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NOTICEBOARD

Winter Programme and Membership Card

Comes with this *Fieldfare*. Please sign it straight away (names of junior members should be put on adults' cards) and always carry it if you go to Eyebrook or Burley Wood, or use it for books at Uppingham Sports and Books. This card has details of events through to April 2009, so you can plan ahead. As always, membership subscriptions are due on January 1st each year, and all who renew (by Standing Order, cheque or cash) will receive the next Card with the summer programme along with the March *Fieldfare*. Have a good winter!

B.T.O. Breeding Bird Atlas

My thanks to everyone who completed tetrad walks for this survey and returned their forms to me or submitted their records on-line. Many records from recording slips will also help to give a clearer picture of the distribution of our breeding birds. I hope that members who took part in the summer survey enjoyed it as much as I did – it is always pleasing to prove a particular species breeding or find an unexpected bird on your patch during a walk, which might otherwise have been missed.

I'll be checking Rutland tetrads for the second year of winter recording and should have these available at the first indoor meeting. I hope we can manage to cover as many as possible. Thanks again,

Terry Mitcham

Cliff Rhodes

We have received the following letter from Hazel Rhodes:

"As you know, Cliff sadly passed away in March 2008 after a brave fight against cancer. Cliff enjoyed his many years as a member of the Society whilst living in Rutland, and after returning to Lincolnshire he still made frequent visits to the reserves. His love for wildlife and nature was apparent throughout his life.

It was his wish to make the enclosed donation of £500 in his memory. I would like to wish all the members all the very best for the future."

The Society is very touched that Cliff thought to remember RNHS in this way, and we extend our sympathies to Hazel.

Fieldfare

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British Wildlife – homes needed

Max Winslow has entrusted me with mint copies of *British Wildlife* magazine. I am looking for a good home for them. They are as follows: apart from one missing edition, of Volume 17, June 2006, they are an unbroken run from April 2004 to August 2007. This includes volumes 15, 16, 17, 18. I can be contacted on 01780 762 998, or I could bring them to the indoor meetings.

Phil Rudkin

Wildnews Bulletin

Well worth a look! The Lincolnshire Naturalists' Union Bulletin goes to 800 email addresses each week and they are keen to encourage more readers to subscribe.

Please make contact via the LNU Website:

<http://www.lnu.org/>

or e-mail wildlifeneeds@lnu.org

or e-mail the Editor to join up, resign or contribute articles or reports at: rparsons@enterprise.net.

RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY events

Sunday 19 October **TORTOISESHELL WOOD** **10 am**

An RNHS-led outing to this ancient woodland Lincolnshire wood and adjoining fields – very good for fungi. Meet at SK963197.

Sunday 30 November **LYNDON NATURE RESERVE** **10 am**

An RNHS-led outing to a Rutland Water nature reserve. There is a charge of £2 for those not covered by an Anglian Water annual permit. Please bring permits with you to sign in. Meet at SK895056.

INDOOR MEETINGS

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

Tuesday 7 October **BRITISH BEETLES** **7.30 pm**

This first talk of the autumn is given by Nick Holford, Registrar of the Amateur Entomologists' Society and RNHS member. (Brian Eversham has had to cancel his talk on 'Ground beetles', announced in July Fieldfare and the autumn programme, and sends his apologies.)

Tuesday 4 November **ANCIENT TREE FORUM** **7.30 PM**

Given by Ted Green, a founder member of the Ancient Tree Forum: 'The UK's ancient trees are the remnants of Europe's rainforests. Its incredible to think that an oak tree of 1000 years links back just seven or eight generations to the last Ice Age.'

Tuesday 2 December **BIRDS OF THE PO DELTA** **7.30 pm**

Given by Carol Debney, a member of the Rutland Water Nature Reserve Management Committee and a trustee of the Italian conservation organisation, LIPU-UK. She leads wildlife tours to Italy: 'Even very experienced birdwatchers are surprised at how good the birding is and when combined with the fascinating history, food, wine, climate and lovely people, it doesn't get much better.'

LEICESTER AND RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST events

Details of the LRWT Rutland group's meetings are given below. They are held at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton, admission £1, includes tea/coffee/biscuits.

Monday 20 October **FOXES** **7.30 pm**

An illustrated talk by Derek Warren.

Monday 17 November **ECOLOGY OF ORCHARDS** **7.30 pm**
A talk by Richard Keeble of the Stamford Orchard Group.

Monday 8 December **KALEIDOSCOPE OF WILDLIFE** **7.30 pm**
An illustrated talk by David Duckett.

A number of regular events are held at Rutland Water Nature Reserve, including Terry Mitcham's 'Rutland Birds in autumn' birdwatching course – a course of four walks, starting on 22 September; 'Walk with the warden' for a walk round the nature reserve; 'Birdwatching for beginners' led by Paul Stammers; and others. Booking is essential: contact the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre on 01572 770 651; or email jfisher-robins@lrwt.org.uk; or check website www.rutlandwater.org.uk.

LEICESTERSHIRE FUNGI STUDY GROUP event

Sunday 26 October **WAKERLEY GREAT WOOD** **10.00 am**
Leader Peter Long plans to take in St Mary's Wood, one of the most fruitful areas of this large and varied site, and RNHS members are most welcome. PLEASE NOTE: LFSG insurance requires that they must know visitors' names in advance, so if you're going you must phone Richard Iliffe on 01455 612769 before the day.

Meet at SP961987, Wakerley Great Wood main carpark: from Duddington roundabout take A43 towards Corby for 2 miles, at crossroads with Fineshade Top Lodge turn right (carefully, up slope) to carpark half mile on left; or off A47 to Barrowden, to Wakerley over river, left in Wakerley and next right, to carpark half mile on right.

LEICESTERSHIRE AND RUTLAND ORNITHOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Special Rutland meeting at the Anglian Water Birdwatching Centre, Egleton. £2 for non-members.

Friday 21 November **BIRD ISLANDS, A TALK ON SEA EAGLES** **7.30 pm**
Nick Williams is well known for his talks which combine beautiful photography with matching music. He starts in the Arctic in Northern Norway, covering Sea and Golden Eagles, the re-introduction of the Sea Eagles in the Western Isles, Mull and the Outer Hebrides; then to the Bass Rock for the Gannets, the Farnes for breeding sea birds, the Cape Verde Islands for Frigate and Tropic Birds. The second half of the talk goes down to the Falkland Islands.

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST

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

HIGH TIDES IN NORTH NORFOLK Nola Thurlow

High tides for Snettisham; for Titchwell add 5 minutes. Times in GMT from October 26.

October			November		
Sunday	5	10.22 22.34	Sunday	2	08.29 20.34
	12	05.07 17.51		9	02.19 15.17
	19	09.56 22.15		16	08.02 20.19
	26	04.11 16.56		23	02.37 15.34
				30	07.41 19.44

WEATHER SUMMARY John P Hollands, Wittering met.

July 2008

Surface wind July 2008 began with a mainly South to South Westerly light to moderate, occasionally fresh, surface wind. Later on the 11th the surface wind veered to become mainly South West to West light to moderate. This run of wind persisted until the 20th when it veered once again to become mainly West to North West light to moderate. During the 23rd the surface wind veered to become mainly Easterly light. This wind regime persisted until the end of the month.

Temperature July 2008 was very close to the mean with regard to the daily maximum temperature. During July 21.6 °C was recorded at Wittering as compared to the long-term mean of 21.2 °C. The warmest day was the 25th with a maximum temperature of 28.2 °C as compared to the extreme maximum for July of 32.8 °C in 1976.

During July 2007 the average day maximum was 19.6 °C, average night minimum was 11.8 °C and rainfall 84.4 mm (3.32 ins). There were 160.1 hours of bright sunshine.

August 2008

Surface wind August 2008 began with a mainly West to South Westerly light to moderate surface wind. Remarkably this was the wind regime that predominated for the whole of the month.

Temperature August 2008 was an 'average' month with regard to daytime maximum temperature, with a recorded average temperature of 20.7 °C as compared to the long-term mean of 21.1 °C. The warmest day was the 30th with a maximum of 24.6 °C as compared to the extreme maximum for August of 35.2 °C recorded in 1990. The coolest day was the 9th when an afternoon maximum of 17.3 °C was recorded.

There were 117.3 hours of bright sunshine recorded in August, rather less than the long-term mean of 174.4 hours, and very much less than the sunniest August on record, 1947, when 267.7 hours were enjoyed.

The average night minimum recorded in August 2008 was 13.1 °C, significantly warmer than the

There were 188.7 hours of bright sunshine in July 2008, a little more than the mean of 186.0 hours but significantly less than the sunniest July on record, 2006, when 282.2 hours of bright sunshine was recorded.

