

RNHS funds, helping others

Given a sizeable amount of accumulated financial reserves, your Committee felt it appropriate to use some of this money in productive ways that advance the Society's charitable objects. I am sure you will be pleased to know that recently we have donated a total of £5,000 to the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, covering the following:

- £350 for Bird Ringers Audio Loop System at Rutland Water
- £1595 for a CCTV camera for the new Sand Martin Hide at Rutland Water
- The balance (£3055) for a series of schools workshops run by the Trust's education team, aiming to get children more familiar with their local wildlife. These workshops will be organised for schools in Rutland.

During the past year RNHS has also donated £300 to the British Trust for Ornithology, for their nightingale project, and £100 to the Rutland Water Osprey Project to help fund additional tracking technology following the loss of birds this year.

National Planning Policy Framework

You will recall our plea made a couple of *Fieldfares* ago that members do their best to respond to the Government's consultation on the NPPF, which at that time was extremely unfavourable towards conservation and the environment. There was a massive response from people nationwide, and we now await the revised Framework. But pressure is still needed. Please go to the Planning for People site (below) for more information and to see how you can help. They write:

'the next few weeks represent what could be the final opportunity for us to influence the final shape of the NPPF. It's really important, therefore, for us to keep up the pressure where we can. Letting your MP know you expect big changes in the proposed planning reforms will keep up the momentum in the weeks ahead.'

Do please therefore write to your MP. You could think about writing in a similar way to other influential people in your local area too, such as local newspapers and local councillors.'

www.planningforpeople.org.uk

Targetted Recording for 2012

LROS are asking for records of all birds of prey in 2012 and I'm sure we can help by recording Red Kites, Buzzards, Sparrowhawks, Kestrels etc. in as many 1 km squares as possible this year – send

in records as usual, with a grid reference and an indication of numbers.

I'm also requesting all records of breeding wildfowl, from the humble Mallard to Mute Swans, Canada and Greylag Geese – not forgetting those species which seem to be expanding such as Mandarin Ducks, Gadwall and Tufted Ducks. I look forward to being deluged with records!

Terry Mitcham

Flora of Leicestershire and Rutland

This new work, *The Flora of Leicestershire and Rutland*, is the first complete published listing of those flowering plants, ferns, clubmosses and horsetails recorded growing wild in the combined counties of Leics and Rutland (Vice-county 55) since 1933. It includes the records of 1762 plants, including microspecies, hybrids and subspecies, available at 31st December 2010.

There are four pages of colour plates, an introduction addressing issues such as the conservation of the flora, a bibliography, gazetteer and index of English names. The main text consists of an alphabetical list of plants, with concise details of status, habitat and frequency. Rare Plant Register species are highlighted with more detail on localities where they occur, and those plants considered to be indicators of good habitat (axiophytes) are also noted.

The author is Michael Jeeves, Head of Conservation with the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and very well known to the Society. He is the speaker at the February 7 RNHS meeting and will be bringing copies of the book.

The book is available at a cost of £7.50 (plus £1.50 p&p if ordered by post) from Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, Brocks Hill Country Park, Washbrook Lane, Oadby, Leicester LE2 5JJ. Please make cheques payable to LRWT.

Spring 2012 Survey of Grizzled Skippers in Rutland

I have been contacted by Bill Bacon of the East Midlands branch of Butterfly Conservation, who is hoping to undertake a comprehensive survey this spring of (a) known, (b) potentially extinct and (c) new potential sites, for the Grizzled Skipper in Rutland. He would welcome any assistance so if anyone would like to be involved with this project or would like more information please contact me for further details.

Alistair Lawrence

Annual General Meeting, Tuesday 6th March 2012

Our AGM will be held on Tuesday 6th March, in advance of our talk for the evening.

All officers and other committee members automatically stand down at the AGM. If you would like to nominate someone or offer to be nominated yourself, please contact the Chairman or Secretary as soon as possible. We definitely need your help! Also, please let the Chairman or Secretary know if you have any other business to raise at the AGM.

New President: Sir Clifford Boulton, who has been our kind and supportive President for many years, will be standing down at this AGM. We are most grateful to Sir Clifford and Lady Boulton for their involvement with the Society.

We are very fortunate that Mr Joss Hanbury has agreed to be our President going forward. Mr Hanbury has a long association with the RNHS, not least because of his ownership of Burley Wood and his kind permission for access given to RNHS members. We are delighted that he is happy to be further involved with the Society in this way. Mr Hanbury's appointment as President will be part of the business for the meeting, but I am sure that members will join me in giving him a warm welcome.

In order to assist the Society where necessary with official business, Dr Clive Jones and Phil Rudkin have both kindly consented to be Vice-Presidents.

MINUTES OF RNHS ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2011

The Annual General Meeting of the Rutland Natural History Society was held on Tuesday 1st March 2011 at the Church of England School, Oakham, with 50 members present and the President, Sir Clifford Boulton, in the Chair.

1 Apologies: J Levisohn, J Ostler, N Thurlow, D Whitefield.

2 Minutes of AGM 2010: As circulated in *Fieldfare* January 2011, but Item 4, Treasurer's Report, should have been followed by 'Item 5, Appointment of Independent Examiner: Canon Tovey was thanked. Proposed G Kirk, seconded P Scott, Canon Tovey was reappointed' and subsequent items renumbered. The corrections were read to the meeting. Proposed L Biddle, seconded G Worrall, the corrected minutes were approved and signed.

3 Matters arising: Sound system: Investigations

into improvement had taken place; however, the school is to be demolished and rebuilt by autumn 2011 and the Society had been offered use of the new system to be installed. Monitoring of that system would take place as soon as possible to ensure it would be suitable for Society meetings.

