



Great White Egrets. Photo, D Cotter

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From the Editor

January *Fieldfare* is a bumper edition, as it includes the Recorders’ reports for the months September to December inclusive. March *Fieldfare* will go back to the usual two-monthly pattern. May *Fieldfare* will be my last edition, and I feel both relieved and sad to be handing it back to the Committee (see July 2018 page 2).

Hendrina Ellis, *Fieldfare* Editor

New Year Greetings

Welcome to the first edition of *Fieldfare* for 2019, a bumper edition to make up for the very condensed November issue. Hendrina has returned and has nobly said she will continue to produce *Fieldfare* for us for a while, as a temporary stop gap – her last edition will be May *Fieldfare*. Your Committee is considering all possibilities, but we really need someone to step up and take over. There is no obligation to continue to do things as at present – a simpler production would be just as acceptable, so please do consider how you can help. The Society is creaking on, but struggling to maintain the services members have come to expect. If no help is forthcoming many activities will have to be reduced or finish altogether.

Well here we are – January 2019 all ready. There are snowdrops flowering, hazel catkins are shedding pollen, and birds are starting to sing – very early signs of spring I know, but it will be here before long. There may well be colder weather on the way, but we have had a very mild winter so far. Walking near Exton we saw the origin of the saying ‘larking around’ when more than a dozen skylarks were

Membership subscription

There are a number of members who have not yet paid their subscriptions for 2019. November's *Fieldfare* came with a Membership Subscription form, which you can use to send with your subscription, or you can just send me a cheque with your details, ASAP. If we don't receive your fees, your membership will lapse and this will be the last *Fieldfare* you receive. (Remember you can also set up a standing order to automatically renew each year.)

Thank you to all members who have already paid their subscriptions.

Margaret Conner, Treasurer/
Membership

apparently playing, flying up and chasing each other around.

The season of indoor meetings began with our very own Phil and Dave's presentation on their antics watching and recording woodpeckers, and a large audience had a wonderful evening. In November we were treated to an excellent presentation by Dawn Balmer of BTO, and our members' evening in December was also a great success. Richard Astle of the Langdyke Countryside Trust began 2019 with a fascinating talk on the history of John Clare country and the development of nature reserves, in particular Swaddywell Pit, which we plan to visit on August 10. This pit was formerly a landfill site, an amazing example of how nature can recolonise even the most inhospitable of environments, and now a site for many different orchid species and other flora to flourish.

I look forward to seeing many of you at the indoor and outdoor meetings (listed in the separate *Annual Programme 2019*) and wish you all well for 2019, and happy wildlife watching!

Linda Biddle RNHS Chair

Recorders Conference at Rothley on February 24, 10 to 4, free

Phil Rudkin highly recommends the Recorders Conference for a most up-to-date and stimulating meeting on all aspects of local wildlife and recording. Designed for volunteers at Rutland Water but open to others, please email or phone for more information: **Ben Devine**, Conservation Officer, LRWT. Email: bdevine@lrwt.org.uk; direct line: 0116 2487369; Mobile: 07802879682.

DIARY DATES

RNHS FIELD TRIPS

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

Saturday 16 February, 9.30 am

Winter birds at Rutland Water

Leader Lloyd Park, Rutland Water Reserves Officer. Your chance to ID and learn more about the winter birds, with the advantage of hides to shelter in! Meet at the Anglian Water Visitor Centre at Egleton (there is a charge). (Map ref: SK 878072).

Queries: Linda Biddle, 01780 762108; abiddle21@talktalk.net

Sunday 24 March, 10 am

Eyebrook Reservoir

Leader Peter Scott, RNHS Website Editor. A new way to look at this reservoir! The Leicestershire Eyebrook Fishery is signposted off the A6003 at Caldecott, just off the Great Easton Road. Then follow a one-mile concrete track to the Fishing Lodge and meet to register there (Map ref: SP856941. Postcode: LE15 8RP). Most of this walk will be on good paths/concrete tracks but please wear sensible shoes and clothing appropriate to this time of year.

Queries: Peter Scott, 07535 508932, peter.scott27@btopenworld.com

Saturday 13 April, 10 am

Spring at Pickworth Great Wood

Leader Linda Biddle, RNHS Chairman and Mammal Recorder. This is a large deciduous woodland SSSI on the boundary of Rutland and Lincolnshire. Park just opposite Quarry Farm (OS grid ref SK987156) and walk up the track to the wood.

Queries: Linda Biddle, 01780 762108; abiddle21@talktalk.net

Sunday 5 May, 3.45 am

Dawn chorus at Pickworth Great Wood

Leader Linda Biddle, RNHS Chairman and Mammal Recorder. Enjoy this wood at dawn! See above for parking. Warm clothing, suitable footwear and a torch essential. We recommend bringing a picnic chair, a hot drink and breakfast!

Queries: Linda Biddle, 01780 762108; abiddle21@talktalk.net



Great White Egret (note black feet!). Photo, D Cotter

RNHS EVENING MEETINGS

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

Tuesday 5 February, 7.30 pm

Froglife

By James McAdie – Head of Projects at *Froglife*, the national charity committed to the conservation of amphibians and reptiles and their habitats.

Tuesday 5 March, 7.30 pm

AGM and King's Dyke Nature Reserve, Peterborough

The Society's AGM, followed by a talk by Philip Parker (of Philip Parker Associates), who was instrumental in setting up this Peterborough Nature Reserve in 1995 for Hanson, and is still running it. (The Society is meeting at King's Dyke on July 13.)

Tuesday 2 April, 7.30 pm

Ospreys: the latest news and information

By Dr Tim Mackrill, who started as a schoolboy volunteer at Rutland Water a few years ago and whose latest project is the Osprey Leadership Foundation.

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST, RUTLAND GROUP

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

Monday 18 February, 7.30 pm

Cossington Meadows Nature Reserve

LRWT Conservation Officer Chris Hill will talk about this Trust nature reserve in the Soar Valley. Admission £1. Contact Becky Ward on 01572 345 069

Monday 18 March, 7.30 pm

Initiatives and developments at LRWT

Director Simon Bentley will talk about recent initiatives and developments at Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. Admission £1. Contact Becky Ward on 01572 345 069

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST, BOURNE GROUP

For details of all LWT events, see www.lincstrust.org.uk, or phone 01507 526677 in office hours. Bourne group indoor meetings are held at the Methodist Church Hall, Bourne. No booking necessary. Refreshments available. A donation of £1.50 is requested, children free. You don't need to be a member to join in our activities.

Friday 15 February, 7.30 pm

LoveLincsPlants project

Project Officer, Aidan Neary, based at Lincolnshire WildlifeTrust HQ, will be our guest speaker this month. This National Lottery funded project aims to create and preserve a collection of plants from Lincolnshire and to train and inspire young people to become the botanists of the future. No booking necessary.

Friday 15 March, 7.30 pm

50 years of the Bourne Area Group

A celebration and a look-back as the Area Group starts its golden anniversary year. The evening will include shared memories of past events and feature several short presentations.

