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## From the Chairman

This first *Fieldfare* of 2007 marks quite a few changes. You will all know by now that our stalwart and talented *Fieldfare* editor of many years, Linda Worrall, has had to give up this post suddenly owing to ill health. We all owe Linda a huge debt of gratitude for the many years she has guided us through *Fieldfare*; informing, alerting, entertaining, cajoling. Linda's style made our publication eminently readable, but never less than a quality professional publication, and the many academic institutions and scientific organisations which are keen subscribers to *Fieldfare* are testament to this. We are very sorry that Linda has had to down tools in such a sudden way, and hope very much for a speedy resolution to her health problems. We also hope that she will be able to continue as Society Secretary and a glow-worm Recorder, but will await her decision on this.

We are very lucky to have a qualified professional to take over Linda's position as *Fieldfare* editor. Hendrina Ellis has been a member of the Society for several years now and I know she will bring to *Fieldfare* all the enthusiasm and humour that marks her attention to natural history. I am very grateful to her for agreeing to take up the post.

This *Fieldfare* edition will have some changes from the usual format, and is still somewhat work in progress as we take this opportunity to make a few amendments to layout and technology. We concentrate in particular however in making sure that meeting and event information is with you as soon as possible. In subsequent issues we may take the opportunity to revamp in other ways, and hope you will bear with us.

Some other important changes take place as of 1st January 2007. Following Jean and Ron Harvey's decision to offload some of their responsibilities as invertebrate Recorders, we now have some new names, and indeed recording groups, to concentrate on. Jean and Ron Harvey will still deal with butterflies and moths, while Phil Rudkin will act as Recorder for orthoptera. Roy Lemmon will be Recorder for the area that rejoices in the name of 'Cecidology'

# Fieldfare

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which is the study of plant galls, and Jill Chiverton will be the Recorder for all other invertebrates. A comprehensive list of all Recorders, old and new, is given on the INSERT.

We extend our huge thanks to Jean and Ron for dealing wonderfully with such a lot of recording activity for so long, and welcome our new Recorders, with the hope that with these new, separate, groupings, Society members will be even more enthusiastic about sending in invertebrate records!

These many changes underline one thing in particular. This Society's success is so very dependent on the many skilled, enthusiastic and committed people within its membership, who are prepared to give up time and effort to take on roles within the workings of the RNHS, allowing us to continue to develop. We thank them all.

I wish you all the best for the New Year, and happy wildlife recording for 2007!

*Ann Tomlinson, RNHS Chairman*

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## NOTICEBOARD

### **24 June – a wonderful Orchid day out**

Following John Jones' very well-received talk on orchids last Autumn, we propose a day trip to **Bonsall Moor and Buxton Country Park on Sunday 24 June**. Maximum places 50.

**Places will be £12.50 each, on a strictly first come, first served basis.** We need at least 25 people to go, should we get more it will be cheaper and we will refund the difference.

A coach will leave Stamford in the morning, picking up at Oakham on the way; details of pick-up/drop-off and times will follow later. Members will need to bring their own refreshments.

If you wish to reserve a seat, please fill out the form on the INSERT and give to Ann Tomlinson together with a cheque (made out to Rutland Natural History Society), paying in full for the number of places you wish to book.

You can send this by post or hand it over in person at an indoor meeting. Closing date for applications is **30 April**.

### **Help! Roadside verge nature reserves**

We still need more observers for Spring and Summer 2007. It seems that new verges have been designated and these will put great pressure on our band of observers.

We hope to visit each verge three times between the end of March and mid-August, the timing depending on the weather. We report back as part of our Annual Report to Natural England, Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust and Rutland Council. There is a big effort being made to conserve the remnants of limestone

grassland, much of which is now confined to old quarries and roadside verges. Please phone Graham Worrall on 01572 747302 if you only half feel you can help, to talk it over and learn more about the set-up. Help is urgently required, please phone!

### **AGM**

The AGM is on Tuesday March 6 at Burley Road School. There is a slip on the INSERT for nominations; please return to the Secretary by mid-February. If there is Any Other Business you wish to raise at the AGM, please let the Secretary or Chairman know by mid-February.

### **Fleas**

Bob George wants to produce a 'Fleas of Rutland' and would like people to send him fleas from their pets. If you are interested, please contact Nick Holford, 8 Ruddle Way, Langham LE15 7NZ; telephone 01572 723532; email: nickholford@btinternet.com.

### **Long-eared owls**

The World Owl Trust is organising a survey of Long-eared Owls in March, the month in which they are carrying out pre-breeding calling. It gives a guide as to the number of active pairs within an area.

