



Four Spotted Chaser, Grantham Canal. Photo by Carolyn Baxter

Diary dates, 2

Weather, 2

Amphibians and reptiles, 3

Birds, 4

Botany, 6

Butterflies, 7

Moths, 8

Plant galls, 9

Orthoptera, 10

Other insects & invertebrates, 12

Mammals, 15

Bats, 17

RNHS field trip reports, 20

RNHS contacts, 20

As I write this the sun is shining the sky is blue, and the temperature is very comfortable, perhaps average for this time of year. In the previous Fieldfare I mentioned the contrasting weather – and this has continued into summer. After a spell of very dry warm weather, only a week ago we experienced probably the hottest day on record, followed by the inevitable very wet spell, the effects of climate change making themselves obvious!

Our wildlife fortunately is very resilient, but the changing climate is bound to alter the range and abundance of different species, and the society must continue to monitor this to the best of our ability. Not only do I want to encourage members to use their eyes and ears, and to record what is happening, but we all have a part to play in trying to minimise the adverse effects of humanity on our wonderful countryside and environment in general, by reducing carbon emissions and pollution as much as possible.

Do get out there and see and experience as much as you can! We have had lots of opportunities to do just that over the last months. Reports on society activities are to be found elsewhere in Fieldfare, as well as suggestions for our future events you can join.

Roadside verges have been particularly attractive this year, and I encourage members to respond to RCCs request in local press for comments on their plans for encouraging biodiversity.

This edition of Fieldfare sees a new production team, Richard and Linda Brown receiving and editing your articles and contributions, and Sophie Widdowson setting the layout and presentation. This will be new to them all and we wish them well, and thank them for their efforts. We hope that the task will not be too arduous, and that they will enjoy it so much that they want to continue!!

Linda Biddle, RNHS Chair

Remember – RNHS 2020 Calendar and competition

DEADLINE **September 20th!**

See March *Fieldfare* page 2 for rules, or the RNHS website.
Please send your photographs to me at peter.scott27@btopenworld.com.

Uppingham Sports and Books, 9 High St East, Uppingham, LE15 9PY

Having spoken to Terry, he has confirmed with Uppingham Bookshop that they still offer the 10% discount to RNHS members (take your membership card).

Peter Scott, Website Editor

DIARY DATES

RNHS FIELD TRIPS

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

Sunday 1 September, 10.30am

Burley Wood

Leader Roy Lemmon with members of the British Plant Gall Society.
Meet at Map Ref SK892093. Please park carefully on the grass verge, as this is a busy main road.
Queries to Roy Lemmon 01780 762051 or email roy.lemmon@yahoo.co.uk

Saturday 5 October, 2pm

Prior's Coppice

Leader Dr Andy Lear, LRWT Conservation Officer.
Ancient woodland, map ref SK 83307 04905.
Queries to John Bristow 07975660656 or email jbristow@lrwt.org.uk

Sunday 10 November, 10am

Frampton Marsh, The Wash

Leader Peter Scott.
Meet at Frampton Marsh RSPB Centre, PE20 1AY,
Map ref TF 356392. £2.00 for non RSPB members.
Dress for an exposed coastal site. Toilets at centre.
Queries to Peter Scott 07535 508932 or email peter.scott27@btopenworld.com

RNHS INDOOR EVENING MEETINGS

Indoor meetings are held at Rutland Community Hub (VAR), Lands End Way, Oakham LE15 6RB. Visitors are asked for a donation of £2.00.

Tuesday 1 October, 7.30pm

Buglife

Speaker Matt Shardlow, Chief Executive of Buglife.

Tuesday 5 November, 7.30pm

Members and Recorders Evening

Members are invited to present interesting photographs, data records etc.
Enquiries to Peter Scott 07535 508932 or email peter.scott27@btopenworld.com

Tuesday 3 December, 7.30pm

Peterborough and around – a great area for birding

Speaker Dave Cromack of the Peterborough Bird Club.

WEATHER

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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May 2019

Atmospheric pressure and wind Generally a month of high pressures although two days, the 8th and 9th, were below 1000 mb; the highest was 1041 mb at 09.00 on the 13th.

Winds were variable in direction up to the 21st and then SW–NW for the rest of the month.

Temperature The overall mean, 12.76 °C, was seventh in the decade 2010–2019, making this a cool May.

Rain A total here of 46.4 mm (1.83 inches) which is 93% of my long-term mean of 29 years. May 2019 was the fourth driest in the above-mentioned decade, and the total for the year so far is 72% of the expected rainfall.