Sunday 14 April, 10.30 – 16.00

Dole Wood open day

Come along to our open day at Dole Wood and explore this woodland reserve and its carpet of bluebells. Volunteers will be present to talk to you about the Trust and the conservation work at the wood. There will also be a sales stall plus refreshments, excellent home-made cooking and locally grown plants for sale.

WEATHER

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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September 2018

Atmospheric pressure and wind Pressures were generally unremarkable until the 24th of the month when they suddenly rose to 1035 mb and stayed elevated until the penultimate day of the month. This period also saw some low night-time temperatures.

Winds were predominantly SW–W and the month was notable for 3 storm systems, tropical storm Helene on the 18th followed by storms Ali and Bronagh on the next two days. All of these came from the west and all went to the west and north of us in this part of the country. Although I recorded gusts of 32–34 mph on the 18th and 19th we were spared heavy rain and wind damage.

Temperature The overall mean, 14.46 °C, was fifth in the decade 2009–2018, as was the mean maximum, but the mean night-time minimum was 8th in the same period, with 9.14 °C. In the last 8 days of the month, minima were in the range 2.4–4.2 °C, except on the 25th–26th when the minimum was 12.9 °C!

Rain A dry September with a total here of 19.8 mm (0.78 inches) which is 40% of my long-term mean of 28 years. Looking back at these records it seems that September rainfall is quite variable, 1992–4 inclusive saw totals around the 100 mm mark each year, but 1996 was 3.7 mm and 2014 was 5.4 mm.

October 2018

Atmospheric pressure and wind Pressure varied considerably over the whole of the month. The lowest was 995.5 mb on the 30th and the highest 1035.5 mb on the 22nd. There were several windy episodes, the most marked being that due to storm Callum on the 12–14th when I recorded gusts up to 25 mph at 09.00 on the 12th. Wind direction was also variable but in the second half it was mostly W–NE.

Temperature The overall mean for the month was 11.08 °C, which was 7th in the decade 2009–2018; but the mean minimum was 6.34 °C or 9th in the same decade, hence a cold October. There were several ground frosts and one air frost when it was –1.8 °C overnight on the 29–30th. In contrast the daytime maximum on the 13th was 25.5 °C.

Rain This month was nearer normal with a total of 54.7 mm (2.15 inches), this being 90.5% of my long-term mean of 28 years. 54% of this fell in the time of storm Callum.

November 2018

Atmospheric pressure and wind Pressures varied between 995 mb at 09.00 on the 10th and also the 11th, and 1030 mb on the 18th, this latter being part of a high pressure episode – the 14th to 19th inclusive.

Winds were generally SE–W from the 1st to the 16th. For the first 6 days of the month, speeds were low and there was reduced visibility in the mornings. From the 17th to 26th winds were N–E and then again SE–SW to the end of the month. Storm Diana occurred in this time and gave wet and windy conditions.

Temperature All the means, i.e. the minimum, maximum and overall means, place this month firmly 4th in the decade 2009–2018. There was one air frost, –3.1 °C on the 20–21st and the next night was chilly at 0.1 °C. The highest daytime maximum was 15.4 °C on the 15th, and at the time of storm Diana temperatures were relatively high at 13.5–13.6 °C.

Rain A dry November with a total here of 33.4 mm or 1.31 inches; this equates to 52% of my long-term mean of 28 years.

The mean annual rainfall for this site is 606.2 mm; at the moment we are short of this total by some 111.4 mm (4.39 inches) and it will be interesting to see what falls in December.

December 2018

Atmospheric pressure and wind There were two high pressure periods this month, the 10th to 14th and the 24th to the end. No rain fell in either period, and the first was noticeable for low overnight temperatures. The highest pressure was 1034 mb at 09.00 on the 31st, and the lowest was 996 mb on the 2nd.

Winds were overall S–SW, but the 9th to 11th inclusive they were NW, hence the low temperatures mentioned above. Storm Deirdre passed over on the 15th but as usual had dissipated itself by this time.

Temperature The overall mean of 6.62 °C placed December 2018 in second place to December 2015, which was exceptionally warm at 9.46 °C. 2013 was third at 5.97 °C. There were five air frosts, the lowest was –1.9 °C overnight on the 12–13th.

Rain A total here of 71.0 mm (2.8 inches) which is 140% of my long-term mean of 28 years. This fell in two distinct periods, 1st–8th and 15th–23rd.

2018 Annual rainfall The total here was 565.8 mm or 22.3 inches, which is 93.6% of my LTM of 28 years. The monthly rainfall varied widely between March (243%) and July (24%).

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

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September, October, November and December, 2018

Despite this being a four-month ‘bumper report’ there is not a huge amount to report. **Frogs** were heard croaking in Linda Worrall’s pond in October and November as they often are, and occasional **Toads** were seen at Leighfield in September. Preparing this report before Christmas, I was going to write that there had been no records of toad road casualties this autumn/winter, when, blow me, I found a very freshly squashed toad in Wing on 22nd December. This is the latest date that a toad road casualty has been recorded in Rutland, although there have been two other December records – both in the last three years.

The only other amphibian record would have been a female **Smooth Newt** in my vegetable garden in Wing at the beginning of October. However I decided to go and have a look in my ponds on the night of 30th December and was delighted to find a large male **Great Crested Newt** there. I then went to the cellar to see if there were any there, as I had not seen any there since January, and I found three more – one male, one female and one immature.

A **Viviparous Lizard** was seen at Stretton Woods on 2nd September. There were three **Grass Snake** sightings. A large individual crossed a lane in Wing on 14th September, one was noted by a compost heap in Barrowden on 22nd September and one was seen on a track in Barrow on 4th October.

My thanks to D & J Ball, T Caldicott, M Grimes and L Worrall.

BIRDS

RECORDER Terry Mitcham

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The reports for November/December follow on page 10. There are some photographs on page 20. Good birdwatching to everyone in 2019!

September/October 2018

An interesting two months brought some good birds to the county, courtesy mainly of strong winds – **Grey Phalaropes** and **Great Skuas** – and mild temperatures – **Glossy Ibis** and **Great White Egrets**. Large numbers of wildfowl descended on Rutland Water with lower levels providing plenty of food for dabbling ducks. Waders were less exciting but did include **Avocets**, **Purple Sandpipers** and a brief **Pectoral Sandpiper**. It’s not often that we can claim four species of falcon

in one *Fieldfare* but we have achieved that in these notes. As usual many summer migrants slipped away unheeded but there was a strong arrival of winter thrushes and other migrants in October. The reedbeds on Eggleton reserve go from strength to strength with **Bittern**, **Marsh Harrier** and **Bearded Tit** all recorded.

My thanks to the following for their records: D & J Ball, L & A Biddle, T Caldicott, Dr C H Gallimore, J Harris, T Land, P Langston, LROS, I Misselbrook, T Mitcham, B Moore, D Needham, J S & J Rodgers, RWNr, L Worrall

See also Wildfowl Counts for September and October on page 9.