Go to [www.owls.org](http://www.owls.org), then WOT in action, then UK projects, for all the information you need on the survey and an email address; or contact Sue Thurley, UK Conservation Officer of World Owl Trust, Muncaster Castle, Ravenglas, Cumbria CA18 1RQ, telephone 01229 717393, for instructions and data sheet.

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## **RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY events**

Indoor meetings are held at Burley Road School, Oakham. There is a charge of 40p for tea/ coffee/ biscuits.

### **Tuesday February 6, BRITISH WOODPECKERS 7.30 pm, Burley Road School**

*Our very own Phil Rudkin will tell us about the life of our three local woodpeckers; a look at their breeding, biology, nesting and communication methods, not only in pictures but also with some of Phil's excellent sound recordings.*

### **Saturday February 24, NENE WASHES WALK 10.30 am, Nene Washes**

*The Nene Washes in the Cambridgeshire Fens are some of the best floodplain meadows in England and are regularly flooded in winter attracting thousands of wildfowl. A walk led by one of the RSPB wardens.*

*Meet in the car park at TL317992.*

*Possible route from Oakham: take the A606 towards Stamford, join the A1 heading south. Turn off onto the A1139 to Whittlesey and then onto the A605 which goes through Whittlesey and onto Coates. Just east of Coates turn left into Eldernell Lane and follow this to the car park.*

### **Tuesday March 6, AGM 7.30 pm, Burley Road School**

*The AGM is followed by a wildlife film – title to be announced later.*

### **Sunday March 25, FORT HENRY PONDS 10.30 am, Fort Henry Ponds**

*Our bird recorder Terry Mitcham will lead this walk around what is part of his familiar birding territory to see wildfowl and who knows an early chiffchaff!*

*Meet at the Lakes, SK950120.*

### **Tuesday April 3, BIRD MIGRATION 7.30 pm, Burley Road School** **Mysteries and marvels of migration, one of the wonders of the natural world**

*Peter Holden of the RSPB will be telling us stories not only about bird migration, but also about mammals, insects and amphibians!*

### **Sunday April 15, BURLEY WOOD 10.30 am, Burley Wood**

*A woodland walk led by enthusiast Phil Rudkin looking for birds. Possibly seeing or hearing some of the woodpeckers, the subject of his earlier talk, and hopefully some of our earlier migrants.*

*Meet at SK892093, on the A606 between Oakham and Barnsdale Hill; park on the verge near the entrance gate to the wood.*

### **Thursday April 26, FOX COVERT 6.30 pm, Fox Covert, Barrowden**

*A new venue for the RNHS to look for spring flowers as we take a gentle stroll around this small woodland owned by the Burghley estate with expert botanist Graham Worrall.*

*Meet at OS Landranger 141, grid ref: SK968023. Please park carefully on the roadside.*

## **LEICESTER AND RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST events**

Meetings are held at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton. Admission £1, includes tea/ coffee/ biscuits.

### **Monday 19 February, BARN OWLS 7.30 pm, at Egleton**

*A talk by local wildlife enthusiast and ornithologist Ian Langford.*

### **Monday 19 March, AGM and THE FLORA OF RUTLAND 7.30 pm, at Egleton**

*The AGM followed by a talk given by Graham Worrall.*

# LEICESTER AND RUTLAND ORNITHOLOGY SOCIETY event

Special Rutland meeting at the Anglian Birdwatching Centre, Egleton.

Friday 16 March, JOURNEY TO ICELAND

7.30 pm, at Egleton

*This talk will cover the journey to Iceland via Shetland and the Faroes.*

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## WEATHER SUMMARY John P Hollands, Wittering Met.

### October 2006

**Surface wind** October 2006 began with a mainly South Westerly light to moderate surface wind. This wind regime persisted until the 10th when it gradually backed to become mainly East to South easterly light occasionally moderate. This run persisted until the 20th when the surface wind veered to become mainly West to South Westerly light to moderate. This wind regime persisted to the end of the month but it freshened from the 30th to become mainly moderate to fresh with gusts to strong to near gale.

**Temperature** October 2006 was another month when the average temperature was greater than the long-term mean; 16.1 °C as compared to 14.1 °C. It is interesting to note that this was not a record. The highest monthly average on record for October occurred in 1959 with a temperature

of 17.6 °C. The warmest day was the 10th with a maximum of 19.5 °C. The coolest day was the 23rd with a maximum of 11.8 °C.

As might be expected the nights were warm too. The average night minimum for October 2006 was 9.6 °C as compared to the long-term mean of 7.2 °C. The warmest night was 10th/11th with a low of 14.5 °C whereas the coldest night was 24th/25th with a minimum of 4.3 °C.