The average night minimum was 12.1 °C, close to the long-term mean of 11.7 °C. The coldest night was 3rd/4th, when a minimum of 8.1 °C was recorded, rather better than the extreme minimum for July of 5.2 °C recorded in 1993.

Rainfall July 2008 was drier than the mean with a total of 43.4 mm (1.71 ins) as compared to 53.6 mm (2.1 ins). The wettest day was the 9th with 10.4 mm (0.41 ins). There were 10 days with no recorded rainfall.

long-term mean of 11.7 °C. The coolest night was 14th/15th with a minimum of 8.7 °C recorded, much warmer than the absolute minimum of 4.8 °C recorded in 1964.

The relatively warm night minimum temperature for August 2008 was in part at least due to the persistent cloud cover reflected in the lower than average sunshine figure.

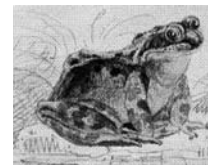
Rainfall August 2008 was a relatively wet month with 66.4 mm (2.61 ins) recorded as compared to the long-term mean of 59.4 mm (2.33 ins). The wettest day was the 11th when 21.4 mm (0.84 ins) was recorded. The wettest August on record was in 2004 when 187.6 mm (7.38 ins) was recorded at Wittering. It was in 2004 that a daily total of 90.8 mm (3.57 ins) was recorded, significantly greater than the highest daily figure for August 2008. There were 12 days during August 2008 with no recorded rainfall.

During August 2007 the average day maximum was 20.7 °C, night minimum 11.2 °C and rainfall 39.4 mm (1.55 ins). There was a total of 190.9 hours of bright sunshine.



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

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



July/August 2008

There has been a smattering of amphibian records with frogs enjoying the wet summer. **Newts** have taken to wheelie bins for shelter. There have been no records of either **Slow Worms** or **Adders**, but **Grass Snakes** have been widely reported – sadly there has been no sign of last year's deliberately translocated lizards, although the accidental imports are surviving. A number of records have been accompanied by excellent photographs, which is helpful (and aesthetically pleasing).

Frogs were frequently seen in August in Barrowden on the Worralls' patio on wet nights, which were many. They were also often seen in an Uppingham garden and less frequently in Wing. **Toads** were only reported from Wing, two on the road (one living, one dead), and the rest from the recorder's property, mainly in various unkempt nooks and crannies in the garden, although one had ventured into the middle of the kitchen floor, whence it was ushered out to the garden where I hope it found more slugs than in the kitchen.

Smooth Newts were seen in Barrowden in a vegetable garden and in Wing in a greenhouse and under a wheelie-bin, both the latter being very small. My wheelie-bin also held an attraction for an adult **Great Crested Newt**, which was sheltering under it. Quite a number of crested newts were found elsewhere in my garden.

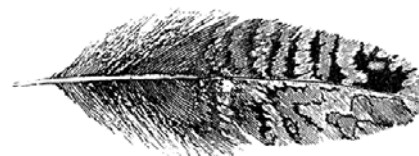
The only record of **Viviparous Lizards** in July and August was from Ketton Quarry at the end of August. It was hoped that the lizards translocated last year from Wing Treatment Works to a site on Lax Hill by a team of contractors would survive but, despite a number of searches, no sign has been found. Lizards can be pretty elusive, but it does not look good. However the lizards accidentally introduced in bales of hay to the Nature Reserve have survived and an adult and young have been seen.

Grass Snakes have been much in evidence in both months, favouring gardens and allotments particularly. Three snakes were seen on a compost heap in Wing in July and a week later ten eggs were found, while compost heaps in Oakham and Uppingham were also both frequented by snakes. In a garden in Oakham a large snake crossed the lawn before curling up under a fuchsia. Another interesting record was from Stretton where a compost heap had been moved during building work and three snakes were subsequently found in the cavity wall insulation – an excellent substitute, as Gill Chiverton observed. A large snake was seen at Exton Park in August, basking in the sun, a noteworthy event in itself. Finally a 40" sloughed skin was found by a bridle way in Leighfield.

My thanks to A Chiverton, D Follows, Dr N E Gordon, A Malcolm, T Mitcham, R Scott and L & G Worrall who sent in records and, in some cases, photographs.

BIRD REPORT compiled by T. Mitcham

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July/August 2008

Despite the mediocre weather some interesting bird watching was to be had during these months. Birds of prey seem to have fared well but it was a poor summer for Barn Owls, and Spotted Flycatchers continued their decline with fewer breeding records. Turtle Doves now seem to be restricted to Rutland Water – how long before these once widespread species disappear from the county for good ?

On a more positive note, Little Egrets continue to prosper and Spoonbills appeared at both reservoirs. A wide variety of waders enjoyed the muddy conditions and a juvenile Redstart was an excellent garden record. Ravens continue to feature and seem to be spreading further east – listen for their distinctive 'kronking' wherever you are .

My thanks to the following for their records: V Arnold, S Barnes, A Biddle, M A Branston, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, M & D Follows, Dr C Gallimore, M & G Griffin, R Lemmon, S Lister, P Mann, T Mitcham, Rev B & L Nicholls, J W Nourish, P Rudkin, J Spiegl, A R & M A Thorp, P Tomalin, D R Willett, G R & L Worrall, J Wright.

- Mute Swan.** 121 were at EBR on 28.08.
- Black Swan.** Three were at EBR on 27.07 with a single from 04.08 to the end of the month. One was at RW in July and Aug.
- Greylag Goose.** 24 were at FHP on 18.07 and 207 were at EBR on 24.08.
- Egyptian Goose.** A pair and four goslings were at RW(Manton Bridge) on 05.07. A count around the reservoir on 19.08 produced a record total of 98.
- Shelduck.** A pair and five ducklings were at RW(Manton Bridge) on 05.07 and two juveniles were at FHP on 03.08.
- Wigeon.** Our first autumn bird was a male at EBR on 24.08.
- Gadwall.** A female and seven ducklings were at Banthorpe Gravel Pit (Belmesthorpe) on 11.07, a new breeding site for this species.
- Mallard.** Confirmed breeding at FHP and Wing Fishing Lakes in July.
- Garganey.** One was at EBR on 04.08 and 10.08 and four were at RW(North Arm and Egleton) on 18.08 with the two Egleton birds present the next day. A remarkable flock of seven were at Banthorpe Gravel Pit on 26.08 – clearly a site worth checking!
- Scaup.** A male was at RW(Egleton) on 18.08.
- Goldeneye.** A male in eclipse plumage was at RW(North Arm) on 19.08.
- Little Grebe.** There was a pair at EBR on 27.07, increasing to ten on 24.08. Singles were at FHP on 09.07 and 23.08.
- Great Crested Grebe.** There were four occupied nests at EBR on 27.07 and a nest was also reported at RW(Whitwell Bay) on 18.08.
- Little Egret.** One was at Leighfield Fishponds on 30.07. Three were regular at EBR during Aug, and at RW birds were present throughout both months with an impressive 22 roosting there on 19.08.
- Spoonbill.** One was at EBR on 29.07 and one was at RW(Manton Bridge) between 06.08 and 12.08.
- Red Kite.** Singles and pairs were reported from EBR, the Welland valley, RW, Exton/FHP and Pickworth/Clipsham.
- Marsh Harrier.** A female/juvenile was at EBR on 30.08.
- Harrier sp.** A ringtail harrier was seen near Tinwell on 24.07. Montagu's Harrier would be the more likely species in summer but there have been records this summer of female Hen Harrier in Leics, so it is not possible to be certain which species was involved.
- Sparrowhawk.** One was in a Langham garden in early Aug. Newly fledged young were heard calling in Stamford, at FHP and in Exton Park, in Aug, indicating local breeding.
- Buzzard.** Widely reported with birds at RW, Pickworth, Barrowden, Exton/FHP, Wing, Ashwell Prison (!) and Ketton. Calling young were noted at FHP, Exton Park and Preston.
- Osprey.** The RW(Manton) birds were well reported throughout both months. The regular off-reserve pair fledged three young and a pair again summered in the EBR area. Singles were at Leighfield Fishponds regularly from 10.07 to the end of Aug, and at FHP on 09.08.
- Kestrel.** Young were fledged from nest-boxes at Normanton and in Exton Park.
- Hobby.** There were reports in July from EBR, Belmesthorpe, RW, and Leighfield Fishponds. One was at Edith Weston on 17.08 and one was over Stamford on 22.08.
- Peregrine.** A juvenile was at RW(Egleton) on 18.08.
- Oystercatcher.** One was at EBR on 05.07 and four were on the July count at RW.
- Little Ringed Plover.** Singles were at EBR on 10.08 and RW on 12.08.
- Ringed Plover.** Three were at EBR on 05.07 and 10.08 with eight there on 24.08. There were eleven at RW on 18.08.
- Golden Plover.** One flew south with Lapwings over Exton Park on 13.07 and there were two at RW(Egleton) on 25.07.
- Lapwing.** Bred at Banthorpe Gravel Pit. Some good early autumn counts included 307 at EBR increasing to c.400 on 24.08; 110 in Exton Park on 03.08, and at RW 627 on 12.08.
- Knot.** A juvenile was at EBR on 24.08.
- Sanderling.** One was at RW in mid-July and one at EBR on 04.08.
- Little Stint.** An adult was at RW(Manton Bridge) on 18.08.
- Dunlin.** Present at RW from mid-July with a max. of 25 on 12.08. At EBR there were two on 04.08 and eight on 24.08.
- Ruff.** Reported only from RW where nos increased from three in mid-July to nine on 18.08.
- Snipe.** Up to five were noted at RW from 25.07, with two at Leighfield Fishponds on 28.08 and one there on 30.08. One was at EBR on 24.08.
- Black-tailed Godwit.** Reported regularly from RW after 06.07 with 24 noted on 07.07 and sixteen on 16.07. There were fourteen there on 16.08.
- Whimbrel.** Singles were at RW in mid-July and on 15.08.