Whooper Swan	Noted at RW on eight dates between 01.10 and 30.10, with a max of seven on 27.10. There were eight at EBR on 22.10 and 28.10.
Pink-footed Goose	55 flew over RW on 28.09 and two were over GHW on 18.10.
American Wigeon	The presumed returning male was seen at RW intermittently in SA and NA between 17.09 and 18.10.
Mallard	89 were on ponds at Greet GC on 08.09.
Garganey	Two were at FHP between 01 and 22.09, with singles at RW/Eg on 09.09, in SA on 16.09 and NA/BFP on 18 and 19.09.
Red-crested Pochard	In RWSA there were six on 09.09 and five on 16.09, with seven on 01.10 and three on 05.10. 23 were off RWLynd on 21.10 and two were at EBR on 30.10.
Scaup	An immature male was reported at RWEg3 on 20.10, with a female there next day.
Common Scoter	A female was in RWNA on 08/09.09.
Smew	The first autumn bird was at RWEg4 on 28.10.
Goosander	A female was at RWNorm on 16.10 – the first autumn record.
Red-legged Partridge	A covey of 28 was on the road near Lynd on 09.09.
Grey Partridge	Eight were in Ext Park on 01.09. At RWEg two were flushed on 23.09 and one was by Lagoon 4 on 19.10.
Great Northern Diver	One was at RWNA between 02 and 08.09.
Bittern	One was seen on RWEg3 on 08 and 21.09.
Little Egret	Away from the reservoirs, there were five at Banthorpe GP on 07.09 and one at FHP on 16.09.
Great White Egret	Numbers at RW increased from one on 06.09 to 16 on 13.10. One flew over Martinsthorpe on 18.10.
Glossy Ibis	One was at RWNA/Eg between 05 and 14.10.
Red-necked Grebe	One was at RW throughout both months, mainly in SA off Old Hall.
Red Kite	The peak count was of five on roadkill near Wg on 12.10.
Marsh Harrier	Two were at RWEg from at least 05.09 to the end of Oct. A female/immature was near Barrow on 27.10.
Sparrowhawk	Garden records came from Stam and Barrow with others at WestlandW and MO.
Buzzard	Three were over KQ on 25.09 – the peak count.
Water Rail	One was heard at LFP on 11, 22 and 24.10.
Avocet	Two were at RWEg1 on 23.09.
Grey Plover	Two were at RWEg1 on 09.10.
Golden Plover	Singles were over Leigh on 15 and 22.09 with one over RWManBay on 28.09. 16 were at RW on 14.10, with 127 on Lagoon 4 on 20.10. c.250 were in flight over Tin Road Cottages next day.
Lapwing	232 were at RW on 09.09 and only six on 14.10. 21 flew NE at FHP on 18.10.
Ringed Plover	12 were at EBR on 08/09.09. At RW there were 13 on 08.09 and 16.09, with one on 01.10 and six on 14.10.
Whimbrel	One flew south at EBR on 10.09.
Curlew	Singles were over Leigh on 01.09, RWNA on 23.09 and Martinsthorpe on 20.10. There were three at RW on 09.09 and four on 14.10.

Black-tailed Godwit	Between 02.09 and 15.09, there were up to six at RWEg. There were four there on 01.10 and one on 14.10, with one at EBR on 30.10.
Turnstone	Singles were at RWDam and Hamb peninsula on 02.09.
Ruff	Noted at both reservoirs from 02.09 to 15.09, with eight at EBR and seven at RW on 09. Three were at EBR on 21.10 and two on 30.10.
Sanderling	One was at RWSA on 21.09.
Dunlin	Most records came from EBR between 02.09 and 14.09, with six on 11. There were 16 at RWEg4 on 16.09, with two there on 14.10. 19 were at EBR on 30.10.
Purple Sandpiper	Two were at RWDam on 03.10.
Pectoral Sandpiper	One was at RWBFP/NA on 18.09.
Grey Phalarope	One was at RWSA between 20 and 22.09, with a second present on the last date. One was at EBR between 20 and 22.09.
Common Sandpiper	Two were at EBR on 02.09, with singles on 04, 12 and 14.09. Three were at RW on 08.09, with seven next day and one on 15.09.
Green Sandpiper	Present in the county throughout both months with records from both reservoirs, LFP and FHP. Peak counts were eight at RW on 08–09/09, and two at EBR on 02.09, LFP on 09.09 and FHP on 16.09 and 27.10.
Spotted Redshank	One was at EBR on 02.09.
Greenshank	Noted at EBR between 02 and 12.09 and on 30.10, with a max. of three up to 04.09. At RW there were four on 05.09, two on 08.09 and singles to 15.09, with a late bird on 14.10.
Wood Sandpiper	One was at EBR between 02 and 11.09.
Redshank	This species remains scarce, with five at RW on 09.09 and one on 14.10 the only records.
Jack Snipe	One was at RWEg from 09 to 18.10.
Woodcock	The first of the autumn was at RWHeronBay on 23.10.
Snipe	Two were at FHP on 01.09. At RW there were 33 on 09.09 and six on 14.10. Between 22.09 and 28.10, birds flew over Leigh/Pilt and Martinsthorpe on five dates, with four on 09.09.
Great Skua	Strong winds produced one at RWSA on 22.09, and two past Norm on 15.10.
Common Tern	There were 22 at RW on 09.09, and singles there on 22.09 and 14.10.
Arctic Tern	Two juveniles were at RW on 21.09 and 06.10.
Yellow-legged Gull	Singles were at EBR on 02 and 09.09, and one was at RWSA on 23.09.
Stock Dove	93 flew SW over Leigh on 27.09, with 112 over SW there on 11.10.
Woodpigeon	Between 25 and 31.10, 3313 flew SW over Martinsthorpe.
Barn Owl	Reported in both months with singles at RWManBay, LyndW, Rid, Leigh, Prest and near Whit.
Little Owl	Calling birds were noted in October at Barrow, Leigh and Martinsthorpe (two).
Tawny Owl	The BTO are running a survey on this species and all records would be appreciated. During Sept and Oct calling birds were well reported from Barrow, FHP, TunnW, WestlandW, Ext Park, Man, Leigh and Martinsthorpe (three on 21.10).
Swift	The last record was from RW on 22.09.
Kingfisher	Two were along the Oak Canal near the former Ashwell Prison on 25.10.
Green Woodpecker	Regularly seen at QF, FHP and Barrow.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Reported from FHP, TunnW, RWEg and Barrow.
Kestrel	Six were at Leigh between 02 and 09.09, with two at FHP on 27.10. Other records were from Ext Park and GHW.
Merlin	Female/imms were at RWNA on 21.09, between N and S Luff on 13.10 and Martinsthorpe on 25.10.
Hobby	Between 01 and 09.09 birds were noted at FHP, RWEg (three on 08), Man and between Greet and Ext.
Peregrine	Singles were reported from KQ, Martinsthorpe and LFP.