June 2019

Atmospheric pressure and wind Pressure was variable for the first 18 days of the month, with winds predominantly S–SW and the last period, 19th–30th, saw higher pressures and winds north–easterly. This meant that the cloud was moving in from the North Sea and was keeping temperature down when a lot of the country was under the influence of a Saharan plume. The exception here was the 29th when skies were clear, wind speeds low and a maximum of 32.3 °C was recorded.

Temperature The overall mean, 15.54 °C, places June 2019 sixth in the decade 2010–2019. The lowest night-time minimum was 9.5 °C on 5th–6th, and the highest day-time maximum is mentioned above.

Rain A wet June with a total of 124.8 mm (4.9 inches) recorded here which corresponds to 242% of my long-term mean of 29 years; and 93.0 mm of this, i.e. 75%, fell in 4 days, 10th–13th inclusive. This monthly total has of course changed the picture for the year so far, and the actual rainfall for January to June inclusive is now 105% of the expected rainfall.

July 2019

Atmospheric pressure and wind A month of very variable conditions. Pressures were relatively high at the beginning, the month's highest I recorded was 1029 mb at 09.00 on the 3rd and the 19th to the end of the month. The 19th to the end of the month saw thunderstorms on the 23rd and 26th and a warm front more or less stationary over East Anglia on the 26th and 27th, which gave a high rainfall. The month's lowest pressure was during this period, 1005 mb on the 26th.

Temperature A warm month, the mean temperature, 18.94 °C, was 4th in the decade 2010–2019, but 1.72 °C lower than the mean for 2018. The month's highest temperature here was 36.1 °C on the 25th, the highest I have ever recorded, but well below that in Cambridge Botanic Garden on the same day, which was 38.7 °C. This is not only the highest July temperature in the UK to date but also the highest ever recorded in any month since records began in 1841, beating 38.3 °C on 10.08.2003 in Brogdale, Kent.

Rain The month's total, 92.0 mm (3.62 inches) equates to 164% of my long-term mean of 29 years. 32.6 mm, 35% of the total, fell on 26th–27th. This was exceeded by 110.8 mm in July 2012.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES **RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore**

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May/June/July 2019

Amphibian records were few in these three months. There were plenty of **toadlets** in June at Leighfield, but other records were mainly of singles – **Frogs** at Leighfield, Prior's Coppice and Barrowden and **Toads** and **Smooth Newts** at Leighfield, Barrowden and Wing.

Viviparous Lizards were seen at Ketton Quarry in July and Market Overton in June, which was the first record from Market Overton since 1970.

Apart from an **Adder** sighting in Ketton Quarry in May the rest of the reptile records concern **Grass Snakes**. There were six records from Wing – three alive in gardens and ponds and three dead on roads. Live **snakes** were also seen in Barrow, Barrowden, Bisbrooke, Ketton and at Rutland Water, while a dead one was found at Cutt's Close in Oakham. Finally a sloughed skin was found in Glaston.

My thanks to the following who provided records:- D & J Ball, T Caldicott, L Clark, M Grimes, A Hill, R Jones, R Lemmon, D Needham, S Smalley, A Tebbit and C Tring

BIRDS

RECORDER Terry Mitcham

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With a change to a quarterly format, bird notes will also change to a summary of the main records for Rutland Water and Other Sites appearing separately, together with the monthly wildfowl counts. The annual report will not change and will continue to be a full account of all species reported, so please continue to send in records as before – they will be used to compile the annual report, even if they do not appear in Fieldfare. My thanks to the following for sending records for these three months:-

D. & J. Ball, A. & L. Biddle, T. Caldicott, D. Cole, A. & J. Comber, Dr. C. H. Gallimore, M. & G. Griffin, Dr. C. R. Jones, P. Langston, LROS, R. Lemmon, T. Mitcham, B. Moore, D. Needham, J. W. Nourish, L. Park, R. Richard, P. Rudkin, J. S. & J. Rodgers, RWNR

May 2019

Highlights Rutland Water had a Whooper Swan (14th – 18th), a Great White Egret (31st), a Kittiwake (7th) and a Sandwich Tern (12th).

