43	11
Mallard	1222	1320	384	222	139	162
Pintail	47	121	7	19	1	2
Garganey				1		
Shoveler	480	471	39	35	18	42
Red-crested Pochard	1		1			
Pochard	12		9	41		
Ring-necked Duck				1		
Tufted Duck	3787	6114	45	204	24	23
Scaup		4				
Long-tailed Duck		1				
Goldeneye		11				
Red-breasted Merganser		1				
Great Northern Diver		1				
Cormorant	156	125	28	19	1	
Little Egret	47	22	5	6		
Grey Heron	20	10	4	3		
Little Grebe	94	122	12	25	1	3
Great Crested Grebe	263	290	41	31		
Black-necked Grebe	1					
Water Rail		10				
Moorhen	141	152	20	10	46	46
Coot	3059	3103	315	353	44	49

Banthorpe Gravel Pit and Holywell Lake Wildfowl Counts – Sept/Oct 2013

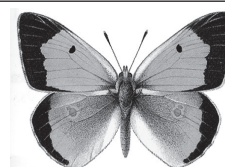
	Banthorpe Gravel Pit		Holywell Lake	
	20/09	14/10	19/09	24/10
Mute Swan	3	2	22	
Canada Goose			18	2
Greylag Goose			123	127
Wigeon			1	
Gadwall			11	10
Teal	35	50	217	
Mallard	14	52	78	92
Shoveler	1		16	
Pochard			2	
Tufted Duck		11	11	26
Grey Heron	1			
Moorhen	1	2	12	14
Coot	1		27	19
Little Grebe			12	8

BOTANY NOTES

There are no Botany notes this issue. Until we have a new Botany Recorder, please send your Record Cards and other information to Linda Biddle, marking the envelope on the outside 'Botany record'.

BUTTERFLY NOTES compiled by Alistair Lawrence

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September/October 2013

The continuation of the warm sunny weather into September meant that many butterflies were still on the wing as evidenced by the following reports, which include further sightings of the Clouded Yellow. The autumnal and more unsettled weather of October saw a gradual reduction in butterfly activity.

Clouded Yellow A couple of reports were received of sightings at the beginning of September. Two specimens were seen at Clipsham Quarry on the 1st and two at Great Casterton on the 4th.

Brimstone This butterfly has been observed throughout September at all the quarries and reserves, but the highest count was 6 in an Uppingham garden on the 19th. The last reported September sighting was at Quarry Farm on the 22nd.

Large White Seen in good numbers in a variety

of locations with the highest counts being 10 at Clipsham Quarry on 1st September and 9 at RW Lyndon on the 8th. The last recorded sighting was in an Uppingham garden on 9 October.

Small White This butterfly has been recorded frequently throughout September on the wing in Rutland, with the highest counts being in excess of 10 at Bloody Oaks and Ketton Quarry and near Great Casterton on the 4th. The latest record is of 4 at Ketton Quarry on 6 October.

Green-veined White Single sightings of this species come from Bloody Oaks, Ketton and Clipsham Quarries. Two were seen at RW Lyndon on 8 September.

Small Copper Several September records have been received for this species, with 4 being seen on the 22nd between Barnsdale and Whitwell. The others were mainly single sightings earlier in the month. The only record received for October comes from RW Lyndon where one was observed on the 19th.

Brown Argus Single specimens were recorded at Bloody Oaks and Ketton Quarry at the beginning of September.

Common Blue This species has been noted at four sites during September with the highest count being 15+ at Ketton Quarry. Good numbers were also seen Clipsham Quarry and Great Casterton. The last record comes from Quarry Farm on 22 September.

Red Admiral Singletons have been recorded during September at the usual reserves and quarries, and also seen frequently in an Uppingham garden throughout the month. It is from Uppingham that the latest record comes on 18 October.

Painted Lady The only record during this period is of a single specimen at Leighfield Fishponds on the 3rd September.

Small Tortoiseshell This butterfly continues to be very active and has been observed throughout Rutland in considerable numbers. 35 were counted on buddleia at Leighfield Fishponds on 3rd September, and 9 at Market Overton on 24 September.

Peacock Although numbers for this species are reduced compared with the August high count, it has been seen regularly throughout our area

mainly in ones and twos. 3 were recorded at Bloody Oaks Quarry on 4 September and 2 at Ketton Quarry on 29th of the month.

Latest sighting is of a single specimen at Ketton Quarry on 7 October.

Comma This species has been observed frequently throughout our reserves, quarries and villages of Rutland. Highest count was 7 seen on blackberries at Clipsham Park Wood on 29 September. Singletons were also seen at Ketton Quarry and RW Lyndon on 3rd and 19th October respectively.

Speckled Wood This is the species for which most reports have been received and with some high counts from a variety of Rutland locations. The highest numbers recorded were 15 at RW Lyndon on 8 September, 13 at RW Egleton on 9 September and 27 at Clipsham Park Wood on 29 September. Latest record comes from RW Lyndon on 19 October.

Meadow Brown Two specimens were seen on a footpath near Great Casterton on 4 September.

Small Heath There have been four sightings of this butterfly: 1 at Ketton Quarry on 2 September, 2 at Bloody Oaks Quarry on 4 September, 1 at Quarry Farm on 22 September and the final record comes from Bloody Oaks again where 1 was observed on 29 September.

My thanks to the following contributors: P Bennett, C Butterfield, T Caldicott, R Edwards, M Grimes, C Jones, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, J Mallett, P & E Mann, J Myers, D Needham, E Northen, B & D Parker, P Rudkin, and B & J Taylor

MOTH NOTES compiled by Jean Harvey

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September/October 2013

These notes relate to the month of September and the first week of October as after that the nights became colder and only a few species remained on the wing.