4 Treasurer's report: Number of subscriptions and Gift Aid increased slightly. Gift Aid was valued by Society. Surplus for year was £1,672; £13,000 in bank and building society. A reserve had to be kept, but suitable ways of using balance were under investigation. Proposed J Harris, carried nem con, the report was adopted and M Grimes thanked.

5 Appointment of Independent Examiner: Canon Tovey was no longer available. His service to the Society was greatly appreciated. A possible successor would be sought.

6 Alterations to RNHS Constitution: M Grimes with the Committee proposed alterations to the Constitution originally adopted 1983 and amended 1994 in order to bring it up to date with current practices. These had been circulated in *Fieldfare* January 2011 with notice to members that voting would take place at AGM 2011. Proposed G Worrall, seconded R Lemmon and approved nem con.

7 Chairman's report: A Tomlinson reported a successful year and praised the hardiness of members who attended meetings in inclement weather. Officers, committee and recorders were thanked and the chairman stressed how reliant the Society was upon them and other members who volunteered their help and involvement. There would shortly be natural losses among such volunteers, and unless other members came forward to offer their assistance the Society would struggle to maintain its high standards.

8 Election of Officers and Committee: Proposed S Hope, seconded T Mitcham, the following were elected en bloc: President: Sir Clifford Boulton; Chairman: Ann Tomlinson; Secretary: Linda Worrall; Treasurer: Martin Grimes; Membership Secretary: Graham Worrall; Programme Secretary: Dawn Whitefield; *Fieldfare* Editor: Hendrina Ellis; other Committee Members: Linda Biddle; Gill Chiverton; Jenny Harry; Andrew Lear: Peter Scott.

9 Any other business: P Rudkin reported his contact by Biological Records Centre, Wallingford, which receives RNHS journals, concerning orthoptera. The Centre appreciated the quality of Society journals and records which it could use.

10 Date of next meeting: Tuesday 6th March 2012.

RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY EVENTS

OUTDOOR EVENTS

Sunday 19 February **RUTLAND WATER** **10.30 am**

Exploring the new lagoons at Rutland Water Nature Reserve, accompanied by reserve staff.

Directions: meet at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton, just outside Oakham on the shore of Rutland Water. Grid ref: SK 879 072

Sunday 25 March **CLIPSHAM PARK WOOD** **9.30 am**

Note the earlier start than usual. Phil Rudkin is leading this walk.

Directions: meet in the car park, OS Landranger 130, SK 981169.

INDOOR EVENTS

RNHS indoor meetings are held at the Oakham Church of England school, Burley Road, Oakham. The new car park is in full working order.

Tuesday 7 February **RE-WILDING THE SOAR VALLEY** **7.30 pm**

Michael Jeeves, Head of Conservation at the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, will talk about this successful 'Living Landscape' project.

Tuesday 6 March **AGM followed by ENCOURAGING WILDLIFE INTO THE GARDEN** **7.30 pm**

The AGM, followed by a talk by Steve Lovell. Steve is a lecturer with the WEA, works part-time for the RSPB as a Community Project Officer, and offers a countryside guide service for people visiting Lincolnshire.

Tuesday 27 March **ULVERSCROFT NATURE RESERVE** **7.30 pm**

Steve Woodward, an expert local naturalist, talks about a reserve close to his heart.

LEICESTER AND RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST

Indoor events are held at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton; admission £1 includes tea/coffee/biscuits. See www.lrwt.org.uk, or phone 0116 272 0444 in office hours, for other events in Leicestershire and Rutland, including guided walks, for which it is often necessary to book.

Monday 20 February **REINTRODUCTION OF RAPTORS** **7.30 pm**

By Tim Mackrill, Project Officer of the Osprey Trust.

Monday 19 March **AGM followed by THE NATIONAL FOREST** **7.30 pm**

The AGM, followed by a talk by Sam Lattaway.

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

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

WEATHER SUMMARY Roy Lemmon

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

November 2011

Atmospheric pressure and winds The first week of this month gave generally low pressures and it was in this period that the majority of the rain fell. The rest of the month saw higher pressures, between 1011 and 1024 mb; and there was a period of four days, the 19th to 22nd, when wind speeds were low or nil and there was reduced visibility due to fog – at 0900 hours on the 20th visibility was below 100 m. The latter half of the month saw winds SW-SW, except on the days quoted.

Temperatures A very warm month, the 'southerly' winds referred to above made it nationally the third most southerly November in 139 years of records and the second warmest November in the 353 year long record. The mean minimum I recorded was 5.91 °C and there was only one night when the temperature fell below freezing and then only by 0.1 °C. November 2010 had 10 air frosts including -9.1 °C on the 27th; this year the mean maximum was 12.3 °C, easily the highest in the decade, 2006 was 11.86 °C and 2009 11.49 °C.

Rain The total I recorded was 24.5 mm (0.96 inches) which is 42% of my long term mean. Nationally, averaged over England and Wales the total was 2.09 inches or 53% of the average for the standard reference period 1971–2000. Here the great majority of the rain fell in the first 8 days with 13.6 mm (0.54 inches) on the 3rd alone.

Sunshine Averaged over England and Wales this was 66 hours or 99% of the LTM. It was however the lowest figure for November for 7 years. The LTM at RAF Wittering is 56 hours.