Rutland Water Up to three Garganey (28th) were present. The count (14th) produced 28 Shelducks, 196 Gadwall, a Pintail, six Shoveler, 14 Pochard, 183 Tufted Ducks and a Goldeneye (also on 28th). A female Ruddy Duck was seen (11th). A Marsh Harrier was present (11th, 20th). Wader passage picked up with four Grey Plovers (8th), 41 Ringed Plovers (28th), two Bar-tailed Godwits (9th – 12th), 26 Turnstones (9th), two Knot (8th), a Curlew Sandpiper (28th – 31st) up to seven Sanderlings (26th) and 125 Dunlin (9th). Also noted were Curlew, Whimbrel, Common Sandpiper, Spotted Redshank and Greenshank. 95 Common Terns were counted (14th) with Arctic Terns present (4th – 27th) and a peak of 20 (5th). Black Terns were seen between (7th – 18th) with ten on the first date. Up to four Little Gulls were present (4th – 11th). Hobbies were noted from (11th with two (24th).

Other Sites Mandarin Ducks were regular at Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park Lake. Six Little Egrets flew over Pilton (26th). Kingfishers were noted at Tinwell (11th), Leighfield Fishponds and Martinshorpe and a Willow Tit was near Leighfield (5th). A Hobby flew over Barrow on (26th). Two Nightingales still sang at one site on (30th). Spotted Flycatchers were at six sites from (19th) with seven at Stretton (22nd). A flock of 19 Ravens flew over Pilton (29th) with breeding confirmed at five sites. Little Owls were noted at Essendine, Pilton and Lyndon and a Crossbill was at Pilton (29th).

June 19

Highlights Rutland Water had a Bittern (2nd) at Lyndon, a Great White Egret (all month) and three Little Terns (20th). A Great White Egret flew over Pilton (10th).

Rutland Water The count (11th) produced 389 Gadwall, a Pintail, 26 Shoveler, 162 Tufted Ducks, 106 Great Crested Grebes and 392 Coot. Single Garganey and Red-crested Pochard were noted and there were three Wigeon (21st). Pochard bred on the Eggleton lagoons. Marsh Harrier and Hobby were regular. On (11th) 19 Oystercatchers and three pairs of Redshank were present with two Avocets (8th). Late passage waders included two Grey Plovers (11th), 25 Ringed Plovers (1st), a Turnstone (6th – 8th) and five Sanderling (6th). A Green Sandpiper (16th) may have been an early returning bird. Yellow-legged Gulls returned mid-month with five (28th). A Cetti's Warbler was at Eggleton.

Other Sites 22 Barnacle Geese flew over Manton (2nd). Three pairs of Gadwall and a pair of Shoveler bred at Fort Henry Ponds. Four pairs of Red Kites were confirmed breeding and three broods of Barn Owls were ringed. Little Owls were at Barrow, Pilton and Wing. A Cetti's Warbler continued to sing at one site and Willow Tits were at Leighfield and Ridlington.

July 2019

Highlights At Rutland Water one or two Great White Egrets were present all month. Four Spoonbills flew over (18th). There were two Little Stints (30th) with one next day. Redstarts were near Wing (11th-21st) and Luffenham Airfield (30th).

Rutland Water The count (9th) produced 1704 Gadwall, a Garganey, 32 Pochard, 1966 Tufted Ducks, 79 Little Egrets, 19 Grey Herons and 201 Great Crested Grebes. Up to five Wigeon were present and there were five Scaup (28th). A Marsh Harrier was present all month. A good variety of waders included two Avocets, 155 Lapwings, six Little Ringed Plovers, five Whimbrel (25th), a Turnstone (31st) and a single Ruff (9th, 14th). There were 12 Dunlin, (30th), a peak of 70 Black-tailed Godwits (2nd), up to four Green Sandpipers and four Common Sandpipers and a Greenshank (28th). Black Terns were noted between (10th – 24th) with 19 on the latter date. 71 Common Terns were counted (9th). There were two Mediterranean Gulls (9th) and up to nine Yellow-legged Gulls (14th).

Eyebrook Reservoir There was a Pintail (6th) and four Common Scoters (31st). On (7th) there were nine Little Egrets and 33 Great Crested Grebes. An Osprey visited regularly and there was a Marsh Harrier (6th). Waders included five Little Ringed Plovers (13th), two Ruff (26th), four Dunlin (28th), 50 Black-tailed Godwits (1st), 12 Common Sandpipers (9th) and seven Green Sandpipers (13th). A Wood Sandpiper was present (28th) and three Yellow-legged Gulls were noted (20th).

Other Sites A Mandarin Duck was at Fort Henry Ponds (13th) where two pairs of Shoveler and two pairs of Tufted Ducks bred. There were three Ospreys over Exton Park (28th). Three Curlew were over Ridlington (2nd) with two over Leighfield (9th). Barn Owls were near Pickworth and Preston with Hobbies near Little Casterton, Manton and Leighfield. A Willow Tit was at Ridlington (2nd) and the first autumn Wheatear was at Luffenham Airfield (30th).