Records from members included Buff Tip caterpillars on a Lime tree at Thorpe-by-Water and two Grey Shoulder Knots which were photographed on the boles of Oak trees at Beaumont Chase. Humming Bird Hawk Moths were on Valerian in the outskirts of Stamford and on Buddleia at Manton where a Silver Y was also seen.

A group carried out trapping sessions at Lyndon,

once again resulting in 22 species on September 9th, 26 species on the 12th and 23 species on the 23rd. These lists included a good selection of moths at the time of year when summer ends and autumn begins.

In 2012, only a few migrant species were added to the records in our area – but this year has been rather different as will be seen later. Dark Sword Grass and Silver Y were in the garden trap at Barrowden and the Delicate and Dark Sword Grass in the reed beds at Rutland Water.

At Eyebrook Reservoir over-night trapping took place twice in September and once in October. Totals here were 27, 30 and 40 respectively. Coinciding with our final visit, there must have

been significant migration movements (with southerly winds) indicated by six migrant species being recorded. These included a Diamond Back moth, five Vestals, ten Dark Sword Grass, a Silver Y and two Pearly Underwings which were new for the site. The 'moth of the night' however was a *Palpita vitrealis*, a scarce migrant from Southern Europe and usually only found in coastal counties

in this country. It is a most attractive micro-moth with translucent white wings with a yellowish brown leading edge.

These results prove the importance of regular trapping at notable sites and certainly left us with an excellent feeling of satisfaction at the end of yet another season.

Thanks once again to: V Arnold, P Bennet, T Caldicott, R Follows, M Grimes, C R Jones, T Mitcham and C Warman

ORTHOPTERA REPORT compiled by Phil Rudkin

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September/October 2013

Summer apparently came to an abrupt end in early September, but a mini heatwave turned up on 22 September which was only to last for a few days. However, the season had been good for our orthoptera. Members may remember my note in the last Fieldfare about the non-appearance of the Long-winged Conehead on the first Beaumont Chase Farm survey on 14th August. Therefore, it was very pleasing to find masses of them in the second Beaumont Chase survey, on the 5th October, which took place in the conservation area.

By late September/early October the grasshopper communities are coming to the end of their season, and it is the crickets that make the news for the period under review.

The National Orthoptera Recording Scheme organisers have decided to encourage county recorders to explore new sites for grasshoppers and crickets in their boundaries, and will be giving recorders one more season (2014) before producing the eagerly awaited National Orthoptera Atlas. Therefore we will again look into new areas in the county, and add to our records to be included in the Atlas.

The Speckled Bush Cricket features prominently in this report, and it is a very intriguing story. In season 2012, and this year (2013), there were a number of sightings of single adults found in gardens, and one occasion on a house wall in Oakham. I followed up these sightings from members in Stamford and Oakham, and did not detect any other Speckled Bush Crickets in these localities.

So, the following account of this species is amazing (and puzzling). On 18th September, a chance meeting with Becky Corby at the Egleton Birdwatching Centre resulted in the following: Becky showed me a photograph of a female Speckled Bush Cricket, which she had taken outside the Centre on 31st August. Steve Houghton identified it for Becky. I was delighted, because this was the first record for this species on the Egleton Reserve since I recorded one on 6th September 2001. From that date there have been no reports from this reserve. Having made notes and accepted the sighting, I then stepped out of the Centre, with bat detector switched on at 35 kHz, and got a shock; the trees outside were full of stridulating males, and approx. 75 yards to the north of the Centre, and later, approx. 100 yards to the south, there were many males in the trees and shrubs. But I found no more on the reserve. What a surprise, and what a puzzle! Over many years as recorder for the reserves (from 2001), I have surveyed these very locations and have found none. Moreover, no one else has reported any. So, where have they appeared from? They are completely flightless, and do not move far. It is worth mentioning that the SBC abounds on the perimeters of the Egleton Reserve, but not on it. But it is highly improbable that these large numbers will have emanated from these scattered perimeter ones.

I then contacted two good friends of the RNHS, Roy Frost, the Orthoptera Recorder for Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire, and Lloyd Park, staff member at Rutland Water. Both gave me their expert opinions, and interestingly, both came up with the same idea. I followed this up with some research into published orthoptera material. The same theme turned up; and that is that a species that cannot fly, is often transported through importation of plants (from garden centres, and from abroad). Marshall/Haes, 1988, states: 'Speckled Bush Crickets insert their eggs into plant stems, and crevices in tree bark. Their eggs are successfully transported on ornamental trees and shrubs.' Ragge, 1965, states: 'Speckled Bush Crickets

are the ones most often found on garden plants, whence it frequently finds its way indoors'. Benton, *New Naturalist* 2012, referring to the Speckled Bush Cricket eggs, states: 'In cooler parts of its range the eggs undergo a double diapause, and the full life cycle takes two years.'

Considering the above discussions, Lloyd said that 'the immediate area around the Centre (the Wildlife Garden in the Egleton reserve) has been planted with stock coming from Oakham and other local sites within the last 5 years'. Therefore, it is possible that within that last 5 year period, eggs were transported in, and the colony has now resulted from that situation! Furthermore, the transportation of plants and shrubs from garden centres to our own gardens, would explain the appearance of lone individuals found there. There is some food for thought for us all. Did the heat wave have any effect in all this!