Willow Tit	Records came from LFP, Leigh and Martinsthorpe.
Marsh Tit	Noted in Ext Park, Tunn and WestlandW, FHP, Man and Leigh (four on 25.10).
Bearded Tit	Four were at RWEg3 on 26.10, with three seen next day.
Skylark	Autumn movement saw 44 SE over Leigh on 24.09, and 218 S over Martinsthorpe on 17.10.
Sand Martin	Our final record was from RWLynd on 21.09.
Swallow	c.296 flew SW over RW on 18.09, with 254 next day. One at Martinsthorpe on 12.10 was our last record.
House Martin	It was interesting to receive reports of evidence of breeding in the centre of Oak with nests noted on a number of buildings. Several shops had old nests with three new ones at another property and c.20 birds circling over Oak School. Nationally, House Martins seem to be declining in the south and increasing in the north so we need to monitor our breeding birds carefully. There was a heavy passage towards the end of Sept with c.540 at RWManBay on 19, with 250 next day and c.3000 around the reservoir on 21. Last birds were at Bden on 03.10 and Man on 05.10.
Chiffchaff	Widespread on passage throughout Sept, with four at QF on 25.09. One or two were at FHP to 11.10.
Willow Warbler	Last noted at RWManBay on 19.09.
Blackcap	The only Sept records were at QF on 10 and one at FHP on 22. A male was in a Stam garden on 17.10.
Lesser Whitethroat	One was in Ext Park on 01.09, and one on elderberries at Banthorpe GP on 07.09 was our final record.
Whitethroat	Four were feeding with the preceding species on 07.09. Three at QF on 10.09 were the last birds.
Starling	Autumn passage was noted over Martinsthorpe with 1378 W on 28.10 and 658 the following day.
Fieldfare	The first autumn birds were 380 over Luff Airfield on 07.10, with up to 60 at HM, Barrow and Oak Canal to 22.10 when there was a further influx with 317 over LFP. Between 26 and 30.10, 2045 passed W over Leigh/Martinsthorpe.
Song Thrush	Three on telephone wires along North Brook on 22.09, which flew high W may have been continental migrants.
Redwing	One over Leigh on 03.10 was the first. A large arrival on 07.10 saw 2287 over Luff Airfield and 417 over Pilt with 557 there next day. On 20.10, 478 flew west at Martinsthorpe with 194 on 30.10.
Spotted Flycatcher	Four were around Pilt on 07.09, with singles there on 16.09 and at KQ on 25.09.
Redstart	Two were at Leigh on 02.09, with one near Pilt next day. Two were again near Leigh on 09/10.09.
Whinchat	Singles were at Leigh and RWEg1 on 01.09.
Stonechat	Singles were at RWEg on 16.09, and at FHP and GHW on 18.10.
Wheatear	Noted between 02.09 and 23.09 on six dates at RWDam, FHP, Luff Airfield and Leigh. All singles except for two at Leigh on 04.09.
House Sparrow	Garden colonies of 40 at Man, 22 at Barrow and c.30 in Stam were reported.
Tree Sparrow	One or two were noted over Leigh/Martinsthorpe on seven dates between 06.09 and 29.10.
Yellow Wagtail	There were Sept records from RWDam on 11.09 and ManBay on 28.09.
Grey Wagtail	One was on North Brook at FHP on 22.09 and one flew S there on 13.10.
Tree Pipit	Singles flew over Leigh on 01 and 06.09.
Meadow Pipit	304 flew S at RWManBay on 21.09 and 567 over Leigh next day.
Rock Pipit	One flew over Leigh on 24.09. Migrants were noted at RWNA/Dam between 06 and 30.10 on four dates with five on 06. One was at EBR on 06.10.
Brambling	Two were over RWLynd on 07.10, with two on 09.10. Three were over Pilt on 08.10, with one at Man on 18.10. Between 20 and 26.10, 32 flew over Martinsthorpe.
Chaffinch	465 were noted flying west over Martinsthorpe between 17 and 25 Oct.
Hawfinch	One flew W with Redwings at Martinsthorpe on 20.10.

- Goldfinch** Good numbers in the Leigh area with c.200 on 14.09, 165 on 22.09 and 139 on 03.10. Elsewhere, c.50 in a Bden garden on 01.09, and 30 at Greet GC on 08.09.
- Linnet** 137 were at Leighfield with 93 of these flying SW.
- Crossbill** One was at Pilt on 07.10. 14 flew over Man on 19.10 and there were singles over Man on 24.10 and Martinsthorpe on 24.10.

Wildfowl Counts for September and October 2018

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir	Fort Henry ponds /Exton Park Lake		Holywell Lake	Banthorpe Gravel Pit	
	09.09	14.10		08.09	13.10		13.10	21.10
Mute Swan	401	388	93	21	21	3	3	2
Greylag Goose	394	761	391	6	21			97
Canada Goose	415	457	555					6
Barnacle Goose	1							
Egyptian Goose	70	12						
Shelduck	1	3						
Mandarin Duck	1				8			
Wigeon	588	3109	11		7			16
Gadwall	1343	1173	8	72	67			4
Teal	720	1252	690	37	49	22	22	8
Mallard	1507	1580	536	160	168	26	16	174
Pintail	48	106	15	1				
Garganey	1							
Shoveler	342	428	33	15	34	1		2
Red-crested Pochard	8	8						1
Pochard	95	29						
Tufted Duck	4368	2100	122	18	20			16
Common Scoter	1							
Great Northern Diver	1							
Cormorant	768	686	37				1	
Bittern	1							
Little Egret	54	83	6			5		
Great White Egret	4	19						
Grey Heron	17	21	3	3	2	3	1	
Glossy Ibis		1						
Little Grebe	183	142	7	2		3		
Great Crested Grebe	711	670	56					
Red-necked Grebe	1	1						
Water Rail	10	4						
Moorhen	211	309	1	33	20	3	1	11
Coot	2407	2534	280	81	93	2		1
Kingfisher	2	1						

The final months of the year produced all five **Grebes**, several **Shags** and two **Great Northern Divers** at Rutland Water, with a **Shorelark** and two **Snow Buntings** for good measure. **Smew** numbers increased at both reservoirs and there were high wildfowl counts at all sites. A family of **Bewick's Swans**, now scarce visitors to the county, made a prolonged stay at Egleton. The generally mild weather did not bring much excitement to garden birdwatchers, with only one **Blackcap** reported from one garden, but **Tree Sparrows** were a bonus at another site. Birds of prey were well reported with **Peregrine**, **Merlin** and **Marsh Harrier** all seen.

My thanks to the following for their records: D Ball, A & L Biddle, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, M & G Griffin, T Land, P Langston, LROS, M Markham, T Mitcham, M & J Nourish, L Park, J S & J Rodgers, P Rudkin, RWNR

See also Wildfowl Counts for November and December 2018 on page 13.