Terry Mitcham

Wildfowl counts for May, June and July 2019 (No May count at EBR)

	Rutland Water			Eyebrook Reservoir		Fort Henry Ponds Exton Park Lake			Banthorpe Gravel Pit		
	14.05	11.06	09.07	16.06	07.07	19.05	16.06	07.07	17.05	14.06	07.07
Mute Swan	221	238	635	68	97	5	6	6	2	2	2
Greylag Goose	262	495	907	265	197	5	1		10		
Canada Goose	106	398	465	297	198	2					
Egyptian Goose	26	22	37								
Shelduck	28	13			2	1	2				
Mandarin Duck						5					
Wigeon	1		5								
Gadwall	196	389	1704	5	6	31	36	18			
Teal		7	23		8						1
Mallard	274	322	704	35	212	78	105	92	2	30	2
Pintail	1	1									
Shoveler	6	26	11		7		2	1			
Pochard	14	21	32								
Tufted Duck	183	162	1966	19	2	22	21	37	2		
Goldeneye	1										
Cormorant	130	93	209		10		2				
Little Egret	3	6	72		9						
Great White Egret		1	1								
Grey Heron	6	4	19	1		1	2	2			
Little Grebe	3	7	19								
Great Crested Grebe	116	106	201	28	33						
Moorhen	17	7	37	2	3	6	6	11			
Coot	257	391	824	97	86	39	48	44	6	3	2
TOTAL	1851	2709		817	870	197	231	211	22	35	7

Whooper Swan at RW on 14.05.

2 Garganey at RW on 11.06. and one on 09.07.

It is sad to have to say it, but autumn is approaching, corn is being harvested and the first fruits are appearing in the hedges. There are blackberries, sloes, elderberries, hips and haws all ripening and there is a lot of thistle down blowing here and there. I haven't yet seen any yellowing leaves on the trees though. Cow Parsley in the road verges has given way to Yarrow, to Ragwort and Bristly Ox-tongue and there are lots of other yellow flowers around which can't all be Dandelions. (They can be quite a challenge to sort out).

The Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI) are in the finishing stages of collecting records for Atlas 2020. This will show the status of wild plants throughout the British Isles and allow comparison of the distribution of plants with that recorded in previous Atlases, published in 1962 and 2002. We will be able to see how plants are faring, what changes there have been over these almost 60 years and get a idea of the health of our countryside. Recording is made in tetrads, 2km squares, and Geoffrey Hall and Steve Woodward, joint recorders for vc55, have conducted recording in several tetrads in Rutland where the cover seemed to be quite low. They have been accompanied by members of RNHS, most of whom have helped, but also learnt quite a lot. Jenny Harris then organised another recording session with which 4 others assisted. By the end of the year it is thought that all the tetrads in the two counties will have been surveyed to an acceptable standard.

All our regular recorders have, as usual, been out and about and submitting records and these have been augmented by the survey work. We have therefore received many records, including some unusual findings. Orchids have been found in the usual places, Early Purple at Prior's Coppice, Bee Orchids at Pickworth Drift, and in Bloody Oaks Quarry, together with the Wasp Orchid that seems to have made its home there. Bee Orchids were also found in Barrowden, reported by Linda Worrall. The first record was from Chapel Lane in a garden which used to be an orchard about 20 years ago. The second and third were in Back Lane on the southern verge. There may have been similar flowers a few years ago in roughly the same site. Lying dormant or newly seeded? We have had an extensive range of umbellifers; Cow Parsley, Hogweed, Upright Hedge Parsley, Rough Chervil, Burnett Saxifrage, Bur Chervil (at Tickencote and Stretton), Knotted Hedge Parsley, Hemlock, Stone Parsley, Fool's Parsley, Pignut, Wild Carrot, Wild Parsnip and Fool's Watercress which is not a bad selection. Other unusual plants include Tutsan at Ketton Quarry not recorded since 2009, Celery-leaved Buttercup only recorded once in the last 20 years by Andy Lear when he did a survey of Rutland Water Nature Reserve and Slender Trefoil at Wing not recorded since 2000.

One other plant recorded by Martin Grimes at Pickworth was Round-leaved Fluellen. He then read that where this was found one often also found Sharp-leaved Fluellen and when he went back to look, there it was. The main difference between the two is the leaf shape but there are also differences in the flowers. The plant is a member of the Figwort family (Now apparently Plantaginaceae) and its name is said to come from the "herb of Llewellyn" but the name Fluellen was also given to Germander Speedwell and Heath Speedwell which were widely used in herbal medicine. (They are the same family of course) The scientific name of the plant is also odd. The Round-leaved Fluellen is *Kickxia spuria*, named after a 18th century Belgian botanist called Jean Kickx.