There were 84.6 hours of bright sunshine making October 2006 a relatively dull month, as the mean is 106.2 hours.

**Rainfall** October 2006 was a relatively wet month with 67.2 mm (2.64 ins) of rain measured as compared to the mean of 52.4 mm (2.06 ins). The wettest day was the 11th with 20.0 mm (0.79 ins).

► *During October 2005 the average day maximum was 16.0 °C, the average night minimum was 10.2 °C, and the rainfall 54.0 mm (2.13 ins). There was a total of 81.9 hours of electronically recorded bright sunshine.*

### November 2006

**Surface wind** November 2006 began with a mainly North Westerly light to moderate surface wind. This run of wind persisted until the 10th when it backed to become mainly Westerly light to moderate but occasionally fresh to strong. Later during the 13th the surface wind backed further to become mainly South Westerly moderate to fresh in strength. This wind regime persisted until the 25th when it backed yet again to become mainly Southerly light to moderate. This persisted until the end of the month.

**Temperature** November 2006 was yet another warm month with an average day maximum of 11.0 °C as compared to the mean of 9.2 °C.

Although this was remarkable it wasn't a record as the highest mean day maximum for November was recorded in 1994 with a temperature of 12.0 °C. The warmest day was the 15th with a maximum of 14.8 °C; rather less than the extreme maximum of 17.5 °C recorded in 2005. The coolest day was the 22nd with a high of 7.5 °C.

The average night minimum during November 2006 was 5.0 °C, significantly warmer than the mean of 4.0 °C. The coldest night was 3rd/4th when the temperature dropped to -0.6 °C; thankfully much warmer than the extreme minimum for November of -7.6 °C recorded in 1978. The warmest night was the 14th/15th when a minimum of 11.3 °C was recorded.

This temperature would be a very respectable daytime maximum in November.

There were 113.9 hours of bright sunshine, significantly more than the mean of 71.4 hours.

- ▶ *During November 2005 the average day maximum was 9.2 °C, the average night minimum was 4.0 °C, rainfall 26.2 mm (1.03 ins), with a total of 103.3 hours of bright sunshine recorded electronically.*

## December 2006

**Surface wind** December 2006 began with a mainly South to South Westerly light to moderate but gusting fresh to strong, occasionally gale force, surface wind. Fortunately, after this protracted description, this blustery, but warm, run of wind persisted until the 15th. During the 16th the surface wind dropped out to become mainly light and variable. This period of light airs persisted until the 28th when the surface wind picked up to become mainly South Westerly light. During the 29th the surface wind freshened to become mainly South Westerly moderate to fresh, with gusts strong to gale force. This run of wind persisted until the end of the month. The highest gust for December 2006 was 54 mph recorded at Wittering on the 31 December.

**Temperature** December 2006 was yet another month when above average temperatures were recorded at Wittering. The average day (09–21) maximum temperature was 8.4 °C whilst the long-term mean is 6.5 °C. The warmest day was the 5th with an afternoon maximum of 14.1 °C. This compared favourably with the absolute maximum for December of 15.4 °C recorded in 1974. The coldest day was the 20th when the air temperature struggled to 0.6 °C. There were 52.6 hours of bright sunshine, which compares favourably with the long-term mean of 54.9 hours. It is interesting to note that when winter months are warm it is usually associated with warm moist South Westerly flows with the air travelling from the Azores area which bring dull overcast days. During December 2006 this is indeed what happened for a considerable

**Rainfall** November 2006 was quite average in the rainfall department when 58.4 mm (2.30 ins) was recorded at Wittering. This compares to the mean of 53.3 mm (2.09 ins). The wettest day was the 22nd with 14.8 mm (0.58 ins) recorded.

length of time but the cloud cover was such that average sunshine totals were recorded despite the 'moist fetch' to the surface wind.

The average night (21–09) minimum temperature recorded at Wittering during December 2006 was 4.5 °C whilst the mean is 2.1 °C. The warm air being continually pumped into the area by the SW surface wind countered the cooling that normally happens during long winter nights and facilitated this high temperature. The warmest night was 4th/5th when 12.8 °C (**new absolute record**) was recorded at Wittering. The coldest night was 21st/22nd when –3.0 °C was recorded at Wittering. This was the last of four frosty nights caused by an anticyclone that 'satdown' over southern England. This high cut off the warm air from the Azores, allowed cloud to break both day and night which in turn allowed temperatures to fall. This was because the energy lost to long wave radiation overnight wasn't replenished by the short wave energy from the sun during the following short winter's day. One consequence of cooling the moist air was fog, which was difficult to clear. This was because of the light wind and lack of heating from the sun.