December 2011

Atmospheric pressure and winds Pressures from the 1st to 21st were generally low and especially during the period 13th to 19th, but from 23rd to the end of the month they were considerably higher, the highest being 1033 mb on the 24th. Winds were SW-W except for four days and this was nationally the second most 'westerly' December in 139 years of records. Winds were often of high velocities and on the night of 12th/13th there were gales. At 0900 hours on the 15th wind speeds were up to 20 knots.

Temperatures This was another much warmer than might be expected month, the warmest since 2006, and nationally there have been only 17 warmer Decembers in the last 100 years. The mean night-time minimum was 2.65 °C (2006 3.4 °C) and the mean day-time maximum was 8.53 °C (2006 8.77 °C). There were only 5 air frosts and the lowest night-time temperature was on the 17th at -2.1 °C. Day-time maxima were rather variable but from the 20th were appreciably higher, with the month's highest, 13.0 °C, occurring on the 26th.

Rain This month's rainfall was almost back to the mean with a total of 54.3 mm being recorded (2.14 inches). This is 92.4% of my LTM and contrasts with the averaged rainfall for England and Wales, which was 112 mm (4.41 inches) or 115% of the average for the standard reference period. Looking back over my records for the past decade it seems that December can be a month with considerable variation in precipitation, 2002 was very wet with 96.5 mm and 2004 and 2005 had totals close to 19 mm.

Sunshine Averaged over England and Wales this was 55 hours or 105% of the 1981–2010 mean and was the lowest for 6 years. The RAF Wittering LTM for this month is 55.9 hours.

Total rainfall for 2011 This was 435.2 mm (17.13 inches) or 72.4% of my 20 year LTM. This was only exceeded in dryness by 1996 (382.9 mm) and 1991 (387.5 mm).

I am indebted to Philip Eden's weather watch column in the Sunday Telegraph for the sunshine national figures, for both months.

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

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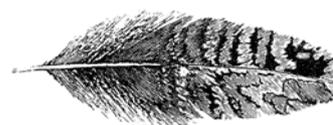
November/December 2011

There have been only two amphibian records for these months. Frogs were heard 'purring' in the Worralls' garden in Barrowden on 3rd November and a Great Crested Newt was found on a path at Stocken on 13th December, apparently in good health.

My thanks to J Crosby and L Worrall who sent in these records.

BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

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November/December 2011

November continued the theme of high wildfowl numbers at Rutland Water but by December many of these had departed, with some Wigeon transferring to Eyebrook. A good variety of species included both wild swan species, White-fronted Goose, Green-winged Teal (back again!), Long-tailed Duck and Smew. Waders were noted at both reservoirs in good numbers, especially Lapwings. Farmland and woodland were generally quiet and there were no large counts of birds in gardens – a legacy of the mild weather, no doubt.

My thanks to the following for their records and good bird watching to all in 2012: P Bennett, A & L Biddle, M Body, P & C Brown, T Caldicott, D P Cole, A Comber, J Crosby, P Ennis, Dr C Gallimore, N E Gordon, M & G Griffin, A Hayday, Dr C Jones, T Land, P Langston, A L Lawrence, R Lemmon, LROS, S Lister, I Misselbrook, T Mitcham, D Needham, D Perril, P Rudkin, Jill Stapleton, A R & M A Thorp, N Went, L & G Worrall.

Bewick's Swan Two were at EBR on 13.11, and twelve at RW the next day. Six remained in the north arm to at least 21.11, and a family of four were at Egleton throughout Dec.

Whooper Swan Five were at RW on 5.11, with eight on 15.11. One was at EBR from 13.11 to mid-Dec and six flew over RW on 2.12. On 5.11, 27 flew south-east over Stocken.

Pink-footed Goose A skein was heard flying over Stocken in fog on 5.11, and four were at RW on 8.11.

White-fronted Goose Four were at EBR on 17.11, increasing to eight the next day and present to at least 14.12. Two or three were at Egleton from 18.11 to at least 13.12.

Greylag Goose Nineteen flew over Stocken on 9.11.

Egyptian Goose Two were by a pond near Lyndon Wood on 25.12.

Shelduck One was back at FHP on 11.12 and 19.12.

Mandarin Duck This colourful duck seems to be extending its range and numbers. Five were at FHP on 3.11, with four to mid-Dec. and a pair to the end of the year. A male was at Oakham Canal, Ashfield on 11.11, and a male was at LFP on 28.11.

Wigeon Twenty-two were by Rygate Lake in Exton Park on 3.12.

American Wigeon The male was at RW on 1.11 and remained until 28.11, when it was killed by a Great Black-backed Gull.

Gadwall Nos at FHP increased to a max of 113 on 11.12.

Green-winged Teal The male was back at EBR on 11.12, and remained to the end of the year.

Shoveler There were high nos at FHP with a max of 105 on 26.11.

Pintail A max of ten were at FHP on 11.12.

Red-crested Pochard Twenty-three were at RW on 4.11 but nos declined over the period to three on 8.12.

Scaup Present at RW from 4.11 with a max of seven noted in south arm on 20.12.

Long-tailed Duck A female was at RW (north arm) from 20.12 to the end of the month.

Common Scoter A female was at RW dam on 15.11, with five at Whitwell next day. Two or three were present to at least 9.12.

Smew Noted at RW from 18.11 when there were three redheads at Lyndon. A max of four redheads and a male were there by 19.12. A male and one or two redheads were at EBR from 5.12.