Curlew. Up to five were at RW between mid-July and 12.08. Two flew south-west at Leighfield Fishponds on 17.08.

Spotted Redshank. Singles were heard calling at RW on 05.08 and 31.08.

Redshank. The only reports were of singles at RW in mid-July and at Manton Bridge on 15.08.

Greenshank. Up to four were at RW from 25.07 to the end of Aug. Two were at EBR on 10.08, with five there on 24.08.

Green Sandpiper. At EBR there was one on 05.07 and two on 24.08. Good counts at RW included five in mid-July and eleven on 12.08. One was at Leighfield Fishponds on 03.08 and one was by Exton Park lake on 23.08.

Wood Sandpiper. Singles were at RW(North Arm) on 03.08 and EBR on 04.08.

Common Sandpiper. First noted at EBR on 06.07, with singles there on several dates to 10.08. The max. RW count was thirteen on 12.08; singles were at Leighfield Fishponds on five dates between 23rd July and 07.08. One was at FHP on 17.08.

Turnstone. Two were at EBR on 10.08.

Mediterranean Gull. One was at RW in mid-July.

Yellow-legged Gull. There were nine at RW in mid-July and sixteen there on 12.08.

Black Tern. There were three at RW on 12.08, and flocks totaling forty-one passed through on 17.08, with three still present the next day. Five were at EBR on 17.08.

Common Tern. The max noted at EBR was c.30 on 05.07. A pair fledged a chick here. At RW there were fourteen in mid-July and forty on 12.08.

Arctic Tern. Six were at RW in mid-July.

Turtle Dove. Up to four were noted at RW(Egleton) between 25.07 and 17.08, when a juvenile was ringed.

Barn Owl. A poor year with birds noted only near Brooke and Barrowden and at RW. Two young were ringed at one nest-box but one was subsequently found dead near the box.

Little Owl. Bred at Barrowden. Noted also near Bloody Oaks on 13.07.

Tawny Owl. Reported from Barrowden, Burley Wood and Edith Weston.

Swift. An immature fell from a Barrowden nest on 05.07 but could not be returned and died. Breeding birds had left Stamford by 06.08 but there were regular records of up to eight at RW until 18.08 and three flew over Stamford on 21.08.

Kingfisher. More reports for this period, mainly in Aug, with singles at EBR, RW(Manton

Bridge), Exton Park, FHP and near North Luffenham. Four were regularly seen at Leighfield Fishponds in July.

Green Woodpecker. Juveniles were noted at Shacklewell, Cottesmore Wood, FHP and Langham. Other reports were received from Barrowden, Bloody Oaks, RW(Manton Bridge) and near Little Casterton.

Great Spotted Woodpecker. Garden records were received from Langham in July.

Lesser Spotted Woodpecker. A male was reported at a peanut feeder in Uppingham in July and one was heard in Tunneley Wood on 26.07.

Swallow. Successful nesting was reported from Barrowden, despite young falling from nest and having to be replaced. Good counts included 118 at Stockerston on 26.07 and 140 at Leighfield Fishponds the next day. Numbers at this site increased to c.250 by 30.08.

House Martin. Occupied nest at the well-watched Wing site totalled five this year, one more than last year, but well down on the twenty-five in 2006. c.50 were noted around a Barrowden breeding area on 29.08.

Tree Pipit. Single migrants were noted at Gorsefield Wood on 16.08 and at RW(Burley Fishponds) on 29.08.

Yellow Wagtail. Noted throughout July in Exton Park. Up to six were reported on passage from RW, EBR, Leighfield Fishponds, Stamford and Gorsefield Wood between 15.07 and the end of Aug.

Grey Wagtail. Noted at RW(Edith Weston) between 14.08 and 23.08, with a family party on the latter date.

Redstart. A juvenile was in an Oakham garden between 13.07 and 19.07. From its appearance it had not travelled far from the nest so perhaps the occasional pair is still breeding locally.

Whinchat. A juvenile was at Leighfield Fishponds on 23 and 25.08.

Wheatear. There were three at Leighfield on 17.08.

Mistle Thrush. Post-breeding flocks of twelve, twenty-one and eighteen were noted at Leighfield between 23.07 and 30.08.

Grasshopper Warbler. Late singing birds were reported as follows: RW(Egleton) on 15.07 and 06.08, near Little Casterton on 25.07 and in Tunneley Wood on 26.07.

Sedge Warbler. One in song at EBR on 05.07 and seven were at Leighfield Fishponds on 27.07.

Reed Warbler. Probable migrants sang at Leighfield on 04.07 and 20.07, and at FHP on 05.07.

Chiffchaff. c.20 were noted around Leighfield Fishponds on 21.08. Small nos at FHP throughout Aug.

Spotted Flycatcher. Birds feeding young or carrying food were noted at Barrowden, Barnsdale, Tunneley Wood and Hambleton and Uppingham churchyards. One was in Oakham on 02.08 and two or three were noted at Priors Coppice and Leighfield between 02.08 and 30.08. A Wing member reports the absence of breeding birds in his garden for the first time in 32 years.

Marsh Tit. Noted in Priors Coppice and at Leighfield Fishponds in Aug.

Willow Tit. One or two were seen at RW(Egletton and Burley Fishponds), Gorsefield Wood and Leighfield during both months.

Nuthatch. Heard at Pickworth Wood on 08.08.

Treecreeper. Noted in a Langham garden on 01.08.

Raven. Pairs were at Leighfield Fishponds on 10.07 and 15.08, with a single there on 28.08. One flew north near Little Casterton on 18.08.

Tree Sparrow. Five were noted at EBR on 05.07.

Greenfinch. c.75 were at Leighfield on 30.07.

Goldfinch. A flock of fifty was at Leighfield on 21.08.

Siskin. Early singles flew over Priors Coppice on 15.07 and Gorsefield Wood on 22.07.

Linnet. There was a good count of c.115 at Leighfield on 30.07.

Crossbill. Small nos passed through from 14.07 to 28.08, with birds noted at Oakham, Gorsefield, Tunneley Wood, FHP, Priors Coppice, RW and Leighfield, which had the largest flock of eight on 23.07.

Wildfowl Counts for July and August – Rutland Water

	July	August
Mute Swan	375	412
Greylag Goose	375	361
Canada Goose	1063	865
Barnacle Goose	1	2
Egyptian Goose	74	58
Shelduck	4	3
Wigeon	6	0
Gadwall	420	683
Teal	9	188
Mallard	767	1233
Pintail	0	1
Garganey	0	2
Shoveler	38	136
Pochard	9	57
Tufted Duck	1610	1773
Scaup	1	1
Goldeneye	1	0
Ruddy Duck	0	1
Little Grebe	6	33
Great Crested Grebe	175	366
Cormorant	240	208
Little Egret	6	13
Grey Heron	15	27
Water Rail	4	0
Moorhen	54	83
Coot	717	1539

Wildfowl Counts for July and August – Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park

	July	August
Mute Swan	8	8
Greylag Goose	7	0
Gadwall	9	11
Mallard	31	82
Tufted Duck	0	1
Grey Heron	2	2
Moorhen	23	42
Coot	37	66



BOTANY NOTES compiled by Graham Worrall

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July 2008

Probably the most notable records were from Ketton Quarry, where an abundance of **Crown Vetch** was noted – a total recovery from the original site being turned into a stone-covered roadway some years ago – and a ‘prolific’ flowering of **Yellow Bird’s-nest** under the mature beech trees at the north edge of the reserve. This is the only site of both of these species in Rutland.