**Rainfall** December 2006 was unremarkable with regard to rainfall amounts. During 2006 54.0 mm (2.13 ins) of rain was recorded at Wittering as compared to the long-term mean of 52.8 mm (2.08 ins). The wettest day was the 30th with 14.6 mm (0.57 ins).

- ▶ *During December 2005 the average day maximum was 6.8 °C, the average night minimum was 2.3 °C and the rainfall 24.0 mm (0.94 ins). There was a total of 54.9 hours of electronically recorded sunshine.*

## HIGH TIDES IN NORTH NORFOLK Nola Thurlow

### February

Sunday	4	07.52	19.49
	11	11.56	
	18	06.57	18.59
	25	11.58	

### March

Sunday	4	06.59	18.55
	11	10.14	22.30
	18	05.05	17.54
[BST]	25	11.51	

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

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

### November/December 2006

The mildness of the winter has resulted in a few more amphibian records than usual in what are usually two pretty dormant months for our herpetological fauna.

The Worralls' frogs do not seem to have heard of seasons and a minimum of three individuals were heard croaking on at least two occasions in December – the last being 30th December. Also on that date a single frog was observed in my garden pond in Wing, which is much earlier than any previous year.

The other amphibian sighting was of a freshly dead Common Toad in Wing on 9th November, being the last Wing toad to meet such a fate in 2006.

*My thanks to L & G Worrall for their record.*

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## BIRD REPORT compiled by T Mitcham

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

### November/December 2006

As Rutland Water filled towards the end of the year it attracted a record six Great Northern Divers, whilst numbers of most wildfowl remained high. The Bittern was seen occasionally and other scarce species noted included Red-crested Pochard, Scaup and Smew. Little Egrets benefited from the mild weather and were present throughout both months. A good variety of raptors included Merlin and Peregrine, with several Barn Owls also reported. Gardens did not attract large numbers of birds but Kingfisher and Great Spotted Woodpeckers brightened some sites.

*My thanks to the following for their records, and good bird watching to everyone in 2007:*

*T Appleton, V Arnold, T Caldicott, F Chiverton, Dr C H Gallimore, J Harris, Dr C R Jones, J Kendrick, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, P Mann, L & M Martyn, I Misselbrook, T Mitcham, D & B Parker, P Rudkin, P Scott, A R & M A Thorpe, M W Tyler, D Willett, L & G Worrall.*