Bush Crickets

Oak Bush Cricket *Meconema thalassinum*

One, observed on roadside under Oak trees near Lyndon village, on 24 September, new site, SK 909 043. During the Beaumont Chase Farm Survey, Uppingham, on 5 October, one dead female was found, tucked into the bark ridges of the lower part of the trunk of an Oak tree. This was in the edge of the conservation woodland, and potential new site, SP 846 982. Note: in August 2007, Derek Lee found a male in his moth trap, in nearby Stoke Dry Wood, with the map reference being SP 844 978. However, this is certainly a new site for Beaumont Chase Farm.

Dark Bush Cricket *Pholidoptera griseoptera*

One, observed in Hawthorn hedge along the footpath entrance of Walk Farm, Great Casterton, at 2.45 pm 26 °C, 22 September.

Roesel's Bush Cricket *Metrioptera roeselii*

18 September: large numbers of stridulating males in the tall, rich grasses along the cycle track, on the minor road to Egleton church; the stridulating slowed down when the sun disappeared behind the clouds, then picked up again as the sun came out. It was midday, cool, 16 °C, 6/8 cloud, and dry. At 1.0 pm, the Egleton reserve survey began, and a 3 ½ hour search resulted in the expected massive numbers of stridulating males (some females observed), in the usual hotspots south east of the Birdwatching Centre, from there and up to Lax Hill.

22 September: 11.30 am, hot, 3/8 cloud, dry, force 2, Quarry Farm, Stamford (inside Rutland), in the first field, large numbers of noisy males in the rough grasses. Reaching the wildflower meadow in the second field, 20+ heard in the wildflower/grasses. Further along to the pond on the hill, the rough grasses surrounding the pond were ringing with the songs of circa 15 males. At 2.45 pm the entrance path to Walk Farm was the next stop, and in the field margins behind the hawthorn hedgerow 50+ stridulating males were located.

The Beaumont Chase Farm Survey on 5 October (south of Kings Hill Lodge) started at 11.0 am, on a cool morning, with 7/8 cloud, force 1, and brief sunny intervals. This species was slow to get started, but when they did, at 1.30 pm, the conservation area had 16 stridulating males in the long grasses in the rides, and one male next to the wild bird cover crop. Finally, as we neared the top of the slope adjacent to the B664, 6 males were heard in the grass verges along the track.

Last sighting for October was on the 6th at 4.40 pm, on a mild afternoon, with 4/8 cloud, sunny intervals calm and dry. Two males, with very slow stridulations, were located in grass verge, along the B1081 (minor road) from Barnsdale Avenue to Exton, new site, SK 922 105

Long-winged Conehead *Conocephalus discolor*

18 September: four stridulating males in the tall, rich grasses along the cycle track, on the minor road to Egleton Church. Midday, 16 °C, dry and cool, 6/8 cloud.

At 1.0 pm, the Egleton Reserve survey began, and during the afternoon the area south-east of the Birdwatching Centre revealed the expected usual large numbers in the regular habitats, from the Centre and to the top of Lax Hill.

22 September: 11.30 am, 21 °C, 3/8 cloud, dry. Quarry Farm, Stamford, massive numbers of stridulating males, in the rough grasses in the first field. In the second field, the wildflower meadow was full of singing males, (female caught and examined), and in the rough grasses around the hill pond, many more were heard, outdoing the Roesel's Bush Crickets. At 2.45 pm, in the entrance to Walk Farm, Great Casterton, 30+ stridulating males were located in field margins behind the hawthorn hedgerows.

During the first Beaumont Chase Farm Survey on 14 August, this cricket was not found in its usual habitat. But on the second Survey (5 October), we were in the conservation area and numbers were well up. This took place south-east of Kings Hill Lodge, adjacent to the B664, and it was cool, 7/8 cloud, with sunny intervals. The grass/soft rush

bed on the slope held the expected stridulating males (10), and 4 females were observed in the rushes. Then, into the conservation woodland, and in the grassy verges of the rides, large numbers heard and some observed in the grasses between the trees. More were located next to the wild bird cover crops, and in the final walk along the track, adjacent to the B664, many more heard.

The final sighting for October was on the 27th, 4.0 pm, a mild, dry afternoon, with a very strong force 6 wind blowing, I took the bat detector to Quarry Farm, Stamford, and found 4 stridulating males in the rough grasses of the first field. At 4.15 pm, in the second field amongst the wildflower/grasses, 14 males were heard, and the stridulating was at the normal speed. Usually, at this late time of the season, stridulating tends to be slower (due to the body temperature cooling), however, although the strong wind continued, it was mild.

Short-winged Conehead *Conocephalus dorsalis*

18 September: the Egleton Reserve Survey to the south-east of the Birdwatching Centre resulted in only one area being successful. At 1.0 pm, 16 °C, three stridulating males were heard in rough vegetation on a bank, in a small area with a reedy pond, near Snipe Hide. A new site at Egleton reserve, SK 879 067, Field 30. Large area covered, stretching up to and into Lax Hill. This was the only sighting for the survey.

Speckled Bush Cricket *Leptophyes punctatissima*

One female was caught during a moth-trapping session on 12 September, 9.0 pm, on the Lyndon reserve outside the Interpretive Centre. Lyndon reserve is a hotspot for this species!

Eight stridulating males, in hedgerows along the minor road to Egleton Church, at 11.0 am on 18 September (fewer than usual in this site)!

The usual large numbers heard in the hawthorn hedgerows, along the path of the entrance lane to Walk Farm, Great Casterton, at 2.45 pm, on a hot, 26 °C, afternoon, 22 September.