- Goosander** Five females were at LFP on 6.11 and nine were at RW(Lyndon) on 30.11.
- Red-breasted Merganser** A male was at EBR on 11.11.
- Ruddy Duck** A female was at RW(Lyndon) on 22.12.
- Grey Partridge** Three were near Mounts Lodge on 21.12.
- Pheasant** Two males and three females were regular visitors to a Barleythorpe feeding station in Nov.
- Bittern** One was at RW(Eggleton) on 19.12.
- Little Egret** Six flew over Banthorpe GP on 12.11 and there were two at EBR on 13.11. One was at FHP on 31.12.
- Grey Heron** One noted over George Henry Wood on 23.11.
- Slavonian Grebe** One was at RW north arm between 2/13.12.
- Black-necked Grebe** One was at RW north arm between 2/16.12.
- Red Kite** Birds were regular at FHP, Barrowden and Stocken, where there was a max of four on 10.11. Two Stocken birds were seen picking refuse from bin bags on 21.12.
- Marsh Harrier** A female/ juv was at RW(Eggleton) between 6./8/11.
- Sparrowhawk** One or two were frequent at Stocken in both months. Noted in an Oakham garden on 28.11.
- Kestrel** Noted at FHP, Exton Park, Normanton, George Henry Wood and Stoke Dry – all singles.
- Merlin** A male was at Cottesmore Airfield on 12.12.
- Peregrine** One flew over RW(Eggleton) carpark on 4.12.
- Water Rail** Two called by lower lake at FHP on 31.12.
- Golden Plover** 494 were at RW on 32.11. c.120 were at RW(Eggleton) on 23.11, and fifteen were over Stocken on 20.12.
- Lapwing** At RW there were 1930 on 23.11, and 1004 on 18.12. c.250 flew SW over Stocken on 8.12. 200 were in the area on 13.12.
- Knot** Two were at EBR on 5.11, with one at RW(Whitwell) on 16.11.
- Little Stint** Four were reported from RW(Manton Bay) on 5.12.
- White-rumped Sandpiper** RW's October bird was last seen on 6.11 – it apparently relocated to the Axe estuary in Devon the next day.
- Curlew Sandpiper** One was at RW between 1/8.11.
- Dunlin** Present at RW throughout both months with max counts of 86 on 23.11, and 113 on 18.12. Up to thirteen were at EBR between 23.11 and 12.12.
- Ruff** At RW twenty-one were present on 1.11, decreasing to eleven on 32.11, and eight on 18.12. There were nine at EBR on 12.12, five on 17.12 and two the next day.
- Jack Snipe** One was at RW(Eggleton) on 1.11 and 18.12.
- Snipe** At RW there were three on 23.11, and thirty-five on 18.12. One flew over Stocken on 17.11 and there were eight at LFP on 28.11, and twelve there on 10.12.
- Woodcock** Singles were reported between 10.11 and 31.12 from RW(Lyndon and Whitwell), Morcott, Little Haw Wood and Tunneley Wood.
- Black-tailed Godwit** Present at RW from 2.11 to at least 18.12, with three on the first date, two from 8.11, and one from 16.12.
- Curlew** Seven were at RW on 23.11 with five on 18.12.
- Green Sandpiper** A good spread of records with two at FHP to 18.11 and one to 11.12, two at EBR on 23/25.11. and singles at LFP on 6.11 and Wing Fishing Lakes on 16.11. One was at RW(Lyndon) on 15.11 and one near Lyndon on 25.12.
- Spotted Redshank** Two were at RW on 1.11.
- Redshank** There were eight at RW on 23.11 and eighteen on 18.12. One was at EBR on 17.12. with two noted the next day.
- Grey Phalarope** One was at RW north arm on 22.12.
- Great Skua** One was at RW on 9.11.
- Little Gull** One was at RW on 1.11.
- Kittiwake** A first-winter bird was at RW on 6.12.
- Mediterranean Gull** Singles were at the RW roost on 17.11 and 13.12.
- Iceland Gull** A first winter was in the RW roost on 19.11.
- Glaucous Gull** An adult was regular at the RW roost from 12.12 to 20.12, and in the EBR roost on 31.12.
- Woodpigeon** Some sizeable flocks were reported – c.500 at Stocken on 29.11, 530 over Leighfield on 6.11, and 500 at Lyndon Wood on 25.12. These were dwarfed, however, by c.2000 near Crossroads Farm, Empingham .
- Collared Dove** Garden nos seem to be decreasing but there were thirty-six at Mounts Lodge on 12.11.