**Black Swan.** One was at EBR on 12.11.

**Pink-footed Goose.** c.80 flew over Tunneley Wood on 9.12. One was at RW (Egleton) on 15.12.

**Greylag Goose.** c.70 were at EBR on 12.11.

**Barnacle Goose.** One was at EBR on 12.11 with Greylags and Canada Geese.

**Egyptian Goose.** Away from RW there were two by the R. Gwash near Brooke on 28.12.

**Mandarin.** Two were at RW (Lyndon) on 17.12.

**Teal.** c.350 were at EBR on 12.11.

**Pintail.** Up to six remained at FHP to 19.11.

**Scaup.** A female at RW (Dam) on 3.11 remained to mid Dec.

**Goosander.** A female was at EBR on 5.11.

**Smew.** A redhead was at RW on 12.12 and three males at EBR on 27.12.

- Ruddy Duck.** Numbers are now much lower following the Govt. cull. Nine were noted off Hambleton peninsula (RW) on 13.12.
- Grey Partridge.** Seven were noted near the R.Chater at Leighfield Fishponds on 28.12.
- Little Egret.** One was at EBR on 5.11. Present throughout both months at RW with four noted on 19.11.
- Cormorant.** c.19 were at EBR on 12.11.
- Red Kite.** Singles and pairs were reported from seven sites in the east and south of the county with three occasionally over Barrowden.
- Sparrowhawk.** Regular in some Stamford and Oakham gardens. One attacked a Magpie in a Langham garden on 28.11.
- Buzzard.** Records were received from FHP / Exton Park, Clipsham Park Wood, RW, Manton and Braunston.
- Kestrel.** Hunting or perched birds were seen at FHP / Exton Park, Woolfox, RW, Braunston, Bloody Oaks and Tixover.
- Merlin.** A female or immature bird was at Luffenham Airfield on 9.12.
- Peregrine.** Singles were at FHP on 2.12 and EBR on 27.12.
- Golden Plover.** Flocks were rather mobile. There were only 18 at RW on 19.11 and 14 on 17.12 but 2900 appeared briefly on 28.11. There were c.180 at EBR on 12.11.
- Lapwing.** At EBR there were 414 on 5.11 and c.850 on 12.11. RW had 522 on 19.11 and 478 on 17.12.
- Little Stint.** One accompanied the RW Dunlin flock throughout both months.
- Dunlin.** There were 174 at RW on 19.11 and 169 there on 17.12.
- Ruff.** Eight at RW on 19.11 declined to four on 17.12.
- Snipe.** There were 17 at RW on 19.11 but only two on 17.12.
- Woodcock.** Noted from 3.11 onwards with one or two flushed in Priors Coppice, Tunneley Wood and Stoke Dry Wood.
- Black-tailed Godwit.** Generally up to three at RW throughout both months but 48 were present on 28.11.
- Curlew.** Five were counted at RW on 19.11 and three were noted on 17.12.
- Redshank.** Good numbers at RW with 27 on 19.11 and 33 on 17.12. They clearly have winter feeding territories along the shoreline as two were watched disputing a stretch of mud at Lyndon on 4.11.
- Green Sandpiper.** Two were at RW on 19.11 and at FHP on 2.12 and one was at RW on 17.12.
- Stock Dove.** A flock of 26 was on fallow land in Exton Park on 4.11.
- Woodpigeon.** A late fledged juvenile was in a Stamford garden on 5.11.
- Barn Owl.** Singles were reported from Barrowden and FHP in Nov. and Pickworth and Morcott in Dec.
- Little Owl.** Reported from Langham, FHP and Wing Burrows.
- Tawny Owl.** Noted in Pickworth Wood on 21.11.
- Kingfisher.** Between 25.11 and 3.12 one fished in an Empingham garden pond, reducing the large Stickleback population. One was at Wing Fishing Lakes on 2.12. Noted also along the Oakham Canal.
- Green Woodpecker.** Two were on a Braunston lawn on 4.11. and one or two were noted at Morkery and Clipsham Park Woods and FHP, mainly in Dec.
- Great Spotted Woodpecker.** One fed regularly in a Langham garden in Nov. and others were noted at Tunneley Wood (on feeder), RW (Gibbett Gorse) and FHP.
- Meadow Pipit.** Flocks of c.50 birds were at RW(Old Hall) on 16.12 and Leighfield Fishponds on 28.12; perhaps a measure of the mild weather.
- Grey Wagtail.** Singles noted up to 29.11 with records from FHP, Geeston and RW (North Arm).
- Fieldfare.** Not widely reported. There were c.50 at Morcott on 1.11 and 20 at Wing Fishing Lakes the next day. Good nos. passed over Stamford on 18.11 and c.40 were at Caldecott on 14.12. During Dec up to 120 fed on hawthorn berries along the North Brook near Horn Mill.
- Song Thrush.** Full song first reported from Langham on 16.11. Fifteen were counted around Hambleton peninsula at RW on 29.11.
- Redwing.** The only record was of 14 feeding on hawthorn berries near Pickworth on 10.12.
- Mistle Thrush.** Song was first heard at Barrowden on 15.11. Noted at Langham on 21.11.
- Chiffchaff.** Present at RW (Egletton) between 1.11 and 16.12 with one also seen at Leighfield Fishponds on 12.11.

**Long-tailed Tit.** This species is apparently doing well with 21 counted in a Barrowden garden on 21.11 and 54 noted around Hambleton peninsula on 16.12. There were ten at Bloody Oaks on 1.12.