On a visit to Ashwell Garden Centre, on a sunny, hot, calm afternoon at 3.0 pm on 24 September, I was armed with the bat detector, switched on at 35 kHz. I was delighted and surprised to find the stock yard and the shopping centre (surrounded by various tree species) were full of stridulating males. A very rough count of circa 56 males.

After tea and cakes with my wife, we headed to the car park, and over the road at 3.45 pm there were circa 15 stridulating males in the hedgerow. These records are a new and welcome site for this cricket, SK 867 136.

One observed on gatepost at Leighfield Fishponds, 28 September.

5 October: the Beaumont Chase Farm Survey south of Kings Hill Lodge, next to the B664, had the expected very large numbers in the first field, and in the shrubs and trees in the conservation area. Very successful here.

6 October: yet another brand new site! And again, in a habitat full of trees and shrubs. 10.40 am, warm, 3/8 cloud, sunny, dry, force 3. I was on duty at Barnsdale Gardens, and of course, took along the trusty bat detector. During a short break before the next walk around the garden, I switched on and was delighted to find the trees and shrubs full of stridulating males. Before leaving at 4.30 pm, in the car park the trees were full of 'clicking' males. Brilliant! Gardens: SK 912 107.

Car Park: SK 912 109. At 4.40 pm, 20 males heard in roadside hedgerows, on the minor road to Exton.

Final October sighting, 31 October: 4.0 pm, cold, 12 °C, clear sky, dry, calm, nearing dusk. Walk Farm, entrance path. Two stridulating males in Blackthorn at the start of the lane. Then, 100 yards along the path, four males heard in hawthorn hedge. At 4.30 pm, back at the entrance, and over the road to Verge 8, six stridulating males in hawthorn hedgerow. Dusk and now 11 °C.

I have purposely left this story for last – on 18 September, I called in at the Birdwatching Centre at 12.30 pm. I was speaking to Becky Corby in her office, and Becky produced a very good photograph of a female Speckled Bush Cricket, that she had found on 31 August, just outside the Centre. Steve Houghton was on the reserve, and he identified the cricket. I told Becky how important this find was. Although this species is around the outskirts of the reserve, there have been no reports from the Egleton Reserve. I then set off to survey the reserve. Imagine my shock and surprise when I stepped out into the car park outside the Centre. Males were stridulating all around in the shrubs and trees. From there I checked the hedges along the path, and there were no more, just before the Badger Watching Hide. Also a short distance in field 35, many more heard in the hawthorn hedges, new site: SK 879 072. Then returning to the Centre, I took the path towards Mallard Hide, and there were four stridulating males in the hedgerow. But there were no more found on the reserve from that point. New site: Field 31, SK 878 069. My subsequent research through the records revealed that there was one sighting on the

Eggleton Reserve, on 6 September 2001. Note: see discussion in the introduction.

Grasshoppers

Common Green Grasshopper *Omocestus viridulus*

One stridulating male heard in pasture at Leighfield, on 3 September. The season for grasshoppers is nearing its conclusion; therefore numbers will be low for this period.

Meadow Grasshopper *Chorthippus parallelus*

During the RNHS joint field meeting with the British Plant Gall Society, on 8 September at Ketton Quarries, Tim Newton observed a pair copulating. This was in the vegetation in the BBQ area, near the edge of the car park. Peter Scott took a superb photograph, and sent it in via email.

18 September: the Eggleton Reserve survey was as expected low on the grasshoppers, and this common and widespread species was no exception. Two stridulating males heard and observed in rough grasses near Tern Hide, field 30. Two, caught and identified in rough grasses, just on the bank, at the edge of Lax Hill, field 24.

Final report for the season: 11.30 am, 22 September, hot and dry. Four stridulating males in the wildflower meadow of the second field. Four caught and identified in grasses next to the hill pond, in the second field. Both sightings at Quarry Farm, Stamford.

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper *Chorthippus albomarginatus*

Final sighting of the season: three, observed and identified, in grasses around the hill pond, in the second field, at Quarry Farm, on 22 September, 11.30 am.

Many thanks to the intrepid reporters for their hard work and contributions for Sept/October: T Caldicott, B Corby, M Grimes, S Houghton, C Jones, T Newton, P Rudkin, P Scott. Also to Roy Frost and Lloyd Park, for their suggestions regarding the movement of the Speckled Bush Cricket.

INSECTS AND OTHERS compiled by Gill Chiverton

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September 2013

ODONATA

Damselflies

Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum* – many were recorded on 2 Sept at Oakham Canal.

Dragonflies

Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis* – 2 recorded at Oakham Canal.

Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea* – one recorded at Oakham Canal and 2 recorded at Priors Coppice.

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta* – approx 20 recorded Leighfield Fishponds and 2 recorded Priors Coppice.

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum* – 4 recorded Clipsham Quarry and a pair in tandem recorded Oakham Canal.

Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum* – 2 recorded Oakham Canal, small numbers, both m. and f., recorded Priors Coppice.

HEMIPTERA

Dock Bug *Coreus marginatus* – one recorded on raspberries at Oakham.

Squash Bug *Corizus hyoscyami* – one recorded Clipsham Quarry.

Common Froghopper *Philaenus spumarius* – small numbers recorded, mainly of light brown colouration, in Priors Coppice.

DIPTERA

Cranefly *Tipula maxima* – noted as abundant at Priors Coppice.

Hoverfly *Helophilus pendulus* – small numbers recorded on umbellifers at Priors Coppice.

HYMENOPTERA

Common Wasp *Vespula vulgaris* – towards the end of the month an active nest recorded in a dry stone wall at Barrowden.