- Barn Owl** Nov singles were at Wild's Lodge, Oakham bypass, near Morcott, Greetham, and near Lyndon. Two were near Leighfield on 10.12.
- Tawny Owl** Well reported during Nov with two calling in Oakham on 27.11, and regular song at Normanton. One was dead by the A47 at Barrowden on 29.11, and two were by the same road near Bisbrooke on 1.12.
- Short-eared Owl** One was at RW between 1/14.11 and one at EBR on 12.12.
- Kingfisher** One was at North Brook FHP on 6.11, and one or two were at RW (Eggleton) between 10/27.11.
- Green Woodpecker** Present all of Nov at Normanton and Stocken with others seen at FHP, Exton Park, RW(Eggleton) and a Stamford garden.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker** In Nov regularly visited feeders at Barleythorpe and Normanton (pair). Noted at George Henry Wood on 23.11, and in Tunneley Wood in both months. Three were around Lyndon on 25.12, with drumming heard from Lyndon Wood.
- Jay** Regularly seen in Exton estate woodlands in both months. Eight were around Lyndon on 12.11.
- Jackdaw** c.150 were noted over Stocken on 18 and 26.12.
- Rook** A regular flight line over Stocken was noted during Dec, with birds passing west in late afternoon. 1071 were counted on 25.12. Has anyone noted similar flight lines in other parts of Rutland?
- Carrion Crow** Thirty-two were noted at Stocken on 2.11, and 108 were scavenging freshwater mussels around the margins of a very low EBR on 17.11.
- Raven** Two were over Wing on 6.11, with three in that area on 13.11. Two were at Leighfield on 14.11, and singles were reported from FHP, Stocken, Lyndon and Pickworth.
- Willow Tit** Two were at RW(Lyndon) on 12.12, two were at Leighfield (18.12) and one was near Lyndon on 25.12.
- Marsh Tit** One or two were seen at several sites on RW(Lyndon, Gibbet Gorse and Berrybutts Spinney), Tunneley Wood, Stretton Wood, Wing and Manton (taking sunflower hearts).
- Long-tailed Tit** A max of fifteen were at Park House, Normanton, in Nov, and six were in a Barrowden garden on 23.11.
- Chiffchaff** Singles were at RW(Lyndon) on 23 and 30.11.
- Blackcap** A pair were in a Manton garden on 17.12, with the male again on 19.12.
- Nuthatch** Pairs were noted in Lyndon, Wing and Berrybutts Spinney. One fed regularly at Tunneley Wood feeders in both months.
- Treecreeper** One was in an Uppingham garden on 26/27.12.
- Blackbird** Some good counts included forty around Wing on 13.11, fifty-two at Leighfield on 20.11, and fifty-two, again at Wing, on 21.12.
- Fieldfare** Movement was noted at Stocken with ninety-four on 9.11, ninety-three on 11.11, and seventy-six on 22.11. In North Brook valley at FHP there were c.110 on 12.11, and 120 on 3.12. The largest total was c.500 over Leighfield on 14.11.
- Redwing** 180 flew west at Stocken on 2.11, with 116 on 9.11, and 400 at a pre-roost there next day. Eighty were over Stocken on 23.12.
- Mistle Thrush** Seven fed on Yew berries at Normanton in Nov and there were seven at FHP on 31.12. Song was heard at Barrowden on 9.12 and Stamford on 22.12.
- Stonechat** A male was at RW(Eggleton) on 16.12.
- Duncock** Twenty-two were noted around Wing on 21.12.
- Tree Sparrow** Twelve were at RW(Lyndon) feeders on 11.11, and there were six at Wing/Morcott sewage works on 13.11. Four were at EBR feeders near the dam on 28.11, and eight at Martinthorpe on 10.12, with thirteen at RW(Lyndon) feeders on 13.12.
- Grey Wagtail** Singles were in Scotgate, Stamford on 13.12, and RW(Tertiary Treatment Works) on 18.12.
- Meadow Pipit** Twenty were at EBR on 18.12 and thirty at RW(Berrybutts) on 24 and 31.12.
- Rock Pipit** Singles were at EBR on 1.11 and RW dam on 15.11.
- Brambling** Only two records – one over Leighfield on 14.11 and one with Chaffinches in Exton Park on 26.11.
- Goldfinch** Eleven fed on thistles at George Henry Wood on 23.11.
- Siskin** Thirty flew over Greetham Valley GC on 28.12.
- Linnet** Eighty were near Berrybutts at RW on 2.12, with one hundred in the same area on 31.12.
- Crossbill** Over flew over Gibbet Gorse on 4.12, ten flew over RW on 23.12, and one over Lyndon Wood on 25.12.
- Bullfinch** Twenty-three were around Wing on 16.11, and fifteen at RW(Lyndon) on 23.11.

Hawfinch One was heard in Gibbet Gorse on 22.12.

Snow Bunting One was near Pickworth on 2.11, and a female was at RW(Egleton/Old Hall) from 6.12 to the end of the month.

Yellowhammer Forty-one were at Stocken on 19.11.

Corn Bunting A single was with Yellowhammers near Mounts Lodge on 21.12.

Wildfowl Counts – November and December 2011

The November Eyebrook count was affected by fog. P – birds present but not counted.

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry Ponds /Exton Park		Holywell Lake	
	23.11	18.12	20.11	18.12	18.11	19.12	18.11	
Mute Swan	314	360	78	101	11	11	8	No count received
Bewick's Swan	6	6						
Whooper Swan				1				
White-fronted Goose				8				
Greylag Goose	64	56	P	352	206	260	32	
Canada Goose	896	467	P	321		8	62	
Barnacle Goose	13	13						
Egyptian Goose	57	19						
Shelduck	6	7		1		1		
Mandarin Duck	2				4	2		
Wigeon	7034	2691	P	1360		49	2	
American Wigeon	1							
Gadwall	2823	1665	P	206	43	99	8	
Teal	1130	988	P	360	41	12	14	
Green-winged Teal				1				
Mallard	1322	899		98	89	73	83	
Pintail	107	16		11	6	6	1	
Shoveler	537	171	23	4	75	59	10	
Red-crested Pochard	34							
Pochard	198	52	26	32			2	
Tufted Duck	4959	3885	P	265	5	19	25	
Scaup	3	5						
Common Scoter	2							
Goldeneye	341	365	P	21				
Smew	3	4		3				
Goosander	6	21			3			
Cormorant	81	73	41	51				
Little Egret	52	1	5					
Grey Heron	21	14	11	4	1			
Little Grebe	138	100	P		5	12	10	
Great-crested Grebe	276	223	P	32				
Water Rail	1				2			
Moorhen	128	95	2	1	46	10	28	
Coot	4832	2192	P	296	13	21	65	

BOTANY NOTES compiled by Graham Worrall

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November 2011

The mild weather and low rainfall have extended the flowering season. Flowers seen include **Lady's Bedstraw, Oxeye Daisy, Common Knapweed, Harebell, Yellow-wort, Burnet-saxifrage, Hedge Mustard, Dove's-foot Crane's-bill, Musk Thistle, Common Centuary, Wild Angelica**, as well as the more expected species such as **Dandelion, Bristly Ox-tongue, Common Ragwort, Creeping Buttercup**.