**Marsh Tit.** One or two were regular at a peanut feeder in Tunneley Wood during both months.

**Great Tit.** Belling first noted in Wing on 4.12.

**Willow Tit.** Nov. records came from Leighfield Fishponds and RW (Egleton) with two at Leighfield Fishponds on 28.12.

**Brambling.** Singles were at FHP on 4.11, EBR on 5.11, and Exton on 10.12.

**Redpoll.** Up to eight were noted at Leighfield Fishponds, Priors Coppice and RW (Hambleton) between 3.11 and 29.11.

## National Waterfowl Counts 2006

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park		Holywell Lake	
	19 Nov	17 Dec	19 Nov	–	19 Nov	15 Dec	11 Nov	24 Dec
Mute Swan	519	206	30	–	8	8	7	2
Pink-footed Goose	–	–	–	–	–	–	1	1
Greylag Goose	247	78	45	–	18	47	3	13
Canada Goose	960	763	40	–	1	1	147	80
Barnacle Goose	13	9	–	–	–	–	–	–
Egyptian Goose	33	30	–	–	–	–	–	–
Shelduck	24	38	–	–	–	–	–	–
Mandarin	–	2	–	–	–	–	–	1
Wigeon	2174	1882	112	–	9	2	–	–
Gadwall	868	579	12	–	54	47	32	23
Teal	904	1008	240	–	34	32	28	10
Mallard	1251	958	71	–	106	46	130	135
Pintail	14	16	3	–	–	–	–	–
Shoveler	152	86	–	–	20	–	13	5
Red-crested Pochard	10	1	–	–	–	–	–	–
Pochard	95	152	68	–	4	2	–	–
Tufted Duck	2874	2696	212	–	48	43	11	10
Goldeneye	248	239	18	–	–	–	–	–
Goosander	10	21	1	–	–	–	–	–
Ruddy Duck	2	11	–	–	–	–	–	–
Little Grebe	61	45	7	–	2	4	6	–
Great Crested Grebe	655	558	29	–	–	–	–	–
Cormorant	162	96	12	–	–	–	–	–
Little Egret	4	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
Grey Heron	25	25	7	–	–	–	–	–
Moorhen	157	124	1	–	49	33	11	12
Coot	4018	6233	160	–	79	84	7	8
Kingfisher	1	–	–	–	–	–	1	–



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

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

### **November/December 2006**

Autumn lingered on until the week before Christmas but more flowers were seen in November than December, unless of course observers went out shopping instead of looking! Bloody Oaks Quarry produced some notables: **Harebell**, **Small Scabious** and **Corn Sow-thistle**. Uppingham gave us **Green Amaranth** (an import from tropical Americas), **Black Nightshade** and **Corn Chamomile**. Many areas produced the hardy flowers such as **Common Daisy**, **White Deadnettle**, **Red Campion**, **Hogweed** and **Creeping Buttercup**. December 14 produced the last **Dandelion** of the year, at Eyebrook Reservoir, while **Common Gromwell** at Bloody Oaks Quarry and **Oxeye Daisy** at South Luffenham show how the Summer can be extended.

The only report of truly Spring flowers in December was of male **Hazel** catkins at Manton, but at least it signals a change to warmer times.

*Thanks to R Lemmon, T Caldicott, P Ennis, G Worrall and J Harris.*

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## **ENTOMOLOGY REPORT** compiled by J & R Harvey

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

### **September/October 2006**

#### **Butterflies**

With higher than normal temperatures for the time of year, more butterflies have been recorded than is usual. **Brimstones** visited gardens in several villages, **Large** and **Small Whites** were seen until the third week of September, and **Green Veined Whites** were observed in Ketton Quarry and at Lyddington.

Seven records were received for **Small Copper**. This is encouraging as it is a species which has declined in some places locally. One record for **Brown Argus** came from Lyddington, **Common Blues** were seen in Ketton Quarry and single **Holly Blues** were flying at Wing in the first few days of September.

The **Red Admiral** has been the best recorded and the most prolific butterfly species this autumn. During September, approximately 30 were found on ivy blossom at Barrowden, a maximum of 15 were counted at Wing and nine were seen together in Oakham. This species continued to visit many areas throughout October, with over 10 found at Belton and six or seven at Ketton Quarry. In total, 24 records were received for the two months.

**Painted Ladies** were found in a number of gardens and at Leighfield Fish Ponds until mid-October. **Small Tortoiseshells** were reported from eight areas including Clipsham Park and Addah Woods. **Peacocks** considered scarce last year have been seen in the quarries, woods and gardens throughout both months.

**Commas** were found feeding on rotten figs in Uppingham and a maximum of five were seen in Wing. There were also records from a further nine sites so obviously this species has had a successful season. **Speckled Woods** appeared in good numbers during September. Over 30 were noted around Belton and 15 were on the Egleton Reserve. Finally, a single record for **Small Heath** came from Ketton Quarry in early September

#### **Moths**

It has been a busy autumn for our regular moth trappers as catches have been very varied with a large number of species seen especially during September. Some moths which normally fly in the summer months only have apparently had extra broods so that as the autumn species emerged there has been a big 'overlap' thus boosting the numbers recorded.

The following examples were extracted from records from the garden trap at Lyddington.

<i>Species</i>	<i>last date in 2006</i>	<i>number seen</i>	<i>previous latest dates</i>
<b>Mother of Pearl</b>	Oct. 18	three	Sept. 10
<b>Swallow Tailed Moth</b>	Oct. 20	one, twice	July 23
<b>Heart and Dart</b>	Oct. 28	regularly	Aug. 3
<b>Dark Arches</b>	Oct. 30	at least three	Sept. 27
<b>Beautiful Hook Tip</b>	Oct. 17	regularly	July 23

On September 24th a **Blair's Mocha** was caught at Edith Weston and this record has been confirmed as a 'first' for VC55. Two micro-moths caught at Lyddington proved to be 'firsts' for Rutland. These were *Antigasta cataclaunalis* and *Palpita vitrealis*.