Hornet *Vespa crabro* – 4 recorded at Clipsham Quarry.

COLEOPTERA

Lesser Stag Beetle *Dorcus parallelipedus* – one recorded RWBarnsdale.

7-spot Ladybird *Coccinella 7-punctata* – 2 recorded at Oakham, one recorded at Priors Coppice, recorded over the month in garden at Uppingham, 2-3 per day by month end.

Harlequin Ladybird *Harmonia axyridis* – one recorded Uppingham.

Below is a list of insect leaf miners which were recorded by Keith Palmer of the British Plant Gall Society during the joint meeting of RNHS and BPGS on 8th September at Ketton Quarry.

DIPTERA

Agromyzidae – *Liriomyza amoena* recorded on *Sambucus*.

Anthomyiidae – *Pegomya solennis* recorded on *Rumex obtusifolius*.

HYMENOPTERA

Tenthredinidae – *Fenella nigrita* recorded on *Potentilla reptans*.

Tenthredinidae – *Fenusa pumila* recorded on *Betula*.

October 2013

ODONATA

Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta* – 4 recorded on 17th at Leighfield Fishponds.

Many thanks to the following recorders: C Butterfield, T Caldicott, G Chiverton, R Edwards, R & J Harvey, C R Jones, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, D Needham, P Rudkin and L Worrall.

PLANT GALLS REPORT

compiled by Roy Lemmon

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September 2013

The highlight of the month and also the first report of the month was the joint meeting between ourselves and members of the British Plant Gall Society at Ketton Quarry on the 8th. Some BPGS members had travelled from as far afield as Suffolk and Yorkshire and were delighted with the reserve, so much so that most stayed on in the afternoon along with one or two of our members. The result of the day's efforts was a total of some 57 galls, inevitably some were

Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum* – 9 recorded on 17th at Leighfield Fishponds.

HEMIPTERA

Parent Bug *Elasmucha grisea* – one recorded at Clipsham Park Wood.

Green Shieldbug *Palomena prasina* – one recorded on raspberries at Oakham.

DIPTERA

Drone Fly *Eristalis tenax* – one recorded at Uppingham.

HYMENOPTERA

Hornet *Vespa crabro* – 2 recorded feeding on flowers in Barnsdale Gardens.

COLEOPTERA

7-Spot Ladybird *Coccinella 7-punctata* – 2 recorded Clipsham Park Wood.

Harlequin Ladybird *Harmonia axyridis succinea* – one recorded Barnsdale Lodge Wood.

Harlequin Ladybird *Harmonia axyridis* – recorded as becoming 'increasingly noticeable' in garden at Uppingham and seeking hibernation spots. Then at same location 40+ recorded in recess of window casement.

the ones we find routinely but about a dozen were new to the area and therefore a welcome addition to our knowledge. Also there was a list of leaf miners from one BPGS member whose speciality this is, and although not galls were nevertheless welcome, and they have been passed on to our appropriate recorders (see above).

A visit to the Woodhead Castle area on the 12th produced two cards both of eight records, and it is interesting to note that two of the species were ones that had been pointed out to us on the 8th,

so the BPGS visit had opened our eyes to new possibilities.

A report from Manton Bay on the 22nd had just four species, all on Oak; in a previous report I had mentioned that Oak galls were almost certainly under-reported in the area, but I am pleased to see that this is changing.

The final report on the 26th was from the Burley Fishponds area and produced a total of 28 species, 10 from the actual fishponds and the remainder from the nearby wood which we have named Charcoal Burners Wood in the absence of any other name. Of 28, two were new: a mite gall on crack willow and a midge gall on small-leaved lime. As I have said previously, one way to find new species is to look at less common hosts.

October 2013

As mentioned in previous reports this season has seen some galls on Oak appearing in considerable numbers, to the point where the whole of the undersides of the leaves have been covered in them. This also applies to other galls such as the

Knopper gall on acorn cups as is borne out by a report from Wing which talks of 'huge numbers' and also mentions that later in the month they had mostly fallen to the ground.

The season is slowly running down but the start of the month saw reasonable numbers of galls – Clipsham Park Wood and Yew Tree Avenue between them produced 26 galls on the 3rd. One of these was new to us and is produced by a Psyllid or 'jumping plant louse' on Buckthorn and which causes quite considerable upward rolling of the leaves. Similarly the 10th produced a total of 22 species from Barnsdale and Barnsdale Lodge Woods, and included a midge gall on Birch catkins identified by Chris Leach who also came to Ketton Quarry on the BPGS/RNHS meeting in September.

The dam end of Eye Brook on the 24th came up with 10 species, all fairly routine, and the month closed with just 4 species from the Lyndon Centre on 31st. It is inevitable that many of the records received are routine, but nevertheless they are valuable in that they help to build up a picture of plant galls in the County.

Thanks for records to: M Chinery (BPGS), C H Gallimore, M Grimes, T Higginbotom (BPGS), C K Leach (BPGS), R Lemmon, K Palmer (BPGS)

BAT REPORT compiled by Jenny Harris

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May to October 2013

The summer of 2013 was slow to get started, with both May and June being described as cool months, but once the warmer weather arrived the period was much better for bats than the previous two summers. Breeding appears to have been more successful compared to 2012. For example, there were nine grounded pipistrelle bats during the period, only two of which were juveniles whereas in the same period during 2012, 13 pipistrelles were found grounded, of which nine were emaciated juveniles, all of which died.