Foxgloves were spotted in Burley Wood – rare for Rutland – along with **Creeping Jenny**.

Clipsham Quarry produced 315 **Common Spotted Orchids** early in the month, but **Common Bird’s-foot Trefoil** was noted as diminished as against previous years, an observation which I have noticed on roadside verges throughout Rutland. Is this the consequence of high moisture content for the last eighteen months, causing competition from other species, especially grasses?

Knapweed Broomrape flourished on **Greater Knapweed** on limestone soils in the east of Rutland – for instance, 39 were seen on the Little

Casterton to Stamford road as against 16 in 2007. I only learned recently that this is an annual plant and new infection of the host is required each year.

August 2008

A **Stone Parsley** colony along the green lane to Elaine’s Field northwest of Lyddington village was spotted by Clive Jones. Six plants were found growing amongst **Upright Hedge-parsley**. Clive says the way to spot the Stone Parsley is to crush the leaves – it smells of petrol! No other umbellifer smells like that.

Harebells were at the Woodland Trust site at Gorsefield Oakham, Pickworth village and between Fort Henry and Horn Mill.

I have started to receive verge reports for 2008 – and look forward to receiving more in the months to come.

I am still interested in any new volunteers for verge monitoring in 2009 – we need you!

Thanks for records: C R Jones, P Tomalin, J Mallett, R Lemmon, G Worrall, T Caldicott, G Chiverton, B & D Parker, T Mitcham.

LEPIDOPTERA NOTES compiled by Jean Harvey

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August and September 2008

BUTTERFLIES

An article in the National Press recently stated that ‘*butterfly numbers could be at their lowest ever, summer level this year with the recent lack of sunshine following last year’s wash out*’. Overall, I feel that perhaps we have been more fortunate in Rutland than in some other parts of the country.

Peacocks seem to have done well compared with the continued decline of **Small Tortoiseshells**, which used to be so numerous a few years ago. **Small Whites** and **Speckled Woods** were fewer in number but on the other hand records for **Small Coppers** have increased. Members have been very diligent sending in all their sightings so we must remain optimistic that we do not lose species, as has happened with the **Wall** which has not been seen locally since 2004.

Small Skippers were recorded in Clipsham and Ketton quarries in July and also in a Lyddington

garden in August. **Essex Skippers** were identified on two occasions on one site on the Hambleton peninsular. **Large Skippers** were seen more frequently throughout July, with good numbers in Clipsham Quarry and at Belton. Other records came from Ketton Quarry, Pickworth Great Wood, Rutland Water, The Seek and Yew Tree Avenue.

One **Clouded Yellow** was observed at Lax Hill on July 25th. (This has not been a good year for migrants). More **Brimstones** have been seen this summer than a year ago, they were mostly reported during the last week of July and during August with over 20 being counted at Ketton Quarry on August 15th.

Large Whites were very well recorded throughout the County during both months, with the largest numbers occurring in Pickworth Great Wood (19), Ketton Quarry (15+), Barrowden (8), Hambleton (6). Far fewer **Small Whites** were observed,

whilst **Green Veined Whites** were slightly more plentiful as they were seen in fours and fives in, e.g., Ketton Quarry, Prior's Coppice and the Lyndon Reserve.

Two **Small Coppers** were found in Barnsdale Gardens and in Langham in July and there were records from five sites in August. Approximately 20 were found at Gorsefield on the 18th, which is excellent for a species which had been in decline in our area.

During the second half of August, **Brown Argus** was observed at Gorsefield, Ketton Quarry, Leighfield and Lyddington. Records for **Common Blue** were mainly from Ketton Quarry with one seen in Clipsham Quarry in July and others at Little Casterton and Lyddington in August. The second broods of **Holly Blue** were recorded from nine sites from late July.

Last year a **White Admiral** visited an Uppingham garden at the end of July. This year we are fortunate to have had not one but two records for this species, as one was in a Lyddington garden on July 23rd and another in a garden at Barrowden on July 30th. **Red Admirals** appeared singly in July in a number of gardens, reserves and at the quarries. By August, numbers had increased and they were seen in threes and fours, with more than 10 on Buddleia in Stretton on the 30th.

Once again this year numbers of **Small Tortoiseshells** have been low and the majority of records were from garden sites. **Peacocks** have been well recorded by members, with good numbers, e.g., in July Pickworth Great Wood (11), Wing (9), and in August Ketton Quarry (40+), Wing (9), Oakham (5). **Commas** were observed on many sites during both months and records came from a wide variety of habitats. There were fewer records for **Speckled Woods** during August than in July and numbers were on the low side.

Over 50 **Marbled Whites** were counted in Ketton Quarry in early July. This species was monitored by a number of members during the month with a final sighting of a very '*tatty*' specimen there on August 22nd. During July, 14 and 24 were noted at Clipsham Quarry on the 4th and 13th respectively. Three were found at Bloody Oaks Quarry on the 10th plus singles on 21st and 29th, with a further record for a single insect coming from Edith Weston on the 24th. It is interesting to note that this species is no longer confined to Ketton as in years gone by.

Gatekeepers were seen in a wide variety of sites during both months. The largest numbers seen were at Ketton Quarry (20+), Eggleton Reserve

(15+) and Belton (10+). During July, **Meadow Brown** was the most frequently recorded butterfly and members considered them to be '*numerous*' and '*common*' in many areas. Counts of over 50 were made at Rutland Water and Ketton Quarry with 17 in Pickworth Great Wood and 13 at Clipsham Quarry. As one would expect, numbers were low in August as their flight period was finishing. Records for **Small Heath** came only from the quarries.

Finally, **Ringlets** flew in many parts of the County during July and site totals included Clipsham Quarry (68), Ketton Quarry (50+), Pickworth Great Wood (12) and '*good numbers*' were mentioned at Hambleton Wood and Bloody Oaks Quarry. There was only one record for August, this was on the 7th from Lyddington.

MOTHS

Following the poor weather of 2007, some species have been low in numbers or in some cases even missing, whilst others have had a good year despite all the odds. For example, in moth traps, **Straw Dots** have appeared in unusually large numbers and **Angle Shades** have been found several at a time instead of singly. Numbers have been good for **Black Arches**, the **Coronet** and **Buff Footmen** to name but a few and two new County records were a **Festoon** at Ketton Quarry and a **Pauper Pug** at Barnsdale Gardens.

Two traps operated in a Lyddington garden during August attracted 10% more species and almost twice as many moths than during any previous August! These included the **Ear Moth**, **Bulrush Wainscot** and **Twin Spotted Wainscot**. Also July was the second best month since trapping started there, with 20% more species and twice as many moths as 2007. These included **Mere Wainscot** and **Fen Wainscot**. These results come despite all the '*doom and gloom statements*' from the press and some other lepidopterists.

At Barrowden, reasonable catches were obtained through the summer and at this site, an example of a species which has expanded its range was the **Least Carpet**. This moth had been listed as '*very rare*' in VC55, yet this year it has appeared in several places including my own garden!

Trapping took place at Eyebrook twice in each month and the highlight for the site was a **Webb's Wainscot** on July 28th, which was only the second record for Rutland. The first, some people may remember, was caught in the Rothamstead trap at Rutland Water in 2006.

A tripod light and two box traps were run at Clipsham Quarry in early August when 103

species were identified. A **Bordered Beauty** was new for the site and it has been 15 years since the last **Oak Hook Tip** had been seen there. On looking back at all the previous lists I found that around ten fairly common species had not been caught in the quarry area since the early 1990s. This could have been for a variety of reasons such as weather conditions, dates of trapping, habitat change or in some cases perhaps long term reproduction cycles.

Several species were added to the list for Prior's Coppice during one evening's visit in July. Other sites visited on several occasions included Rutland Water reed beds, Coppice Leys, Luffenham Heath Golf Course and Ketton Quarry. A catch at Lyndon Wood in July yielded

41 species. At Barnsdale, three nights trapping in July brought 120 species including the new **Pauper Pug**. Two nights in August brought 43 species. In early July, **Mullein Moth** larvae were found on *Verbascum* in these gardens.