Several migrant species were seen regularly. These included **Scarce Bordered Straw** on a number of occasions at both the traps operated regularly at Barrowden and Lyddington, the **Vestal, Rusty Dot Pearl** and **Rush Veneer**. **Humming Bird Hawk** moths were seen by members in Barrowden, Oakham and Wing. **Convolvulus Hawk** moths were recorded at Beaumont Chase Farm, Edith Weston and Lyddington.

A survey was carried out to monitor the spread of the **Horse Chestnut leaf miners** throughout Rutland. Affected trees were found in Glaston, Preston, Lyndon Village, Ridlington, Tixover, Wing Grange and Tinwell Churchyard.

Finally members may be interested to hear that back in July a **Scarlet Tiger** was seen near Ketton Quarry. We are informed that this species had previously been seen there in 1999 and also in 2003 but apparently larvae were released there in 1994 so it is classed as an introduced species.

### **Crickets & grasshoppers**

**Long Winged Coneheads** have continued to flourish and more new sites have been discovered in the last two months. Several stridulating males were located at Beaumont Chase Farm. Seven were at the edge of the hedgerow on Stockerston Hill, which falls into yet another new square on the map. At Rutland Water Nature Reserve the species was heard in fields 2, 27 and 28 and near Fieldfare hide where they were still present on October 29th. Earlier in the month five were found at Wing Fishing Lakes.

**Roesel's Bush Crickets** were also discovered at the new site at Beaumont Chase Farm whilst others were recorded at Wing Fishing Lakes, at Rutland Water North Arm and in fields 1, 2 and 28.

There were very large numbers of **Speckled Bush Crickets** at Beaumont Chase Farm in mid-September. About 92 were counted in a hedgerow in one area with other large colonies in ash and hawthorn. Other new sites for this species were at Allexton where a large colony was in ash in a lay-by, and south of Belton others were found in ash and hawthorn. During the *Bat Evening* at Hambleton Woods a colony was heard in the trees and still more were outside the wood.

**Meadow and Lesser Marsh Grasshoppers** were found on the Egleton Reserve and at Beaumont Chase Farm and several **Common Green Grasshoppers** were at Burley Fish Ponds.

### **Dragonflies**

In mid-September c.60 **Common Blue Damselflies** were counted at Burley Fish Ponds where one **Emerald Damselfly** had also been seen on the 1st. Common Blues were found in Hambleton Woods.

In a Barrowden garden many more **Hawkers** were seen than has been normal for September in previous years. These included both **Southern** and **Migrants**. At Leighfield Fish Ponds, c.30 Migrant Hawkets were recorded and one Southern. At Burley Fish Ponds c.15 Migrants were present with four Southern. Other sites for these two species included Egleton, Lyddington and Wing. Seven **Brown Hawkets** were observed in Addah Wood and five at Egleton.

Forty **Common Darters** were reported from Burley Fish Ponds, 30 from Leighfield Fish Ponds and others from Barrowden, Clipsham Park Wood, Ketton Quarry, Lyddington and Wing. One **Ruddy Darter** was flying at Burley Fish Ponds.

### Miscellaneous

**7-Spot** ladybird records came from Barnsdale Lodge Wood and Lyndon. One **2-Spot** was also seen at Barnsdale and one **10-Spot** in Barrowden.

**Hornets** were extremely active throughout the period and visited moth lights in numbers at Eyebrook Reservoir, Stoke Dry Wood and just across the County border in Great Merrible Wood. Some were quite aggressive and some painful stings were experienced! In general, other wasp species were low in numbers this year.

**Green Shield Bugs** were seen in Edith Weston and Tixover, a leaf hopper (*Cicadella viridis*) was at Burley Fish Ponds and **Bird Cherry** aphids were in a Barrowden garden in large numbers. This last species rolls the leaves of Bird Cherry in Spring but turns its attention to cereals and grasses in Summer and even into Winter if it is mild.

**Plant galls** were found in Hambleton Woods on Crab Apple, Hawthorn, Speedwell and Goat Willow. **Lighthouse galls** on Ground Ivy and **leaf galls** on Field Maple were in Burley Wood, and leaf galls on Elm in Barnsdale Lodge Wood.

### November and December 2006

During the first week of November, **Painted Lady** butterflies were seen at Barrowden, Brooke, Edith Weston and Rutland Water Lyndon Reserve. A **Comma** and a **Peacock** were also noted at the last site. On November 11th approximately 20 **Small Tortoiseshells** were found hibernating in the tower of North Luffenham church. **Red Admirals** took advantage of the extended mild weather and were active in six areas during November with final sightings reported from Barrowden, Edith Weston, Uppingham and Wing in early December.