There were few unspecified records from members for this period, but from 1 to 5.5 one or two bats were seen in a Barrowden garden and, more unusually four were foraging around the same garden after two warmer days. Again in Barrowden, a larger bat was seen on 22.5 and 31.5, flying strongly up and down, close to vegetation, dodging around as if catching insects on a cooler evening after a warm afternoon. There were definitely moths

about on the second date, suggesting the larger bat could have been long-eared. Also in May, there was a report of approximately 50 bats seen foraging near coppiced trees at Lagoon 3, Rutland Water, thought by the observer possibly to be Daubenton's. In June there were regular sightings of both small and larger bats in the Barrowden garden, even though it was often cool in the evenings. In Oakham, usually one but up to three bats were seen foraging over my own and adjoining gardens, particularly on 27.8. There were lots of Silver Y moths around, and there were spectacular dives and acrobatics from the bats, although these moths may be too big for pipistrelles.

Common pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus*

A sheltered glade in Compartment 23, between the main east/west ride and the southern boundary of Burley Wood, was the scene of frenetic foraging activity on 4.5, which included a small number of common pipistrelles at around 9.0 pm; several were heard later just north of the

main entrance to the wood. The same foraging areas were being used on 19.5. These bats were heard at Ketton on 29.6 and 5.7, and at Lyndon, Hambleton Peninsula and Egleton Reserve during the Rutland Water Bioblitz on 6.7. Alan and Julie Comber first reported common pipistrelle in their Oakham garden on 31.5 and then recorded them throughout the summer, with the last being seen and heard on 8.9. On 26.6, five bats were circling round the observers on a ridge south west of Eight Riding Tree in Burley Wood, detected at 45 kHz, the peak frequency for common pipistrelle.

Two bats emerged from Whissendine church during the Natterer's count, and one emerged from the north aisle of Ashwell church on 23.8.

Six grounded common pipistrelles were found, one of which was a juvenile; one adult male was found dead in Alan and Julie Comber's garden. Two bats, or perhaps the same one twice, spent several nights flying round the Land's End retail shop call centre. The first one, which had been flying round for two nights, was contained in a separate room on 9.9, where I caught it and released it a few days later. It was immediately joined by another pipistrelle which began what appeared to be an aggressive interaction, chasing the released bat persistently for some time until they disappeared from sight. The second bat at Land's End was seen over a period of about 10 days, emerging to fly round for about half an hour, then disappearing again, resisting all attempts to contain it in a room where it could be caught. Eventually it came out during daylight, and fell to the ground, obviously dehydrated and thin, on 23.10. Currently, I still have this one as the weather turned windy, wet and cold before it was fit for release. Both were males.

In June, Charles Gallimore counted 20 common pipistrelles at his Wing roost on 28.6, but by 10.7 the count had gone up to 71. Dave Cole had up to 67 bats in his Morcott roost in June, with a maximum count of 53 on 4.7. At Braunston church the relatively small common pipistrelle roost was augmented by a huge influx of bats, with a total of 501 on 30.7. I believe these may be the soprano pipistrelles from another roost in the village (see below) and it remains to be seen what happens next year. On the north side of the church, nests of both wild bees and wasps took up residence; the latter were treated by an experienced local pest control officer under advice from the Bat Conservation Trust, in such a way that the bats would not be harmed. It is important that the pesticide is delivered directly to the wasps' nest, not left on any structures that the bats might come

into contact with or they too could be killed. The last common pipistrelle of the year was a male found in a bat box during a check at Egleton nature reserve.

Soprano pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pygmaeus*

Soprano pipistrelles were recorded foraging at Burley Wood on 4.5 and 19.5; a single bat was heard on just one occasion in Alan and Julie Comber's garden on 2.6 and one was seen in my Woodland View garden on 24.8. They were recorded at Lyndon, Egleton and Hambleton peninsula during the Rutland Water Bioblitz, and at Ketton on 5.7. There were no bats in the former Whitwell Hotel roost. Four counts were carried out at Egleton Church with the help of Ivan and Lorna Burger and Bob Burchnell, with a peak count of 409 bats on 13.6. On one of the dates, three bats were seen flying round inside the church, possibly trapped, but the church warden who lives across the road from the church kindly left the church door open so that the bats could escape. The Society held a social and bat count evening at The Fox and Hounds, Exton, on 2.8 when a count of approximately 400 bats emerged from the roof. However, on 21.7 a phenomenal 743 bats were counted by Paul and Marion Coughlan. It really is an extraordinary sight.

In May, the roost of a maternity colony of soprano pipistrelles in Braunston was destroyed when the chimney they had chosen as home collapsed. Soon afterwards the small colony of common pipistrelles in the church, which last year peaked at around 60 bats in July, swelled to 253 bats in June and over 500 in July. I feel sure that the additional bats were the sopranos that had occupied the church as an emergency measure when they lost their original roost. It is not known whether the common pips were completely displaced during the breeding season or whether they were able to co-exist with the sopranos.

A large soprano pipistrelle roost was found at a farm in Pilton, when the owners found that bats and wasps were both using the same entrance. Neither species were roosting in the roof, so it was assumed they were using the large old stone wall on the south side of the house. Following a visit, advice was given on how to treat the wasps without harming the bats by the Bat Conservation Trust.

Only one grounded soprano was found, an emaciated juvenile male found on a building in Land's End Way on 9.9.