A number of individual records have been received recently and these have included three **Leopard** moths found on low blackberry foliage beside a ride in Pickworth Great Wood, and three **Latticed Heaths** in Clipsham Quarry. **Cinnabars** and **Six-spot Burnets** were present in the quarries and **Hummingbird Hawkmoths** were found in Edith Weston and Oakham. **Elephant Hawkmoth** caterpillars were seen in Prior's Coppice and Oakham. **Horse Chestnut Leaf Miners** were located in Oakham and ten Rutland villages.

Many thanks to all the following for their contributions: J Ansley, V Arnold, T Caldicott, G Chiverton, A & J Comber, R & J Follows, C H Gallimore, J Harvey, V Hemsley, A L Lawrence, D & F Lee, R Lemmon, J Levisohn, A Malcolm, P & E Mann, D Manning, D Marchbank-Smith, E Northen, K O'Brien, D & B Parker, P Rudkin, A Russell, P Scott, and G & L Worrall.

ORTHOPTERA REPORT compiled by Phil Rudkin

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July/August 2008

This summer is marginally better than last year, but sun hours have been lacking. Once again, this has resulted so far in holding up development of some species. Amongst Tim Caldicott's record cards was an observation on the small size of the **Long-winged Conehead**. Tim photographed an adult male and a nymph male, on the 14th August, at Egleton reserve, and on the same date, I caught one each of the same species as Tim, at Quarry Farm, Stamford (just inside Rutland). They were also very small indeed. It will be interesting to observe other species over the next two months for the same phenomenon.

Roesel's Bush Cricket and **Long-winged Conehead** continue their impressive range expansion in Rutland; all rough fields, hay fields and verges have massive numbers in them. Listening with the bat detector, the amazing cacophony of sound is immense. Good news! Thankfully, **Common Green Grasshopper** numbers were up this year. **Oak Bush Cricket**, **Slender** and **Common Groundhoppers** remain under-recorded.

I made a last ditch effort to find the **Short-winged Conehead**, visiting last year's site several times in

the last month, with no success. On 29th August from 11.00 am, no sun, dull cloud, spent over one hour on the Hambleton Peninsular Road monitoring Roesel's Bush Cricket. I heard no Long-winged Coneheads. Eventually, I moved on at 1.15 pm for about 300 yards, and stopped to listen to Long-winged Coneheads in a verge, near to the turn to Keeper's Cottage. If these had commenced singing, then I reasoned that I had better return to the Short-winged Conehead site. This I did, and a careful walk to the exact spot revealed three males stridulating deep into the Rosebay Willow Herb/Thistle-dominated verge. Just in time for the *Fieldfare* report!

Readers of *British Wildlife*, August 2008, page 433, will have noted that the annual Orthopterists Meeting will be held on the 19th November 2008. The official paperwork states that the venue is the Natural History Museum, London, from 14.00 to 20.00. In addition to the short talks, posters and displays, Dr Peter Sutton, the National Orthoptera Recording Scheme organiser, will be giving a lecture entitled 'British Orthoptera – the current state of affairs' at 5.0 pm. If any RNHS members would like to attend, please contact me for details.



CRICKETS

Dark Bush Cricket, *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*

Large colony, located in uncut corner of tall grasses/thistles, at Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue car park, 5 males and 3 females seen on 8th August. Stridulations heard in bushes, at the junction of the Hambleton Peninsular Road with the A606, 15 August.

Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Metrioptera roeselii*

The impressive expansion in Rutland, and Rutland Water reserves, continues apace. At Egleton reserve, the first stridulations were heard on 15th July, and thereafter most hay fields and rough herbage along the footpaths in the south east (Tern Hide, Harrier Hide and Fieldfare areas) echoed to the massive numbers. The locations to the south west (Redshank Hide area), have less habitat, nevertheless good numbers were maintained.

In the Lyndon reserve, to the west of the Interpretive Centre, the hay fields opposite Deep Water Hide and Tufted Duck Hide are a stronghold, and other habitats such as rough corners and footpath herbage are full of this species, and the sound is wonderful. The road leading downhill to the Lyndon centre has rough pasture fields to the left, and these are absolutely full of this attractive cricket.

Away from the reserves, it is a take-over of Rutland, as year by year the numbers swell. Brickyard Quarry Farm, Little Casterton Road, Stamford (just inside Rutland) had stridulations from 26th July.

Ketton Quarries again proved good for Roesel's, with a large colony in the valley, known as The Dell, from 28th July. In a rough grass field, alongside the LRWT footpath into Ketton Quarries, good numbers were stridulating on 2nd August. On the same day, all available habitats at Wing Fishing Lakes were full of sounds. Four males were heard, in the thick herbage on the verge at the Hambleton Peninsular Road, on the 3rd August. On 29th August, I observed a macropterous (extra long winged) form on the Peninsular Road.

On that date, the Exton footpath and meadow had their usual excellent numbers in the herb-rich wet ditches. In August in the Leighfield and Gorsefield Wood areas, stridulation was heard regularly, reports our member from Oakham.

Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus discolor*

This species always matures slightly later than Roesel's, and stridulation was first heard at

Ketton Quarries in a rough field, alongside the LRWT entrance – 11 males on 2nd August. The expansion and numbers of this species are identical to Roesel's, and they can be found together, side by side in the same locations; Egleton and Lyndon reserves, the rough pasture fields on the left, as one descends the hill to the Lyndon centre, Wing Fishing Lakes, Brickyard Farm, The Dell, Ketton Quarries, Hambleton Peninsular Road, and the wet ditches in the Exton footpath meadows.

Tim Caldicott found and photographed an adult male and nymph male, at Egleton reserve, as they sunned themselves on a wooden post, on the 21st Anniversary Trail, on 14th August, and sent me the photos by email. Tim commented on the very small size of both of the specimens. That very same day, I caught a nymph and an adult male in the rushes at the edge of the first lake at Wing Fishing Lakes. These also were extremely small. So far, those caught, and also seen on plant stems, have been normal winged.

Short-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus dorsalis*

Members will remember that this cricket was first recorded in Rutland in September 2007. I located it first by sound, then captured it, and photographed it for final identification, and this was accepted by the National Orthoptera Recording Scheme. It has a single-year egg cycle, so with trepidation, I made a few visits, and eventually heard 3 males' soft stridulations deep into the vegetation. This habitat of tall Rosebay Willow Herb, thistles and tall grasses, could well hold a future large colony. Here's hoping! So far, I have not located the Short-winged in other areas around Rutland, but there is still time.

Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima*

Fabulous numbers as always! The use of bat detectors has been essential to orthopterists over the years for finding this lovely spotted creature, the stridulation only being picked up at 35 to 40 kHz.

The first record was of a female, observed resting on a bramble leaf, in Priors Coppice reserve on 10th July. The same observer noted one resting on a bramble leaf at Gorsefield Wood, this time a male, on 12th August. At the Lyndon reserve, stridulation was heard in the Hawthorn hedgerow, along the path near the car park, on 3rd August. Throughout August, numbers at Lyndon built up, and stretched along the path west of the Interpretive Centre, to Wader Scrape Hide. Going the other way (west), revealed massive numbers within a 600-yard walk from the

centre, ending just before Swan Hide. Located in bramble, hawthorn and ash, on 22nd August.

Away from the reserves, on 15th August, Roy Frost, the visiting orthoptera recorder for Derbyshire and Notts, using his detector located good numbers in hedgerow trees on the Hambleton Peninsular Road, and also along the minor road towards Egleton Church. I followed this up on 29th August, on the road to Egleton Church, and decided to walk 200 yards along the tall hedgerow, picking up amazing numbers on the detector. From there I visited the Exton footpath and meadow (next to the Horn Mill trout hatchery), but only heard c.20 males at the footpath entrance. But no sounds down into the valley, it was still very overcast and dull; this could have been the reason. News from one of the protected verges came from Verge 11 (Ryhall to Careby) on 21st August. The observer, not using a bat detector, noted one single specimen, sunning itself on the grass on the west side in bright sunshine.

GRASSHOPPERS

Common Green Grasshopper, *Omocestus viridulus*

An upturn in fortunes this season, albeit at only two locations. My first Egleton reserve survey on 15th July was rewarding, with c.13 stridulating males in pasture fields below Lax Hill, just off Harrier Hide. 4 more heard at the bend 50 yards away, 10 in an uncut hay field, behind Harrier Hide. A return visit on 26th July revealed numbers up in the same localities. Another report received was of one male seen on the path near Fieldfare Hide, on 1st August. I was delighted to find 2 stridulating males, in the Brickyard Quarry Field, on 26th July.