Bewick's Swan	Two were in RWNA on 19.11 and seven were at EBR between 21-24.11. A family party of five with three juveniles were at RWEg1 from 22.11 to at least 24.12. One was at EBR between 22-25.12.
Whooper Swan	Noted at both reservoirs between 02.11 and 13. 12 on seven dates with peaks of 8 at RWNA on 17.11 and 9 at EBR on 20.11. Six flew east over LFP on 25.11.
Greylag Goose	310 were at FHP on 16.12.
Pink-footed Goose	c.90 flew east over Greet GC on 30.11. Four were in RWNA between 09.12 and 12.12, with at least one to the end of the month. One was at FHP on 16.12 and two were at EBR on 22.12.
White-fronted Goose	One was with Greylags at Lax Hill, Hamb peninsula and Barns/Whit between 20 and 24.11.
Mandarin Duck	Noted in the Wg area between 25.11 and 31.12, with four on the first date.
American Wigeon	The RWLynd male was present throughout both months.
Red-crested Pochard	One of the features of these months was the large number at RW with 64 counted on 15.11. Two were at EBR on 04.11.
Tufted Duck	A female carrying a blue nasal saddle was at RWEg on 10.11. It had been fitted in France in 2011.
Scaup	Present at RW from 05.11 to the end of Dec, with a maximum of 5 from 11.12.
Common Scoter	A female was at RWWhit on 24.11.
Smew	A popular species with many birdwatchers, up to three were noted at both reservoirs from 18.11, with increased numbers from 12.12, when five were at Eg and then seven on 8.12. On 25.12 nine (including four males) were at EBR.
Goosander	Reported from RW in small numbers with just one at the Dam on 02.11, and 20 on 11.12.
Red-breasted Merganser	Four, including one male, were in RWNA on 26.12.
Red-throated Diver	A juvenile was at RWWhit/Dam between 25-27.11.
Great Northern Diver	One was in RWSA from 13 to 25.11, when a second bird arrived, with both present to the end of the year.
Shag	A first-winter bird was at RWDam on 11.12 with four present next day and still three on 23.12 with one to the end of the year.
Bittern	One was seen at RWEg3 on 12 and 17.12.
Great White Egret	Present at RW throughout both months with eight in NA and four on Eg1 on 04.11.
Little Grebe	Numbers at FHP peaked at 17 on 01.12.
Red-necked Grebe	One remained in RWSA throughout both months.
Slavonian Grebe	Two were at RW, mainly NA, from 20.11 to the end of Dec.
Black-necked Grebe	Two were in RWNA from at least 06.12 to the end of the year.
Water Rail	One or two were at LFP from 13.11 to 14.12.
Marsh Harrier	Two were at RWEg to 16.11, with one regular there to the end of the year.
Sparrowhawk	Singles were in Ext Park, Barrow, near Pick and FHP, where one took a Long-tailed Tit on 02.12.

Golden Plover	13 flew over Martinsthorpe on 01.11. At RW there were 25 on 11.11 and just two on 09.12. EBR had 450 on 11.11 and 32 on 09.12.
Lapwing	Reservoir counts on 11.11 were 1690 at RW and 267 at EBR. In Dec there were 1591 at RW on 09.12 and 768 at EBR on the same date. 24 were near Pick on 04.12, when 157 flew over Rid. A movement in mid-Dec saw c.400 SW over Martinsthorpe on 13 and 455 over LFP next day.
Ringed Plover	One flew over Martinsthorpe on 10.11.
Curlew	Three were at RW on 11.11 with four at Lynd on 14.11. Five were counted there on 09.12. Two flew over Martinsthorpe on 24.11.
Black-tailed Godwit	One or two were at RW between 10.11 and 22.12, with singles at EBR from 2–5.11 and 11–13.11.
Bar-tailed Godwit	One was in RWNA on 04.11.
Knot	One was at EBR on 02 and 17.11.
Ruff	Two were at EBR from 02 to 04.11 with one to 09.12 and two again on 20/21.12. One was present on 22.12.
Dunlin	Reported from both reservoirs throughout both months with peak counts of 42 at EBR on 17.11 and 21.12 and 80 at RW on 09.12.
Green Sandpiper	Present at FHP to 16.12 with a max of four on 12.11. There were three at RW on 11.11 and four on 09.12. One was on the R. Chater near Wg between 26–31.12.
Spotted Redshank	Three were at EBR on 04.11.
Greenshank	One was at EBR from 2.11 to 17.11 and one at RW on 15.11.
Redshank	One was at EBR on 11.11. 15 were at RW on 11.11 and ten there on 09.12.
Woodcock	There were records from 08.11 to the end of the year. Three were flushed in TunnW on 02.12. Singles were at RW on 08 and 17.11 and four were ringed there on a nocturnal session on 13.12. One was flushed near Rid on 04.12.
Snipe	Very few reported – one by a pond in TunnW on 03.11, one or two at RWEg and two or three at LFP up to 10.12. One flew over Man early on 04.11.
Little Gull	A first-winter bird was at RWDam on 12.12.
Mediterranean Gull	An ad. was at EBR on 20.12.
Woodpigeon	c.800 were at Martinsthorpe on 01.11. Passage over Rutland continued with c.600 SW over Leigh on 19.11 and 240 SW over Martinsthorpe on 24.11.
Barn Owl	Well reported with singles seen at RWEg, Kett, LFP, Wg and near Edith Weston.
Little Owl	Calling birds were at Martinsthorpe, Rid, Leigh, Barrow and near Wg (two between 25–28.12).
Tawny Owl	Records were again of nocturnal calling birds – Man, near Wg (three on 25.12), Barrow and Lang (four on 25.12). Why the peak of activity on Christmas night? Complaints about presents?
Short-eared Owl	One was at EBR on 13.11.
Kingfisher	This species gets no commoner. One was on the R. Chater at Martinsthorpe on 01.11 and one was at LFP all month. Singles were at Tin Pumping Station and Geest on 17.12.
Green Woodpecker	Occasionally heard at Barrow in November and regular at FHP throughout both months.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Singles noted at feeders in TunnW, at Lang and Barrow. Also noted at GHW, Oak, Oak Canal and Greet GC.
Kestrel	Reported from FHP, Barrow/Cott, Hall Farm, Ext and Barns.
Merlin	A female/immature was at BCF on 15.12.
Peregrine	One was regular around Martinsthorpe throughout November to 02.12 with one at RWEg during both months, with two on 22.1. One was at Barrow on 02.12.
Ring-necked Parakeet	A very vocal bird was at Rid on 14 and 24.12.
Raven	Pairs were noted at or over five regular or possible breeding sites. The largest count was eight north over FHP on 12.12.