Brown Long-eared bat *Plecotus auritus*

In a Barrowden garden there were a number of sightings of larger bats that may have been long-eared, and on 25.9 Linda Worrall reported finding the head of a *noctuid* moth on top of the car, under the rafters of the car port, suggesting a long-eared bat had its feeding perch there. The moth was possibly a large *ranunculus*. There were 15 long-eared bats emerging from a wing roost in June (28.6), 14 on 10.7 and several were thought to have emerged from outbuildings where droppings were found. Charles Gallimore kindly allowed me to release a brown long-eared female in this outbuilding. Found grounded in the village in 2012, she thrived but was not really fit to release during that summer. I prepared her for release by allowing her to roost in a bat box that was placed inside a laundry basket, her mealworms being placed in a dish on the roof of the box. In August we placed the laundry basket in Charles' outhouse, the basket remaining closed for two nights so that she and the local long-eared bats could get used to each other. On the third night, the basket lid was opened so that the bat could stay in the bat box or go, as she chose. Charles reported that most of the mealworms left on top of the bat box were eaten, but she was not otherwise disturbed. On the fourth night about three mealworms were eaten, but thereafter no more mealworms were eaten. We just have to hope that she quickly learned how to look after herself, both from the point of view of feeding and in respect of the other long-eared bats in residence.

Five grounded bats were found during the period, which is more than usual. They were from Bisbrooke, Market Overton, Edmondthorpe, Glaston and Burley-on-the-Hill. The Edmondthorpe bat, found on 2.8, was only about four days old, so was a very late birth. It was placed close to the roof of the roost to allow its mother to collect it, which we hope was the case. The bat found at Burley-on-the-Hill on 26.10 was a male that had found its way into a metal ventilation duct. It was found and rescued when its foot and wing appeared at the louvred end of the duct inside a utility room as it tried to get out. Unfortunately, it was thin and probably dehydrated and died shortly afterwards. This was the last record.

Nathusius' pipistrelle *Pipistrellus nathusii*

In early May, Nathusius' pipistrelles were heard foraging with other pipistrelles in the Compartment 23 glade at Burley Wood; many seemed to be passing through as if heading

towards Rutland Water. At around 9.20 pm, 18 bats were seen emerging from a known roost in the wood. On 19.5 several were heard foraging but the roost appeared to be unoccupied. Foraging bats were heard in small numbers near Lagoon 6, Egleton, and along south shore, Hambleton Peninsula, during the Rutland Water Bioblitz on 6.7.

Barbastelle *Barbastellus barbastellus*

On 19.5 this rare species was heard very briefly on the main east to west ride in Burley Wood, and later near the entrance to the wood adjacent to the A606. The bats were recorded on an AnaBat detector, which meant that the brief passes could be confirmed by computer analysis. Both bats were travelling fast, probably towards Rutland Water, not foraging.

Daubenton's bat *Myotis daubentonii*

The short stretch of the River Chater at the Sinc Bridge, Ketton, was again a reliable site for seeing and hearing Daubenton's bat, with good numbers there on 29.6 and 5.7. Foraging activity was also seen where Station Road, Ketton, crosses the Chater, but with fewer passes seen than on the sheltered section of the river at Sinc Bridge, possibly because of the low water level. On 6.7, during the RW Bioblitz, Daubenton's bats were foraging close to the south shore of Rutland Water at Lyndon, just east of Teal Hide, where shrubs shelter the water's edge. They were also recorded at Lagoon 6, Egleton.

Natterer's bat *Myotis nattereri*

This species was present at Stoke Dry and Whissendine churches; the counts at the latter were 34 on 9.6 and 33 on 18.6, a slight increase from last year. On 1.9 a freshly dead bat was found in a garden in St. Mary's Road, Manton. This is a significant record, as it confirms a tentative identification I made of droppings found in St. Mary's church some years ago and a completely new area for the species. It is intriguing to speculate where the breeding roost might be. On 1.11 Nathalie Cossa, a conservation officer for the Wildlife Trust, found a male Natterer's bat during a bat box check at Egleton nature reserve, which was a first record for Rutland Water Nature Reserve.

Brandt's bat *Myotis brandtii*

On 20.9 a bat was found on a pathway at RW Egleton by a visitor. The bat was taken to Joelle Bryan, the Education Officer and local Bat Group member. The male bat was very floppy and died

overnight, but Joelle identified it as a Brandt's bat from the convex outer edge of its tragus (part of the ear) and its bulbous penis. Some years ago Dr Robert Stebbings identified some of the hibernating bats at Ketton Gorse at Brandt's, but this is the first bat in the hand identified in Rutland. Its fur was pale on the belly, while its dorsal fur was much browner than that of the closely related whiskered bat *Myotis mystacinus*, and had golden tips to the fur. It is a tricky species to identify so well done, Joelle.

Noctule bat *Nyctalus noctula*

There were few sightings this year. On 4.5 a single noctule was heard briefly in the distance from Compartment 23 near the southern boundary of Burley Wood, at around 9.0 pm. At roughly 9.50 pm three passes were heard as bats flew over

the junction of the Main Ride with the east/west ride in Burley. No foraging buzzes were heard. Several distant passes were heard at Burley Wood on 19.5. A noctule flew high over a Wing garden soon after sunset. At Ketton, over the Sinc Stream where it flows into the Chater, sustained foraging behaviour was seen and heard during walks on 29.6 and 5.7. This was an amazing sight, with the single noctule in clear view above our heads, circling and diving after insects. A noctule was heard at Egleton during the Bioblitz but not at Lyndon or Hambleton. Two noctules foraging together was a thrilling sight at Ashwell on 23.8. The bats were circling over the church and houses in spite of the drizzle; Ivan and Lorna Burger and I watched them for 15 minutes before leaving them to it.