Field Grasshopper, *Chorthippus brunneus*

Very under-recorded in Rutland, but scattered reports as follows: one observed on bare soil, on member's Brooke Road, Oakham, allotment, 29th July; also, during August, several seen and heard regularly on the allotment. This is a good time to mention this important habitat. The Field Grasshopper is typically found on bare patches of soil, and it develops a colour form to mimic its surroundings, which gives it good camouflage. On 29th August, I found one on the verge, at the junction of the Hambleton Peninsular Road/ A606 corner.

Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus parallelus*

Our most common grasshopper! Stridulating first heard, and two small colonies located, in pasture

Many thanks to my small army of reporters, and for digital photographs from Tim Caldicott and Peter Scott. Contributors: T Caldicott, R Frost (Derby/ Notts Orthoptera Recorder), C Jones, P Rudkin, P Scott.

fields, in the valley just below the A47, north east of Wardley Woods. At Egleton reserve, large numbers present in all suitable habitats during July and August, and also at Lyndon reserve, east of the Interpretive Centre. Stridulating males, in the lush grasses next to the Ketton Quarries car park and The Dell, on 28th July. During early August, numbers increased in The Dell, and also observed in rough pasture, at LRWT entrance to Ketton Quarries. Large numbers noted in the pasture at Gorsefield Woods, Oakham, on 24th July. Small colony in the grasses on the edge of the verge, Hambleton Peninsular Road, 3rd August. Although the hay fields had been cut, there were numerous individuals active in the long grasses' edge, and in the thick grasses by the wet ditches, in the Exton footpath valley, on 29th August. Finally, our Verge 11 recorder (Ryhall to Careby), found a 'profusion' of this grasshopper, on the east verges, 21st August.

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*

This impressive colonist in Rutland (since September 1997) maintains its numbers well. Throughout July and August, all suitable habitats at Egleton and Lyndon reserves were fully occupied. Courting pairs were located regularly. Often found alongside Roesel's Bush Cricket, Long-winged Coneheads and Meadow Grasshoppers. Stridulating first noticed on the reserves on 15th July. One interesting report comes from a North Luffenham back garden. One individual noted hopping around on the back lawn, 20th July (photo by email). Guess what! That Brooke Road, Oakham, allotment features again, with 'several' seen and heard in rough grass area, on 29th July. Truly a good habitat for orthoptera! Stamford Brickyard Quarry, Wing Fishing Lakes, Hambleton Peninsular Road and Exton footpath and meadows had the usual large numbers present in July and August.



PLANT GALLS REPORT compiled by Roy Lemmon

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July 2008

An average number of records this month coming from just four locations. Hambleton Wood on 10th produced a total of 7 different galls, some being the usual suspects that turn up at each investigation but also one or two which were a little out of the ordinary. Oak showed signs of the work of a gall midge which causes a tight fold to appear at the tip of the leaf and these later turn brown. Also there on Wild Redcurrant was a gall caused by aphids which make the leaf thicken and often colour it reddish, something which may be familiar to members who grow cultivated redcurrants. A quick visit to Bloody Oaks Quarry on the same day produced just two galls, on Germander Speedwell and Sycamore respectively. On 23rd a small group of us visited Burley Wood to investigate Glow Worms and Bats. This was of course an evening visit and before the light became too dim I managed to find three galls, on Germander Speedwell (again!), Male Fern and Meadowsweet, none unusual but all helping to fill in the pattern for the County. Verge 7 on 24th produced 8 records, 4 of them rusts and 1 other fungus, White Blister on Goatsbeard. Not all fungi that infect plants produce galls so it is necessary to check the book to find those which do. One of the others on Verge 7, the Rose Pea gall, is smooth but with protruding spikes and is sometimes known as the sputnik gall.

August 2008

Verge 8 on the 2nd produced Robins Pincushion on Dog Rose and this was also seen on 13th in Egleton Reserve and on 14th in Ketton Quarry along with 5 other galls. Egleton Reserve, also on 2nd, produced Pea galls on Dog Rose previously mentioned in the July report. The middle of the month featured a stem gall on Creeping Thistle, at Gorsefield on the 12th and Egleton on the 14th; several were seen and this tells us that a gall fly *Urophora cardui* is present. A cherry gall on oak leaves was reported from Leighfield Fishponds on 15th and a further 4 different galls on oak were reported from Priors Coppice on 21st, along with 11 other galls, quite a bumper bundle. This may sound a lot for one species but in fact oaks can have 60 to 70 different species of galls on them. Four others on this occasion were rusts on Meadowsweet, Goat Willow, Enchanters' Nightshade and Nipple Wort and the rest were a mixture of galls on Ash, Goat Willow, Male Fern, Nettle and Meadowsweet. On hazel there was 'Big Bud' caused by a mite, perhaps familiar to anyone who grows, or attempts to grow, blackcurrants in their garden.

Contributions from: T Caldicott, G Chiverton, R Lemmon

Knopper gall on Oak.



INSECTS AND OTHERS compiled by Gill Chiverton

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July 2008

A good number of Damselfly and Dragonfly records were received for July. Interestingly the majority of sightings came in the last week of the month. **Common Blue Damselfly** – small numbers were noted at the beginning of the month at Edith Weston and Egleton Reserve. In the last week of July they were seen in larger numbers at the Oakham Canal. Three **White-legged Damselflies** were recorded at Leighfield Fishponds, and **Emerald Damselfly** records came from Leighfield Fishponds, RW(Egleton) and Priors Coppice. A male **Banded Demoiselle** was seen at the Oakham Canal

and five **Banded Demoiselles** were recorded at Leighfield Fishponds. A **Common Darter** and a female **Emperor Dragonfly** were seen at The Seek. **Black-tailed Skimmers** – three at each location were noted at Leighfield Fishponds and RW(Egleton). **Broad-bodied Chasers** sighted were: a male at RW(Egleton), two female and a male at Priors Coppice, and three recorded at Leighfield Fishponds. All sightings, except one, of **Brown Hawker** Dragonflies were in the last week of July. Brown Hawkets were recorded in Barrowden, Pickworth Great Wood (where four were seen hawking along the rides), two sightings came from Priors Coppice and two were

recorded from a garden at Wing. Brown Hawker records also came from Bloody Oaks Quarry, Oakham Canal and Leighfield Fishponds. Two **Common Hawkers** were noted at RW(Lyndon). **Southern Hawkers** were recorded at Pickworth Great Wood, RW(Lyndon), RW(Egleton), Priors Coppice, Leighfield Fishponds and at Wing.

Beetles didn't go unnoticed in July. Ladybird sightings were as follows: **Harlequin** – two records from Edith Weston and a single record from a moth trap left overnight at Eyebrook; **Cream Spot** – one record from RW(Egleton); **Orange** – one seen at Edith Weston and one seen in Lyndon Wood. Other beetles recorded: a large **Violet Ground Beetle** was seen on the road leading to Leighfield Fishponds, a **Lily Beetle** was noted in a garden at Edith Weston, as was a **Water Beetle *Colymbetes fuscus***, and a **Cardinal Beetle *Pyrochroa coccinea*** was seen on a hogweed flower at Hambleton Wood.

Many thanks to all recorders: J Ansley, V Arnold, T Caldicott, G Chiverton, J Harvey, R Lemmon, P & E Mann, B & D Parker, P Scott, L Worrall.

August 2008

August brought an unusual record. An interesting find came from a field hedgerow near Barrowden. An incomplete wax comb was found suspended vertically from a blackthorn shrub. This was almost certainly made by wild honey bees *Apis mellifera*. Chinery says that 'Wild colonies ... occasionally build in the open. The nests consist of several wax combs, suspended vertically – not horizontally like the wasps' combs – and without a protective envelope.' There was only one comb at the site, which obviously had been deserted. Perhaps the bees had decided to find a hollow tree or more protected site because of our not so summery weather. An expert at Buglife said that wild bee colonies are becoming increasingly scarce, so this was an unusual find. A record for actual live *Apis mellifera* was also received this month from Priors Coppice.

Bumble bees were recorded as follows: at the end of August a **Common Carder-bee** was seen at Yew Tree Avenue, Clipsham. Earlier in the month many **Carder-bee Workers** were noted at Ketton Quarry and also Carder-bee Workers were in Priors Coppice. Many **Red-tailed Bumble-bee Workers** were seen at Ketton Quarry and a few **Buff-tailed Bumble-bee Workers** were also noted there. A surprising number of six **Cuckoo Bees, *Bombus vestalis* G. *Psithymus***, were observed at one time on a west-facing window at Barrowden.

Two records of burying beetle: *Nicrophorus vespillo* was noted at Edith Weston and two specimens of *Nicrophorus investigator* were attracted to a mothtrap at Eyebrook.

Two sightings for **Hornets** were received: one from Pickworth Great Wood and one from Burley Wood.