The drawdown zone at Eyebrook Reservoir produced **Redshank, Common Orache, Rough Sow-thistle**, and **Water Chickweed** (in abundance).

December 2011

This month also produced surprises: **Night-flowering Catchfly, Field Pansy, Pencilled Crane's-bill, Germander Speedwell**, along with many others more expected in mild December such as **Herb Robert, Bristly Ox-tongue, Dandelion, Red Campion, Groundsel, White and Red Deadnettle, Common Ragwort, Prickly Sow-thistle**.

Thanks to: P Ennis, T Mitcham, J Crosby, R Lemmon, C Jones, J Harris, M Grimes, R Lemmon.

BUTTERFLY NOTES compiled by Alistair Lawrence

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November 2011

Two species of butterfly are recorded in this report. On 4 November a single **Peacock** was seen at Wing.

Several records for **Red Admiral** have been received, reflecting the continuing strong presence of this butterfly, coupled with the relatively mild weather during this period.

A single specimen was observed at Stocken on the 1st of the month, whilst on the same date one was observed in a Wing garden and then seen regularly up to 28 November. On the 19th three were noted in a Barleythorpe garden and a single

specimen also seen outside the Bird Centre at Egleton. In Barrowden a single specimen was seen on at least three occasions between the 3rd and the 8th of the month.

December 2011

The only record for this month is of a single **Peacock** on the 8th, which was brought out of hibernation by the central heating in the garden office at Stocken. The butterfly was captured and placed in another cooler outbuilding where it will hopefully continue its hibernation.

My thanks to the following contributors: J Crosby, C Gallimore, A Lawrence, D Perrill, L & G Worrall. Finally I would like to thank all those who contributed records during 2011, and wish you a Happy New Year and more good sightings in 2012.

MOTH NOTES compiled by Jean Harvey

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November/December 2011

2011 has seen very varied weather patterns, resulting in very mixed results with regard to moth trapping. A mild spring produced good numbers of some species, but summer did not live up to expectations! Plenty of migrants were recorded along the south coast this autumn, but very few individuals reached this part of the country.

Trapping at Eyebrook Reservoir (for the 12th year) resulted in yet more species being added to the site list. There were seven new micro-moths and ten new macro-species. As reported in our last issue, the Delicate was the most notable of these and the other macros were the Concolorous (a red data book species), Frosted Green, Barred Rivulet, Silky Wainscot, Brown Silver Line, September Thorn, Round Winged Muslin, Minor Shoulder Knot and Bordered Sallow.

The trap in the reed beds at Rutland Water attracted a Northern Winter Moth in November and others seen in that area included Dark Sword Grass and the Gem.

Members may be interested to hear that I have recently learned of a new moth amongst those caught in the Rothampstead trap at Rutland Water during 2010. This was an Oblique Carpet, which is apparently a 'first' for Rutland. In the 1940s, it was known from Narborough Bog, there was a record from Quorn in 1976 and the only other record for VC55 since then, was for one in a Ravenstone garden in 2006. The larval foodplants for this species are Marsh and Heath Bedstraws and the habitats listed include water meadows and damp woodland.

Finally, I am most grateful for all the information I have received during the past year and hopefully look forward to more new records in 2012.

Reports for this issue came from R Follows and A Russell.

ORTHOPTERA REPORT compiled by Phil Rudkin

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November/December 2011

In early November, I put the bat detector away, but decided to leave the battery intact. This was for any reasonable weather that might happen in the forthcoming days. On the 11th, the sun appeared briefly, but it was cool, although calm. Had some time to spare that day, so the bat detector was taken out of the drawer, and off I went to Quarry Farm at 2.30 pm. The entrance was on the Little Casterton Road, Stamford, situated conveniently inside Rutland. A short walk along the grass path in the first field, with the detector switched on (more in hope than expectancy), and just one single male Long-winged Conehead was heard stridulating. Despite the date, the conehead's stridulating was at the normal speed that one would expect in the warmer months. So, with hopes high, I investigated the rest of the first field, then through the hedge into the wildflower meadow of the second field, and finally reaching the pond on the hill near the telephone mast. But not a sound or sight of any orthopterans. I was not disappointed,

because I was delighted to have recorded the conehead at this time of the season.

No other positive reports were received for this period. However, there was an unconfirmed record received from Rutland Water at about the same time. The member had heard stridulating, but could not see the singer.

So, that is it! A very rewarding 2011 was concluded, and my thanks go to our small group of unstinting regular reporters who have shared the work, and I know have all enjoyed the season.

At the time of writing, I have had emails from Bjorn Beckmann, at the Centre for Ecology and Hydrology, to say that the Rutland Orthoptera data input is almost completed. When everything is finalised, it is hoped that the final maps for the orthoptera species in Rutland will be published in the near future. At the risk of repeating myself (from the last *Fieldfare*), the exciting prospect of a possible County Orthoptera publication will eventually be published.

Also, equally exciting is that the National Atlas will be in the pipeline sometime in 2012, and our Society will be a part of this mammoth project.