My thanks to: I & L Burger, B Burchnall, J Bryan (Rutland Water), T Caldicott, D Cole, A & J Comber, P & M Coughlan, Dr C Gallimore, J Harris, R Lemmon, P Rudkin, A Tomlinson, J Whiteford, G and L Worrall, and of course everyone who came on the RNHS bat evening at Exton.

MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

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July to October 2013

Records from the last four months have been included in one report this time. This is partly due to fewer records than usual for the summer period, but also to my repeated absences from home! The latter I apologise for, but greatly appreciate the records that I have received, and thank all recorders for their reports. I wonder whether the reports are fewer because of lower numbers of animals being seen, or whether there are fewer members recording. I suspect probably a bit of both, and encourage you all to adventure (safely) out into the countryside and see what you can find!

Otter spraint has given evidence that one was present at Fort Henry ponds in July, but not more recently, and later the same month one was observed swimming in Leighfield Fishponds. All other records come from RWNr, where prints were found in mud at Heron Bay in August, and a lying up area and chute into the water seen alongside ponds between lagoons 2, 3 and 4 near Smew Hide. An otter was also reported swimming across RW in front of the main centre, from island to island in full view of visitors. Spraint was found on a mink raft at Dog Kennel Cottage in September, and October, and also at Burley Fishponds.

A **Mink** was seen in mid July near Martinthorpe running along a track in the early morning, and another was later reported from the Bridge near the sewage works at Langham. The observer noted that it was a fine animal, and looked very

healthy with a beautiful shiny coat – probably why ladies loved them so much! They are still very much around, but fortunately none have been seen or recorded at RW recently, so **Water Voles** still appear to be doing well. A final reintroduction took place in September, around 100 further animals placed in areas where they have previously succeeded, so no new territories, unless by natural spread. A group was lucky enough to spot one at wet meadow in early September, as it sat on a mat of weed feeding happily beneath the brambles and overhanging bushes, and another was spotted from the Egleton centre. Droppings and footprints are regularly found on rafts in the reintroduction areas.

Badger setts in the Pickworth area showed signs of activity in August through to October, and road casualties were seen on the A606 near Tinwell and the A6003 at Lyddington, the latter making a

meal for a Red Kite, which narrowly avoided an approaching car. Only two foxes were reported during the whole 4 months; one hesitated over whether to cross the A606 at Empingham, before deciding against it, and another near EBR emerged from a hedge to investigate a family of Red-legged Partridge, which flew off over the hedge to escape.

A **Stoat** was seen in June, between Great Casterton and Mount's Lodge, peeping out of a hole, making clicking sounds to warn off danger. In July one was seen on two occasions near the bridge at Leighfield Fishponds, and near Pilton one was seen, and a few days later two observed, in the same spot.

A bumper pack of **Hedgehog** reports begins with one walking across a gravel yard then up the road, in Normanton. In Stamford (not in Rutland I know!) a faithful visitor fed regularly on dog food, returning every night in July and August, but failed to return on 31 August or 1 September. No further reports suggest it has found another source of sustenance – or is sadly no longer in need of it! From her Barrowden garden Linda Worrall reports a courting pair in early July, and hogs regularly seen, up to 3 at once through the month. On the 22nd two large hogs courted, and a much smaller one was also present. In August nightly sightings of at least 2 hedgehogs were followed on the 22nd by a courting pair, and on the 27th 2 courting and one large one fed on the patio. There were few sightings from mid September to October 5th, after which 2 different individuals were seen most evenings to 24th. From then to the end of October at least 4 separate animals fed on the patio or car port.

On July 7th 2 **Long-tailed Field Mice** were trapped separately near the Birdwatching Centre at Egleton, 3 **Bank Voles** and one **Short-tailed**

Vole were also found. A **Common shrew** was found dead on a footpath near Woodside Farm, Normanton, in July, and another on a field margin at Exton Park. **Rabbits** are present in numbers, a warren along the hedgerow north of Tolethorpe, and several near Newell Wood on the permissive path. A dead rabbit provided a meal for a Red Kite on Seaton Road Barrowden, and the black one mentioned in an earlier report was still present at Banthorpe Gravel Pits in August.

Brown Hares are seldom seen these days in the Pickworth area, and there have been very few reports at all this summer, but on 23rd July one was seen running up the hedgerow towards Turnpole Wood. At Greetham Valley Golf Club they were regularly seen during October. In July 2 **Roe Deer** bounded away from the top lake at Fort Henry through a wheat field. **Muntjac** are reported from Burley Wood, one seen in both July and August. 2 were seen and 2 heard barking in Burley Wood, and at Normanton a pair browsed on a lawn and shrubs at the edge of a wood.

Numbers of **Fallow Deer** remain low in the area. At Clipsham and Little Haw, formerly home to groups of 30 to 40, a maximum of 8 were seen in July, and 9 including 2 fawns in August. At Burley Wood, 11 was the maximum seen in August, 14 including 3 fawns at Burley, and 18 with 3 fawns at Pickworth. A group of 5 browsed on a spinney near Taylor's Farm between Pickworth and Great Casterton in early August. In September 11 were seen in Burley Wood, including 3 fawns, only 2 fallow in Clipsham, and 17 including 2 fawns in Little Haw. In October, 4 were recorded in Clipsham Wood, and 1 in Little Haw. The faithful deer recorders have gone further east in search of Fallow, venturing into Lincolnshire, where numbers remain higher, hoping that no-one tells the hunters!

Records received from: M Branston, T Caldicott, C Gallimore, M & G Griffin, M Grimes, R Lemmon, P Langston, T Mitcham, A R & M A Thorp, L Worrall