Bees were busy on the flowers on Verge 8 – **Common Carder Bees**, a **White-tailed Bumblebee** and several **Red-tailed Bumblebee** workers. A **Common Froghopper** and a **Pill Woodlouse** were also recorded from Verge 8, as were a bee-mimic hoverfly – *Volucella bombylans* and numerous **Marmalade Hoverflies**. A **Common Banded Hoverfly** was photographed at North Luffenham, as was a Marmalade Hoverfly.

A **Scorpion Fly** was seen at Edith Weston. **Pied Shield Bug** larvae were brought from North Luffenham and finally changed into adults on July 17th in Edith Weston.

A **Hornet** was found dead in a mothtrap at Barnsdale Gardens.

Damselflies and Dragonflies were again recorded, but none in large numbers. Two **Blue-tailed Damselflies** were seen in Wing. **Emerald Damselfly** records came from RW(Egleton) and Leighfield Fishponds. At least two **Azure Damselflies** were noted near Rutland Water at Edith Weston. One record came in for an **Emperor Dragonfly** at Barrowden. One or two **Southern Hawker Dragonflies** were seen occasionally all month at Wing with three noted at the end of the month. **Brown Hawker Dragonflies** were seen several times in a Barrowden Garden, one catching a Large White Butterfly.



Brown Hawker Dragonfly, Photo Peter Scott

A few **Common Hawker Dragonflies** were noted in Priors Coppice. **Common Darters** were most active, with 'good numbers' active at Ketton Quarry and Priors Coppice and a single record from Yew Tree Avenue, Clipsham.

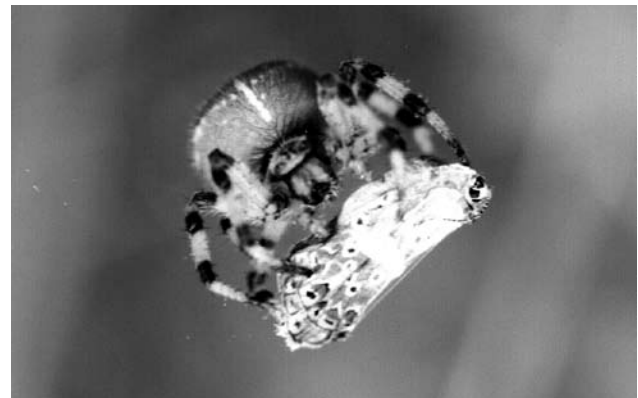
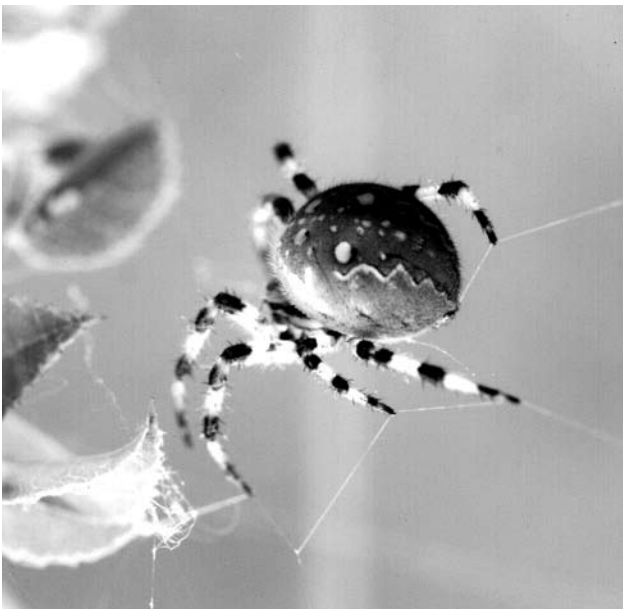
Shieldbug records came in as follows: **Hawthorn Shieldbug** nymphs and an adult were found in Stretton, and an adult was also noted in Barrowden; a **Green Shieldbug** was recorded in Barnsdale Gardens and several shieldbug nymphs (?Green Shieldbug) were re-located during gardening in Barrowden; a **Green Shieldbug** and a **Forest Bug** came to a white sheet under a tripod light at a mothtrap at Clipsham Quarry. (In the FSC *Guide to Shieldbugs* the Forest Bug is now known as the Red-Legged Shieldbug.)

Beetle records: a **Dor Beetle** (they often fly on summer evenings) was seen at Edith Weston. **Violet Ground Beetles** were seen in Edith Weston and in rough ground at the side of Verge 8. A burying beetle, *Nicrophorus investigator*, was found in a mothtrap at Eyebrook. Three specimens of *Nicrophorus vespillo*, also a burying beetle, were found at Barnsdale Gardens. A beetle, *Glischrochilus hortensis*, which Chinery notes 'feeds on oozing sap and over-ripe fruit' was noted in an Edith Weston garden where lots were seen on damaged plums. Four species of ladybirds were recorded. One **Orange Ladybird** was caught in a mothtrap at Eyebrook and two were caught in a

mothtrap at Edith Weston. Two **22-spot Ladybirds** were recorded on nettles at Gorsefield Wood and one **7-spot Ladybird** was seen at Yew Tree Avenue, Clipsham. **Harlequin Ladybird** records were as follows: seen on two occasions on a plum tree in Edith Weston, one noted at Leighfield Fishponds, two at the Brooke Road Allotments in Oakham, and two records from RW(Eggleton), a single and eight together.

Two hoverfly records came in: a **Lesser Hornet Hoverfly** *Volucella inanis* was feeding on marjoram at Barrowden and a **Marmalade Hoverfly** *Episyrphus balteatus* was noted at Edith Weston. A **Weevil** *Cionus hortulanus* was found in Barrowden (during some serious gardening). A **Scorpion Fly** came to a mothtrap at Edith Weston. Two flies – a **Horse Fly** *Chrysops relictus* and a **Cleg** *Haematopota pluvialis* – made the mistake of biting a recorder at Ketton Quarry. One 'paid the price' and one 'bit me and died'. (Records like this certainly add a little colour and a smile to writing up your observations.)

Lastly an **Orb-web Spider** *Araneus Quadratus* record came from Ketton Quarry. She was watched as her web trapped a Common Blue Butterfly. The spider was quick to come and expertly 'wrap-up' her prey for later consumption. Some really neat action photos accompanied this record.



Many thanks to all recorders: V Arnold, T Caldicott, A Chiverton, F Chiverton, G Chiverton, C Gallimore, J Harvey, R Lemmon, P Scott, L & G Worrall, and members of the moth-trapping group in Clipsham Quarry.

GLOW-WORM NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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July (from 8th)/August 2008

July had hot spells and rain; August was extremely wet. Although we do not often find glows in August, it is to be hoped any tiny eggs or hatched larvae have not been swamped, especially after last year's windy deluges probably caused problems. Rutland's colonies are small and particularly vulnerable to successive years of difficult weather, and in addition habitat has been disturbed on several sites. But snails appear to have had a lovely time, so any larval survivors should have feasted!

Barrowden, Verge 17, Back Road and Verge 3, The Drift: 30.7: Nil, greatly disappointing a villager, her visiting son and grandson.

Essendine, Verge 5 and main line cutting top: 30.7: Nil. We had hoped that after 25 were seen

on 5.7, as reported in the July *Fieldfare*, numbers would build. Perhaps they had finished mating earlier than usual this year.

Clipsham Quarry: 23.7: 17 all sighted within area of weighbridge and lower North Bank, with 12 on limestone and 5 on grassy area. There were none on the Clay Bank, where habitat has changed somewhat since work by Natural England. 6.8: A fine mild night; none on Clay Bank or elsewhere.

Burley Wood: 23.7: First glow 10.03 pm on bare earth in the ride, at the edge of Compartment 25 near usual centre of colony area, approximately 20 yards from Deer Hide. Second glow 10.25 pm in Compartment 23, approximately 10 yards from the above sighting, this time in grassy ditch. Neither female was being mated.

Many thanks for reports from: B & D Parker, P & E Mann, P Rudkin, P Scott, R Lemmon, G Chiverton, L Worrall, B McMullan.

MYCOLOGY NOTES compiled by Linda Worrall

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July/August 2008

Microfungi apart, it was a fairly fungus-free late summer with brief hot spells and much rain, but the end of August began to be productive. A further flourish of Bloody Oaks Quarry's bright yellow waxcaps, Blackening Waxcaps in an Uppingham garden, Giant Puffballs in two locations and Ruby Boletes both at Barrowden and in the Uppingham garden suggest it could be an interesting autumn!