BUSH CRICKETS

Long-winged Conehead *Conocephalus discolor*

Amazing for this time in the season! On 11th November, at 2.30 pm, sunny intervals, cool, calm

and dry. One stridulating male, in long grasses, by the path track of the first field, at Quarry Farm, Little Casterton Road, Stamford, TF 018 084. A thorough search of the usual strongholds in this area revealed no more sightings. However, very satisfying to have recorded one male.

PLANT GALLS REPORT

compiled by Roy Lemmon

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While I was in the Egleton Centre I noticed that they had a fresh supply of the Field Studies Council's laminated fold out chart *Plant Galls in Britain* which at £3.50 is an excellent start to the subject. It is very clear, well illustrated and easy to take with you into the field.

2011 has been a bumper year for information on British plant galls and I shall give more details in the forthcoming reports.

November 2011

The mild weather we have experienced in these two months has meant that many leaves, especially on trees, which normally would have fallen off have not done so, or at least not until well into December. This has meant that there have been rather more than usual plant galls seen and Clipsham Park Wood on 3rd produced a

total of 7 with another 7 from the Horn Mill area on 10th. The persistence of the mild weather is emphasised by the fact that one of the latter galls was on flowers of White Campion, usually over by this date. Eye Brook plantation on 17th gave another 5 galls although 4 of these were rusts which tend to persist unless the weather is very cold.

December 2011

To finish the year there were reports of 7 galls from the Egleton Centre-Lax Hill area on 1st. The majority were rusts but there was also a rather elderly Robin's Pincushion on Dog Rose and a leaf gall on Alder caused by a mite; none of these are rare but all help to fill in the picture throughout the County.

INSECTS AND OTHERS

compiled by Gill Chiverton

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It is unusual to have received quite a few insect records for the November/December Fieldfare, probably a comment on our weather so far this winter.

November 2011

Odonata

On the 3rd one **Migrant Hawker** *Aeshna mixta* was seen in flight at RW Manton Bridge. On the 4th three **Common Darters** *Sympetrum striolatum* were recorded near Tufted Duck Hide at RW Lyndon.

Hemiptera

A **Hawthorn Shield Bug** *Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale* – a very large insect was noted in a garden at Barrowden. A **Leafhopper** *Eurysa lineata* was found at Lyndon – this was a good find as its status is local, so not common.

Trichoptera

Caddis Fly cases – the recorder noted 'the cases were straight to slightly curved, tapering, averaging about 1 cm long, and composed entirely of fine sand and shell fragments – probably species of the family *Leptoceridae*'. A photograph was enclosed. This was very interesting as the photo was taken during a period of very low water level at RW Normanton; there were literally countless numbers of caddis fly cases and also some zebra mussel shells.

Diptera

A **Drone Fly** and a **Bluebottle** were recorded at Stocken.

Hymenoptera

Plentiful numbers of **Chalcids** *Torymidae* species were recorded around lime trees at Lyndon. These insects are a beautiful metallic green colour and are ectoparasites of the inhabitants of plant galls. A **Braconid Wasp** *Meteorus ictericus* was also recorded from Lyndon. An abundance of **Common Wasps** *Vespula vulgaris* were noted at Stocken. Three **Honey Bees** *Apis mellifera* were also seen at Stocken. **Buff-tailed Bumblebees** *Bombus terrestris* – single insects were noted at Stocken and Barleythorpe. A single **Red-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus lapidarius* was noted at Stocken.

Coleoptera

Seventeen **7-spot Ladybirds** *Coccinella 7-punctata* were recorded at Stocken clustered in a flowerpot. One **Harlequin Ladybird** *Harmonia axyridis f. succinea* was recorded at Stocken. Two **Eyed-Ladybirds** *Anatis ocellata* were recorded at Eyebrook plantation (there are many conifers in this plantation).

Flea Beetles *Longitarsus parvulus* were noted in very large numbers at Lyndon where they appeared to be over-wintering in conifers/ evergreen trees. A **Weevil** *Apion confluens* was also recorded from Lyndon.

The last two months records came with seasonal greetings from some recorders so belatedly I would like to wish all insect recorders A Happy New Year, and a special thank you for so many records received over 2011. Many thanks for Nov/Dec records to T Caldicott, J Crosby, C R Jones, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, T Newton, D Perril and L & G Worrall.

Mollusca

The half shell of a **Swan Mussel** *Anodonta cygnea* was found near the shore-line at Eyebrook reservoir. The recorder notes 'presumably taken by a predator, size 9.5 cm x 6 cm'.

December 2011

Hymenoptera

Bumblebees – recorder queries *Bombus lucorum/ Bombus hortorum* were noted on two occasions at Barrowden. A single bee flying between 7th and 13th in sunny but cold weather; one bee recorded on Christmas Eve when the weather was warmer. A queen **Common Wasp** *Vespula vulgaris* was seen flying at Stocken on the 21st.

Diptera

A **Bluebottle** was noted at Stocken on the 22nd.

Coleoptera

Seven-spot Ladybirds *Coccinella 7-punctata* were recorded as follows: On the 8th three were noted as 'inactive but resting in exposed positions' at Ketton Quarry; on the 22nd one was still active on a buddleia leaf at Stocken; and in the period 23rd–24th ten were noted in hibernation among garden plants at Oakham.

MAMMAL REPORT

compiled by Linda Biddle

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A happy 2012 to everyone, and thank you for sending me your autumn mammal observations.

November/December 2011

The autumn has been a busy one for me, having begun to monitor some of the **Water voles**, re-introduced this summer at Rutland Water, but has resulted in more mammal records for us. Evidence of the presence of Water Voles has been found in several areas of the nature reserve, alongside ditches, streams and reed beds, and live animals seen at several locations. Water voles continued to be active until the end of the year.