A few species of moths visited the garden trap at Lyddington during November. These included several **Sprawlers** and **December Moths**. In December the main species seen there was **Winter Moth**. The garden trap at Barrowden was operated eleven times during November attracting the usual autumn/winter species and included a **Dark Arches** on the unusually late date of the 27th (one was also taken at Lyddington earlier in the month). On December 13th a **Silver Y** was seen there, probably a late migrant proving that 2006 has been a most interesting year. On November 12th two members of the Leicestershire Moth Group ran traps in Clipsham Park Wood, Addah Wood and Pickworth Great Wood for a few hours during the evening. The results were six, two and ten species respectively. At Pickworth, they caught 36 **December Moths** whereas the other species were mostly seen singly.

**Common Darter** dragonflies were found in Prior's Coppice on two dates in November.

Two **Kidney-Spot Ladybirds** were seen on the bark of Willows at Rutland Water Lyndon Reserve on November 4th. On the same day four **Hornets** were flying there and a nest was located nearby, attached to the side of a bird's nesting box. On December 11th a cat took a dead hornet into a house in Ketton. Finally, to end the year we have just received ladybird records from Leighfield Fishponds. On December 28th eight **Orange** ladybirds were together in a 'roost' on a tree trunk and in the same area approximately twenty **14-Spot** ladybirds were counted.

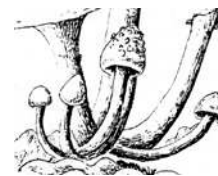
*We should like to thank the following for their contributions:*

*V Arnold, T Caldicott, R Follows, C H Gallimore, C Howat, C R Jones, A L Lawrence, R Lemmon, D & F Lee, P & E Mann, E Northen, D & B Parker, P Rudkin, A Russell, K Tailby, P Tomalin and G & L Worrall.*

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## MYCOLOGY NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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### June to December 2006

There's no way your indisposed Recorder can itemise all the fungi you've reported over the last seven months – please accept abject apologies and an assurance that they will all be put in the Annual Report and sent to Kew as normal. I hope to resume the Notes at the earliest possible moment; meantime **please** keep your eyes peeled as usual and keep sending me your cards. I am particularly sorry not to be able to itemise fungi found on Reserves, so they can conveniently be abstracted for Reserve records, and hope to catch up with this at some point.

Briefly, as always, there have been surprising sightings, non-appearances as well as new species in unexpected places, and the welcome constancy of others. Currently I am being cheered by the Redland Close black **Hairy Earthtongues** and a flourish of golden **Velvet Shanks** with **Silverleaf** fungus on a standing stump of Field Maple in our garden, the **Wood Blewits** under the Firethorn having been and gone. Remarkably colourful, fungi and so many different shapes. I hope you've got some to enjoy too.

*Huge thanks for sightings: Members on Fungus Walk at Pickworth Great Wood, J Ansley, M A Branston, T Caldicott, F and D Lee, R Lemmon, E and P Mann, E Northen, M and J Nourish, P Tomalin, L and G Worrall.*

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## BAT NOTES compiled by Jenny Harris

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The only record for the period was of a grounded male **Soprano Pipistrelle** (*Pipistrellus pygmaeus*) on 6.11. It was found in an industrial unit on Pit Lane, Ketton, and brought to me by an RSPCA officer. It was holding its head to one side, and although it showed no obvious injury, after 11 days there was pink staining on the paper in its box and it died on 26.11.

There were no other records, quite surprising considering the mild weather, when temperatures of 12 °C were regularly recorded in the evening. Bats tend to start hibernating in October if it is cold, but some species, especially Brown Long-eared and Natterer's in this area, are able to take advantage of winter-flying moths and may stay active at least until Christmas. There is usually little activity in January and February but it is still worth keeping an eye out for foraging bats, or droppings in churches, since they will emerge to feed if the temperature goes above 6 °C. Occasionally, hibernating bats are disturbed by various kinds of building work, and back in November a Common Pipistrelle (*P. pipistrellus*) was found when a door frame was pulled out. This was at Somerby, not Rutland, but in the past bats have been found hibernating inside thick walls, under coping stones, around window frames and of course inside colder lofts. Brown Long-eared bats often stay in their maternity roosts, if they are cold enough in winter, and may be found in roof apexes and where beams join, especially at the hip end of roofs. During a very cold spell back in the 1990s, a friend in Essex was called in when 50 pipistrelles were found hibernating under the floor of a loft.

Please keep an eye open for bats or evidence of their presence (droppings, insect remains) and let me know what you find.

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## MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

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Very sorry, unavoidably delayed. Please keep sending your records as usual.