Willow Tit	One or two were in the LFP/Leigh area in November with one near Rid and one reported from Greet GC. Two were near Wg on 31.12.
Marsh Tit	Well reported with peak counts as follows: TunnW (two), Greet GC (four), PickW (two), CPW (five) and singles at RWFishponds, Cott and Hall Farm, Ext.
Bearded Tit	Heard calling in the Eg3 reedbed on 23.11 with two ringed there on 14.12.
Skylark	Passage over LFP saw 49 W on 02.11 and 47 S on 13.11. 53 flew SW over Martinsthorpe on 10.11.
Shore Lark	One flew north over RWEg3 on 06.11.
Long-tailed Tit	21 were at Greet GC on 16.11, ten visited a Barrow feeder during November and two were in an Oak Garden in Dec.
Chiffchaff	Singles were at Leigh on 06.11 and at LFP on 13 and 30.11. In December one was near Rid on 04.12, one was at Geest STW on 17.12 and one near Wg on 26.12.
Blackcap	A male was in an Oak garden between 05 and 30.12.
Nuthatch	Heard and seen regularly in the Ext woods in both months with feeders visited at TunnW. Noted at CPW in November and regular at feeders in Upp and at BCF in December. Also noted in Oak on 13.12.
Starling	Autumn migration continued in November with c.400 W over Martinsthorpe on 03 and c.360 W next day. On 06 there were 1053 W over Leigh with 415 SW on 19.
Blackbird	26 were noted around Rid on 30.11 with 50 around Wg on 25.12.
Fieldfare	Movement over Martinsthorpe saw 666 W on 03.11. 1178 moved west over Leigh on four dates between 06 and 25.11. Between 06 and 09.12, 1436 flew west over Pilt. c.300 fed on haws at FHP on 12.12.
Stonechat	A pair were at RWEg throughout December from 09. Singles were at FHP on 12.11 and 21.12, and two were at EBR on 17.11 into December.
Tree Sparrow	Five flew over Martinsthorpe on 01.11. Three fed at Hall Farm, Ext, feeders on 03 and 12.11.
Grey Wagtail	Singles were at FHP, Geest STW, and RW in Nov and at Geest and FHP in Dec.
Brambling	Six W at Martinsthorpe on 04.11, with up to nine over Leigh on six dates to 25.11. Singles noted on four dates to 31.12 at Rid, Pilt, Leigh and near Wg with four at Leigh on 10.12. A male was at Park House, Norm, on 09.12.
Bullfinch	Four were at CPW on 18.11, one in a Barrow garden on 13.12, one at Oak Canal on 16.12 and three at BCF on 15.12.
Linnet	c.80 were in a weedy sugar beet field near Mounts Lodge on 19.12.
Lesser Redpoll	13 were in TunnW on 30.12.
Crossbill	Several 'flyover' records were received. One over Leigh on 06.11, five over Leigh on 15.11, one over RWManBay on 17.11 and two at LFP on 10.12.
Siskin	17 were at RWManBay on 17.11 and 12 at BCF on 15.12.
Yellowhammer	25 were around Martinsthorpe on 24.11. Nine were in the garden at Park House, Norm, on 02.12 – the first there for several years – and c.50 were on arable land near Mounts Lodge on 19.12.
Snow Bunting	Two very confiding birds were at RWDam on 12–13.12 and again on 23.12, with one to the end of the year (see photo page 20).



Wigeon. Photo, D Cotter

Wildfowl Counts for November and December 2018

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry ponds /Exton Park Lake		Holywell Lake		Banthorpe Gravel Pit	
	11.11	9.12	11.11	9.12	12.11	8.12	8.11	10.12	9.11	7.12
Mute Swan	412	477	123	118	18	16			3	3
Bewick's Swan		5								
Whooper Swan	1									
Pink-footed Goose		4								
Greylag Goose	430	620	335	59	80	6	98			
Canada Goose	357	545	137	76			31	14		
Egyptian Goose	17	39								
Shelduck	5	5			2	2				
Mandarin Duck					6	5				
Wigeon	4846	3351	386	476	63	150	40	4		
American Wigeon	1	1								
Gadwall	1517	933	123	240	88	76	4	8		
Teal	1726	1945	218	890	57	31	10	4	9	56
Mallard	1766	1070	213	296	253	244	149	204	1	6
Pintail	166	66	14	35						
Shoveler	246	95	1	1	38	27	2	4		
Red-crested Pochard	64	31	9	1			1	1		
Pochard	57	15	48	66						
Tufted Duck	5699	4251	586	811	18	19	17	5		
Scaup	1	4								
Goldeneye	164	255	44	56						
Smew		2		1						
Goosander	4	18		1						
Great Northern Diver		2								
Cormorant	591	312	72	26	2	1				
Little Egret	26	12	1			1	2			1
Great White Egret	23	10								
Grey Heron	20	12	1	2	1	1				1
Little Grebe	201	153	3	4	9	11	28			
Great Crested Grebe	761	208	81	123						
Red-necked Grebe	1	1								
Slavonian Grebe		1								
Black-necked Grebe		2								
Water Rail	2	8								
Coot	1804	2556	426	403	102	99				
Moorhen	150	154			17	5	14	21		1
TOTAL	21057	17163	2821	3685	754	694	396	286	13	68

BOTANY

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September to December 2018

There haven't been many records submitted since the middle of September, which isn't surprising since it is more or less the off season for flowering plants. There are a number of 'ordinary' plants that are still showing flowers but they are fairly insignificant and generally are passed over without jogging anybody's mind to record their existence. Plants like **Groundsel**, **White Dead Nettle**, **Common Field Speedwell**, **Germander Speedwell**, **Shepherd's Purse**, **Daisy** and **Dovesfoot Cranesbill** have all been reported in flower in December, as have **White Campion** and **Red Campion**, at the end of November and December respectively. **Winter Heliotrope** is in flower in its usual spot by the Oakham Canal.

The star of these last three months has been **Common Amaranth** found by Martin Grimes and Roy Lemmon in a gateway in Exton. This is an alien plant, rare in Leicestershire and Rutland according to Jeeves (2011). It comes from the same family as the Goosefoots, Spinach, Beetroot and other beets and Quinoa, and like the latter its seeds can be eaten as a staple of the diet. There was a question in the recent series of Christmas University Challenge about this plant family, a good illustration of how you hear things again once having heard them mentioned.

Before finishing this report, the Society held its New Year walk through Hambleton Wood from the Old Hall, on a rather blustery day. We found **Herb Robert** and **Red Campion** in flower and, to mark the beginning of the new season, buds of **Dog's Mercury** and some **Hazel** catkins in pollen.

Happy botanising in 2019.

BUTTERFLIES

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September to December 2018

The table shows all the species reported in Rutland during 2018. The earliest and latest record dates for each species is shown, with X indicating subsequent months in which the species was observed. The total of 31 species in the year compares to 30 seen during 2017.

There were no Purple Emperors and no White-letter Hairstreaks, no Clouded Yellows, no Chalkhill Blues (all have been found in the last few years) – let's look out for them in 2019! Specials for 2018 were Purple Hairstreaks and White Admirals, let's hope we find them again this year.

November/December observations With just three records submitted in November/December, there is no major comment to be made. But note the finding of a **Small Tortoiseshell** on December 19th, giving this species a full nine months of observation during the year.

Other Rutland observations

The East Midlands branch of Butterfly Conservation report in their Autumn 2018 magazine that **Grizzled Skipper** has been seen again at Bloody Oaks. Adding our RNHS observations to this one gives a healthy total of four sites for this species in 2018 – we have records from Ketton Quarry, Clipsham and Clipsham Quarry. Butterfly Conservation received few reports of **Dingy Skipper** from Rutland in 2018. However our own records show sightings from three sites (Ketton Quarry, Clipsham and Clipsham Quarry) with a remarkable 30 to 35 specimens seen at the two Clipsham sites in May.