Evidence of **Otters** has also been found on mink rafts at RWNR, and an otter slide with fresh spraint at the edge of reed beds was found in December. In early November spraint was found under the bridge on the North Brook, and at the end of the month more fresh spraint was found at the outflow of the lower lake at Fort Henry.

Stoats have also been active! In a members' garden at Normanton a stoat was seen on two

occasions in November, once chasing a squealing rabbit up a bank, and also on the kitchen patio. Also in November, a stoat was seen in grassland west of North Brook, near Fort Henry, and another crossed the A606 close to Shacklewell Hollow carrying a small mammal. **Badgers** have been road casualties on several of our roads; the A606 at Langham and east of the Hambleton turn, also between Thorpe by Water and Seaton scrap yard. A live badger was seen on the verge of Seaton Road Barrowden, making for a hole in the hedge. Badger latrines were found on RWNR close to Shoveler Hide, on the edge of the reed beds, and also on the opposite side of the A606 near the sewage works. Badger setts in the area are busy, and latrines found close to the entrances, indicating cubs to be born shortly.

One **Hedgehog**, the only one recorded this time, was found freshly killed on the A606 at Barnsdale crossroads at the end of November. **Fox** scats were found close to reed beds at RWNR and live animals seen by Lagoon 5, and another at tertiary treatment works at Egleton. Lots of **Short-tailed field vole** runs were seen in grass alongside a ditch, close to Shoveler Hide at RWNR, and a live one was seen eating peanuts near the Worralls' back door at Barrowden, taking a mouthful back to the log pile near the garage at 10.30 pm.

A **Pygmy Shrew** was found dead in December on the winter trail at the back of Lagoon 2 at RWNR. A **Wood Mouse** was seen in the garden of G Wing, Stocken hall prison in early December. **Moles** have been active in many areas of the county, recent workings reported from near Lax Hill, near the lakes at Fort Henry, near Lagoon 1 RWNR, on verges at Pickworth, and lots of other locations too numerous to mention!!

Rabbits are present in warrens in the spinney on Pickworth Road near the entrance to Walk Farm path, and alongside the path up the hill. Several rabbits were seen in the wet meadow next to Lagoon 1 RWNR. Nine reports of **Brown Hare**

come from Lagoon 1 RWNR, Horn village near Fort Henry, between Seaton and Glaston, between Glaston and Wing – one in Glaston parish, another in Wing parish – Red Hill Barrowden, three on Seaton Road Barrowden, many seen on Greetham Golf course, and one was spotted lying prostrate, eyeing a passing cock pheasant on a grassy bank adjoining Stocken prison perimeter fence. Also at Stocken a dead **Brown Rat** was found in November, and live ones seen on 8 occasions in December, sometimes feeding under bird tables all day, and trying to climb up to the tables. A pair of **Grey Squirrel** chased and chattered to each other in an Ash tree next to the perimeter fence, in November, and in early December one squirrel ran among trees at Lax Hill, Gorse Close Wood.

On December 28th a **Roe Deer** Buck was seen from the First Tee at Greetham valley golf course. **Muntjac** are still commonly seen, this time by Wing Tunnel, and in Morkery Wood, slots evident in many areas of George Henry Wood near Stretton, and through the Birch plantation at RWNR.

Fallow Deer have been seen in Clipsham, Little Haw and Morkery Woods, the largest group of 15 animals. A group of 5 Fallow ran across stubble opposite the farm at Mount's Lodge in November, and a group of 12 including one very light coloured one ran away from the track near the water storage tower near Pickworth. 20–25 animals were observed crossing a ride in Tunnely Wood, the largest group seen there this year, and 30 ran across a field adjacent to Pickworth Wood at the end of December. Regular Deer observers, the Thorps, noted that numbers of Fallow deer recorded this year in Clipsham, Little Haw, and Burley Woods are lower by at least 25% than in previous years.

Thank you to all who recorded during 2011!: P Bennett, A Biddle, M Branston, J Crosby, C Gallimore, M & G Griffin, J Harris, C Jones, P Langston, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, P J Rudkin, A R & M A Thorp, L & G Worrall

BAT REPORT compiled by Jenny Harris

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November/December 2011

As would be expected, there were very few records for the November-December period. Although the weather was often very mild, in winter bats only forage in very favourable habitats, and people are rarely in those places at dusk. All the flight records come from Rutland Water in the middle of November.

A bat was seen at approximately 4.30 pm flying low over Lagoon I on 16.11. It was seen from Egleton Visitor centre by Matthew Berriman. On the same day at 5.30 pm, Lloyd Park saw a small bat flying over the old Stamford Road, beyond Fishponds Cottage on the Hambleton Peninsula. On 18.11 Andy Lear saw a small bat flying along the Hambleton Road just west of the turn to Egleton at roughly 4.30 pm.

A small (possibly juvenile) **Common Pipistrelle** was found dead on top of one of Dawn Whitefield's kitchen cupboards on 7.12. It smelt strongly but was not dried out, so had probably only been dead a couple of days.

At Market Overton church bats continued to be active, leaving evidence of fresh droppings and moth wings, the latter suggesting the bats could have been Brown Long-eared.

Bats will generally be hibernating now, but occasionally come out on nights when the temperature is above 6 °C and it is not raining or very windy. Any records would be very welcome.

My thanks to the above members for records and observations this time.



Illustration from the cover of the 23rd Annual Report 1988, by Chris Park.



Grey heron, an illustration by Jane Wallace, from Terry Mitcham's book, *The birds of Rutland and its reservoirs* (1984).