RESERVES

Ketton Quarry Woodland: 3/7: Several Common Eyelash *Scutellinia scutellata* on fallen Ash twigs and Hyphomycete *Ramularia calcea* on Ground Ivy. 14.8: Powdery mildew anamorph *Erysiphe depressa* on Lesser Burdock and two large Dryad's Saddles on Hawthorn, fresh but slug-eaten.

Hambleton Wood: 10.7: Powdery mildews *Erysiphe cynoglossi* anamorph on Field Forget-me-not and *Microsphaera alphitoides* anamorph on Oak; Rusts *Puccinia cnici* on Spear Thistle, *Puccinia cnici-oleracei* on Marsh Thistle and *Tranzschelia pruni-spinosae* on Blackthorn.

Egleton Reserve, Gorse Close: 16.7: Small numbers of Stinkhorns in the wood.

Prior's Coppice: 10.7: Fresh medium sized clump of Sulphur Tuft on old wood. 21.8: Small patches of Discomycete *Anthracobia macrosystis* on old bonfire site (the recent rains will have had a part to play in its appearance), Powdery mildews *Erysiphe circaeae* teleomorph on Enchanter's Nightshade, *E heraclei* teleomorph on Hogweed, *E ulmaria* teleomorph on Meadowsweet, *Microsphaera alphitoides* anamorph on Oak, *M tortilis* teleomorph on Dogwood; Rusts *Melampsora capraearum* hypophyllous on Goat Willow, *P circaeae* hypophyllous on Enchanter's Nightshade, *P lapsanae* on Nipplewort, *Triphragmium ulmariae* on Meadowsweet (a galler) and *Uromyces viciae-fabae* on Meadow Vetchling.

Bloody Oaks Quarry: 31.8: 122 Persistent Waxcap *Hycrocybe persistens* var *langei* in usual place (dip before rise to grassland), but concentrated in middle and up left slope (from entrance direction), with some more yellow 'pin-points' which may emerge. Wet and warmth in August seems to have produced this flush, an earlier

one having been in late June, so 'Persistent Waxcap' seems an appropriate name!

FIELDS, VERGES, GARDENS

Verge 7, Gt Casterton-Pickworth

24.7: Powdery mildew *Arysiphe heraclei* anamorph on leaves and stems of Hogweed, Rusts *Phragmidium mucronatum* on hips of Dog Rose (galler), *Puccinia lapsanae* on Nipplewort, *P malvacearum* on Common Mallow, *P punctiformis* on Creeping Thistle, *Uromyces vicia-fabae* on Field Bean (in a field adjoining the verge) and Oomycete *Albugo tragopogonis* on Goatsbeard, another galler.

Uppingham garden: 19.8: 17 Ruby Boletes *Boletus rubellus* and a group of Blackening Waxcaps *Hygrocybe conica* in various stages.

Lyddington: 28.8: Giant Puffballs *Calvatia gigantea* were in a field off the A6003 Uppingham-Caldicott road, fairly close to where they were seen in 1989.

Barrowden: 6.8: Jelly Ears on our Field Maple stump in humid, hot weather quickly went

over. 31.8: Ruby Boletes were, unusually, on the south side of the oak next to the duckpond on the Green, against the bole; in previous years they were more at the edge of the canopy to the south and west of the trunk. The grasscutter mows every fortnight and happened to be on the spot; he assured me he looks for them and mows round them. Several years ago I had indeed alerted the Parish Council and the cutter that they were a Barrowden asset, but I was extremely surprised, as you can imagine, that they were actually being looked after! The cutter confirmed he had only seen them by the bole this year, so it looks as if the downpours had penetrated the thickest canopy and stimulated fruiting beneath, preferentially to more open ground, where perhaps it was too wet. In addition, there were more Split Fibrecaps *Inocobe rimosa* also on that part of the Green than I've ever seen before, plus a newcomer, a single Deceiver *Laccaria laccata* between the oak and a lime. I found no fungi on any other part of the whole Green, but nearby, in a paddock, were 2 Giant Puffballs.

Many thanks for reports: T Caldicott, E Clayton, Dr C R Jones, R Lemmon, B Long, L & G Worrall.

MAMMAL REPORT compiled by Linda Biddle

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This report arrived too late for the July edition of Fieldfare. July/August will appear next issue. Please continue sending in your records.

May/June 08

I have not received any reports of **Badger** road casualties this month, but a total of four live ones have been seen, crossing the roads between Ketton and Tinwell, close to Foster's Bridge, and also crossing the B672 near Seaton. The fourth was seen at around 4.30 one afternoon at the end of May, as we entered a wood near Pickworth a strange barking grunt was heard, and after a few moments silence a badger bounded away from us through the undergrowth, with many crashings and snappings of twigs. Badger latrines with fresh droppings were seen in Wardley woods

In May five reports of **Stoats** were received, one crossing a path (in Morkery wood), another crossed the road near the entrance to the Castle Cement works in Ketton. The third, a very small one, ran along the road away from us and into the farm gateway at Taylor's Farm near Pickworth. One ran through Dr Gallimore's garden in Wing,

and a dead stoat was found by the roadside near Ryhall. Just one **Weasel** was seen between Stoke Dry and the Eyebrook reservoir as it ran across the roadway.

A lovely **Fox** was observed one early morning in May to the north of the motorbike field off Little Casterton road, Stamford, and a very sad little fluffy cub road casualty was seen between Ketton and Edith Weston. Another dead cub was next to the A606 near the Edith Weston turn. On May 31st a female and 2 cubs were playing on the field margin at Beaumont Chase Farm, and on June 1st a fox carrying prey crossed the track within 4 feet of me as I walked back to the car on the Walk Farm track at Pickworth. When I reached the point where it had been there was a pile of feathers, and a great hole at the base of a tree where a bees' nest had been excavated. An adult and 2 cubs were also seen playing at Burley Wood in early June, and at the end of June a fox,

looking greyish having been through a field of rape, walked down the track away from me at Pickworth.

There were 18 reports of **Brown Hares**, widespread on arable land between Fort Henry and Tunnely Wood, and also north of Stamford in fields alongside the Great Casterton to Pickworth road. Others were recorded between Seaton and Barrowden, and Wakerley Road Barrowden.

3 reports of **Moles** are recorded, fresh molehills seen at Prior's Coppice, Lyndon Centre and Gibbet Gorse. Only one **Grey Squirrel** was noted, at Tickencote, though I am sure members have seen more than this, as is usual with the more common mammals.

Following my report last month, several **Hedgehog** sightings have been sent in. In Stamford a brickbuilt hedgehog house is in regular use, and in my own garden droppings are often seen. In early May a hedgehog was seen in Alexander Crescent at 9.15 one evening as it visited a garden and scurried down the road. The following morning at 6.30 am two

hedgehogs were seen in the observer's garden as they crossed the lawn and disappeared under the shed. A hedgehog was also seen in Wheel Lane Barrowden. At the end of June another hedgehog is reported from Barmstedt Drive in Oakham.

Roe deer continue to increase in the area. This time we have four reports, all in May. One was seen at Quarry Wood Great Casterton, at 7.00 am one morning, and on the same day a female was observed by Terry Mitcham and his adult education group as it grazed by the deer hide in Tunnely Wood. Another appeared in the plantation between the Trout Farm and Fort Henry, and at the end of May one was flushed from bracken in Westland Wood. **Muntjac** are still commonly seen, reported from Wing, Morcott, Seaton Road Barrowden, Prior's Coppice, Walk Farm Pickworth, and Clipsham, Little Haw, Wardley, Burley, Morkery, and Pickworth Woods. **Fallow Deer** are also seen regularly in Burley, Clipsham, Little Haw, Pickworth, and Morkery Woods, several fawns having been seen, one very small one at Pickworth still wet!

Thank you very much to the regular contributors to this report. I would like to encourage other members to send in their sightings, however unimportant you may think they are; they all help to make a picture of the wildlife of the area, and the more we receive the more complete the picture!

Records received from: J Ansley, A Biddle, M Branston, A Comber, H Ellis, C Gallimore, C Jones, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, G Panter, P J Rudkin, P Scott, A R & M A Thorp, L & G Worrall



From the cover of the RNHS Annual Report, 1986, by Chris Park.

BAT REPORT compiled by Jenny Harris

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No report this issue, as Jenny has been too busy. The wet weather this summer has made life difficult for bats, and she is particularly anxious that you continue looking out for them this autumn and sending in your records.



A multitude of bat detectors on the job at a most enjoyable RNHS bat evening led by Jenny Harris at Rutland Water on September 16, jointly with the Rutland group of the LRWT . See the full report on the RNHS website. Photo, Phil Rudkin (himself seen using a bat detector to detect orthoptera on page 13).