Thanks to D and J Ball, and to T Caldicott for submitting their observations.

RNHS records for 2018 (no sightings in January and February)

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

MOTHS

RECORDER Paul Bennett

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September to December, 2018

Trapping at Lyndon continued regularly until early November, with moth numbers remaining higher than in previous years. Regular early autumn species such as **Sallow** and **Barred Sallow**, often seen in low single figures, were each recorded with double figure counts; while **Merveille du Jour**, which appeared in the woodland trap on 8th October, was a first record for the site in 4 years. The one trap put out on 6th November yielded big counts of **Feathered Thorn** and **Sprawler** (27 and 48 respectively), which were noteworthy and may have coincided

with a fresh emergence. **Mottled Umber** on the same night was a first record for the site, while 7 **December Moths** was an early record for this species. One feature noted and which may have a knock-on effect into next year was the small size of some of the moths encountered, possibly due to the hot summer and the difficulty that the larvae may have had in gaining access to suitable foodplants, which often dried up early in the frequent heat.

Records received from outside Lyndon were again few in number. A **Hummingbird Hawkmoth** seen in a Manton garden on 1st October was a late record, although the highlight of this period was a **Delicate**, an immigrant moth more often seen in coastal areas and not in inland gardens such as this one in Uppingham, which is probably again a reflection of the hot weather and the need for moths to fly further in search of their food sources.

It was good to see a mention in a recent edition of *British Wildlife* of the moth display stand that is set up in Lyndon Visitor Centre. This attracts regular attention from visitors to the Centre, which could now increase next year. Finally, two future publications which are worthy of mention are a planned book on Leicestershire & Rutland's butterflies and moths which is currently being worked on by the county moth recorder and is scheduled for completion sometime next year; and nationally the *Atlas of Britain & Ireland's Larger Moths*, which is due for publication in spring next year – I just hope that the Irish moths can make it over the border after Brexit.

With thanks to the following for their records: V Arnold, P Bennett, T Caldicott, M Grimes, P Stevens.

PLANT GALLS

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September 2018

The main event of the month was the joint meeting with the British Plant Gall Society at Stretton Wood on the 2nd, which as usual produced a good number of galls, in this case 57, of which 3 were new to our records. There were also reports from RW Egleton on the 6th, George Henry Wood on the 13th, Bloody Oaks Quarry on the 16th and Exton Park and Tunneley Wood on the 27th; no new records but all useful additions to the year's list.

October 2018

This was also a busy month, probably close to the end of the gall season as leaf fall is well under way. A report of the rust gall on cultivated Pear was received from Ketton on the 2nd and also from the Seek on the 25th. This latter had 18 other galls as well. Horn Mill on the 4th had 6 galls, and Ryhall Heath on the 11th had 21, one of which, a midge gall on Small-leaved Lime, was new to us.

The LRWT paddock in Ketton, together with the surrounding area, produced 28 galls including Mistletoe on both Apple and Hawthorn, the latter a new record, as was a mite gall on Turkey Oak, not a substrate we often come across. The month was rounded off with a report of 6 galls from Braunston churchyard.

November/December 2018

There was just one gall reported in this time; on November 8 there was a report of the **Lighthouse Gall** on Ground Ivy from Bloody Oaks Quarry. These have usually fallen off the leaf by now leaving just a hole, but this one's persistence may be due to the very hot dry weather this summer, perhaps delaying egg laying.

The weather this year seems to have had an effect on plant gall occurrence. The very cold start to the year, the 'Beast from the East', seemed to delay the onset of the gall season. This eventually picked up only to be hit by a very warm and dry summer. The most noticeable effect was on the galls on Oak which are produced by the gall wasps, an example being the **Silk Button Gall** which was reported 11 times in 2017 and just twice in 2018. Figures for the common **Spangle Gall** are 12 in 2017 and 6 in 2018.

Also, numbers per leaf were drastically reduced. In a 'good' year the undersides of Oak leaves will be almost totally covered by the galls, but this year we have seen leaves with only 2–3 galls. Nature usually bounces back and it will be interesting to see what happens next season.

Many thanks to: M Grimes, T Higginbottom BPGS, C Leach BPGS, R Lemmon and A Tomlinson

ORTHOPTERA

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September/October 2018

The lovely weather continued into September/October, and the orthopteran species thrived; but this period belongs to the bush cricket communities (the grasshoppers are now on the wane).

The regular sites were monitored, and we found numbers were maintained. The only new records were at the Forestry Commission's ancient woodland, Stretton Woods.

First, I have to make an apology to two friends of the RNHS, Helen Ikin and Steve Woodward from the Loughborough Naturalists Club, who were recording plants in Stretton Woods for the BSBI forthcoming atlas in 2017. They sent me this in an email: 'We were distracted by the sounds of the bush crickets' said Helen. It was a letter for information, so I put it in a separate file – I have only just rediscovered it. Their sightings were on 24 September **2017**. I do not want to 'steal their thunder' in beating us – but we thought we were first to find the following firsts for Rutland, in Stretton Woods: **Dark Bush Cricket, Roesel's Bush Cricket, Speckled Bush Cricket, and Long-winged Conehead** – on 2 September **2018**. My apologies. We also found one new site in Stretton Woods for the **Meadow Grasshopper**. I have highlighted the 2017 records in the species accounts: and I belatedly thank the two expert entomologists for their keen sense of hearing.

The last Rutland Water survey was on the Lyndon reserve, 15 September, with good results at the usual hot spots. The Society's moth-trapping team, of Vic Arnold, Paul Bennet, Roy Edwards and Martin Grimes, were emptying the previous night's catch on the morning of Monday 17 September, and found, among the moths, a female Roesel's Bush Cricket.

The final stridulations heard in 2018 were on 10th October, from Roesel's Bush Cricket, Speckled Bush Cricket, and Long-winged Conehead, at Quarry Farm, Stamford. This is a very early date for the songs of our orthopterans to cease; but I have received no other records after the 10th! (Note: recently, in autumn 2018, we have had a welcome but small influx of new members joining the Society. So I think it worth mentioning that Quarry Farm is just inside the Rutland border.)

With all the Rutland species accounts, it will be noted that there is little mention of the particular locations (no map references), etc., for the regular species. The normal procedure is for new records to be listed with full habitat descriptions and with map references. If any new members wish to know where the hotspots in Rutland are, I would be pleased to inform them by email, or during field and indoor meetings.

Bush Crickets

Oak Bush Cricket, *Meconema thalassinum*

One found in bedroom, Maresfield Road, Barleythorpe, 27 September.

Dark Bush Cricket, *Pholidoptera griseoptera*

23 Sept **2017**, Stretton Woods: numbers not stated, males heard stridulating, new site, SK951169.

2 Sept **2018**, Stretton Woods: three in brambles, SK954169. Five stridulating males, in small colony in rough grasses, SK955169.

Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Metrioptera roeselii*

23 Sept **2017**, Stretton Woods: numbers not stated: males heard stridulating, new site, SK951169.

2 Sept **2018**, Stretton Woods: massive numbers of stridulating males, in rough grass verges, SK951169. Large numbers of males stridulating, deep in the woods, in rank grasses, SK955169.

15 Sept, on the Rutland Water Lyndon Reserve survey, the usual massive colonies were located, along the footpath track (west of the Interpretative Centre), and along the farm track grasses (adjacent to Tufted Duck Hide).

Regular sites were visited: Horn Mill, and the North Brook, Exton: numbers maintained and thriving, on 27 Sept. One female, caught in the Team's Moth trap outside the Lyndon Interpretive Centre. Two stridulating males in the stubble of the wildflower meadow, Quarry Farm, Stamford, on 10 October.

Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus discolor*

23 Sept **2017**, Stretton Woods: numbers not stated, males heard stridulating, new site, SK951169.

2 Sept **2018**, Stretton Woods: massive colony of stridulating males in rough grasses, at wood entrance, SK951169. Small colony of stridulating males, in rough herbage deep in the woods, SK955169.

15 Sept, Rutland Water Lyndon Reserve survey: large numbers of stridulating males along the farm track verges (adjacent to Tufted Duck Hide).

27 September: regular sites visited – Horn Mill, and the North Brook, Exton – numbers maintained, and thriving.

10 October, Quarry Farm, Stamford: four large colonies of stridulating males, in the stubble of the wildflower meadow.

Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima*

23 Sept **2017**, Stretton Woods: numbers not stated, males heard stridulating (on the bat-detector), at 35 kHz, new site SK951169.

2 Sept **2018**, Stretton Woods: abundant numbers of stridulating males, located on the bat-detector, in bushes at wood entrance. Three stridulating males in tree, deep in the wood, SK954169.

15 Sept 2018, Rutland Water, Lyndon Reserve survey: usual large numbers of stridulating males, in bushes and trees, all along the footpath (west of the Interpretative Centre). Also, small numbers heard in scrub, along the Farm Track (adjacent to Tufted Duck Hide).

27 Sept 2018: regular sites visited – Horn Mill and the North Brook, Exton – numbers maintained in scrub and trees.

10 Oct 2018, Quarry Farm, Stamford: four stridulating males in wood edge tree.

Grasshoppers

Common Green Grasshopper, *Omocestus viridulus*

2 Sept, Leighfield (west of Prior's Coppice): one stridulating male at regular site.

Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus parallelus*

2 Sept, Stretton Wood: male caught and identified deep in wood. New site: SK954169.

27 Sept, regular sites visited: abundant stridulating males in footpath grasses, Horn Mill, Exton. And further on at North Brook, more stridulating males, in hay stubble.

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*

24 Sept: stridulating male in meadow at regular site, Leighfield (W of Long Wood).

Many thanks to: T Caldicott, P Rudkin. The RNHS moth-trapping team: V Arnold, P Bennet, R Edwards, M Grimes. H Ikin and S Woodward for their 2017 sightings, in Stretton Woods.

OTHER INSECTS AND INVERTEBRATES RECORDER Gill Chiverton

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No report this time, please continue sending in your records.

MAMMALS

RECORDER Linda Biddle

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September to December 2018

As usual there is not time or space to include everything, so a summary of the most interesting observations will have to suffice. Please continue to send in your reports, to help us have a picture of what is happening to our wildlife!

Badgers have been regularly seen on trail cameras at Langham and at RW, and have dug up lawns in Barrowden, as they did last year – not endearing themselves to the residents. The usual numerous road casualties have been observed from Caldecott to Empingham and Normanton further east. **Otters** have been very active in and around Rutland Water, single animals seen and on occasions two seen together, almost certainly mother and cub. There have been no reports outside this area, and luckily no more road casualties so far this year. Evidence of their presence is found in the shape of footprints and spraint on the regularly inspected mink rafts. No **Mink** have been found at RW, but one was observed running along the bank of the Welland close to Tinwell in December. A **Stoat** was seen in September at Christian's Lodge near Pickworth, and in December one ran along a field close to Pilton. Only one **Weasel** was reported, as it crossed the track below the lower lake at Fort Henry in October.

Foxes have appeared very regularly on the camera at Langham, a female with a large white tail tip visiting almost every night in October, occasionally accompanied by a male. Some nights two females and a male are seen separately. Also at Langham a fox crossed the A606 at 11.30 pm in November. At RW near Smew Hide a fox appeared on camera on 3 consecutive nights in October, and near Gunthorpe Hall two foxes were observed within 20 yards of each other by the main road. A fox left prints in mud at the edge of the water near Lyndon centre RW, and fox tracks were seen next to hare fur at George Henry Wood.

Hedgehogs are still popular in Barrowden, observed in different gardens, some taking up residence in hedgehog homes put out for them. In Oakham they are regular visitors to gardens in Heron Road, and Barmstedt Drive where the last report of the year was on 3rd December.

Grey squirrels are commonly seen in many areas of the county, and at Exton one took a bite out of our dog's nose as she sniffed at the base of a tree in October. **Brown rats** left footprints in the clay of a beached mink raft at Manton Bay, and one was seen in front of Smew Hide at RW. Just one report of a **Wood Mouse** came from Barmstedt Drive, Oakham, eating food put out for hedgehogs. Unusually a **House Mouse** was seen at Langham, and a **Bank Vole** was found dead in the garden in September. A dead **Common Shrew** was found behind what was Shallow Water Hide at RWNr. 10 **Brown Hares** were found through the county and **Rabbits** were reported from Tolethorpe, Langham and Barrow. Two reports of molehills came from Barrow, but they are hugely under-reported, often seen in fields and verges. What a pity that members don't think them interesting enough to notice!!

Water Voles are still doing well at RW, evidence for their presence being found at most of the sites surveyed in October, though they have not yet colonised beyond the reserve. At Oakham Canal they are also surviving well, both north and south of the road.

The largest group of **Fallow Deer** was 5, seen in December near Bloody Oaks reserve, others in ones and twos seen near Pickworth and Tunnely Wood, Exton, and a road casualty was found near Tickencote. The numbers of fallow deer locally

is dramatically lower than it has been for many years. **Muntjac** are very numerous and commonly seen throughout the county. **Roe deer** seem to be doing well, and have been seen near Bloody Oaks, Pickworth and in the Chater valley.

Records have been received from: D & J Ball, A Biddle, T Caldicott, C Gallimore, G & M Griffin, M Grimes, V Hemsley, H Hucknall, J King, P Langstone, R Lemmon, M Manson, M Markham, D Masters, T Mitcham, L Nicholls, P J Rudkin, L Worrall.

BATS

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Due to technical problems, there is no report this time. Please continue sending in your records.



Glossy Ibis



Grey phalarope



Shag



Snow Bunting



Great White Egret



Avocet

See pages 5 and 10 for unusual birds seen at Rutland Water, including these. All photos by P Scott

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