I hope that all members have seen the response Linda Biddle has made on behalf of the Society to Rutland County Council's request for views on Verge Management in the county and the letter she has had published in the local press. Both are published on the Society's website under News. Do make some response to the call for views and do take account, or simply support, the Society's submission.

Thanks to C Baxter, A and L Biddle, R and L Brown, T Caldicott, L Clarke, D Cotter, R Edwards, M Grimes, G Hall, J Harris, H Ikin, R Lemmon, M Markham, T Mitcham, D Needham, P Rudkin, JS and J Rodgers, S Woodward, and L Worrall for the records sent in.

BUTTERFLIES

RECORDER Richard Brown

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May - July 2019

LOCAL OBSERVATIONS SUMMARY

The table below shows we now have a total of 33 species observed in Rutland so far this year, 15 new species having been added to our year list since the end of April.

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

The table shows the first date of observation for each species, with a subsequent X indicating observation in the following months.

NOTABLE LOCAL OBSERVATIONS

1. Purple Emperor

Pride of place in this report must go to the finding of a Purple Emperor in the Rutland part of Pickworth Wood at the end of July. This is our first Rutland record for two years. The finding again stresses how the north-east of the county is the favoured site for this charismatic species.

2. Black Hairstreak, and other Hairstreaks

Another rare find for Rutland was the sighting of a Black Hairstreak at Ketton Quarry. This elusive species spends much of its time in tree-tops, so is usually hard to find. Note also that we have had plenty of Green Hairstreak (6 observations, 5 sites), and a single Purple Hairstreak observation.

3. Painted Lady

2019 has been a better year than several recent ones for the Painted Lady. RNHS has no less than 30 separate observations from 20 different sites since 23rd May. The maximum number seen at any one time was 7 in Ketton Quarry on 22 July. Their migration north has been very successful overall - I saw them in Orkney in June!

4. Fritillaries

The number of Fritillaries has been remarkable this year. Dark Green Fritillaries have been seen at 4 sites, with 70+ observed at Bloody Oaks, 45 at Clipsham, 39 at Big Pits Quarry and 20+ at Ketton. Silver Washed Fritillaries have been found at 3 sites, with a maximum of 8 at Ketton Quarry.

5. Skippers

Skippers have also been prominent this summer. Dingy Skippers were seen at 4 sites, with a maximum of 14 at Big Pits Quarry, 11 at Clipsham and 10 at Ketton. Grizzled Skipper records came from 3 sites with Ketton providing the maximum of 8 on 23rd May. We have 6 observations of Small Skippers from 5 sites, with a remarkable 50+ seen at Rutland Water on 23rd July. One dedicated observer got down to take a close look at those antennae and identified a single Essex Skipper at Ketton Quarry on 16th July. By contrast Large Skipper records have been relatively few.

6. Gatekeeper

Gatekeepers have as usual been late on the scene - the first appearance in July is typical. This year has been a good one. In 2018 we had records from only 4 sites, with a maximum of two butterflies at any one time.

This year we have records from 8 sites, with one record of 50+ from Rutland Water, and another of 20+ from Ketton Quarry.

CHEQUERED SKIPPER

Success! Members will remember the talk given by Susan O'Riordan, the project officer for this re-introduction attempt. Belgian butterflies were brought last summer into a "secret" location in Rockingham Forest. After a long and tense wait to see if the larvae could overwinter, some freshly emerged adults were finally seen regularly from late June onwards. Further adults have been collected in Belgium (where they are widespread) this year, and added to the Rockingham population. The larval food-plant is False Brome. It will be worth learning to recognise this grass, and noting its whereabouts, as it is there that we can hope the eventual spread to Rutland will first be obvious.

OBSERVERS

Thanks to the following for their observations:- J & D Bell, Carolyn Baxter, P Bennett, A & L Biddle, R Brown, T Caldicott, E & M Griffin, M Grimes, J Harris, P Langston, R Lemmon, Diana Masters, D Needham, J & JS Rodgers, P Rudkin, D & S Smalley and Linda Worrall.

MOTHS

RECORDER Paul Bennett

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The season began quietly with temperate conditions predominating but ended with a bang as hot and humid weather combined with strong southerly winds helped to bring in a trio of unusual moths for the county with one of these a real rarity. Cooler conditions also occurred so if our moths were struggling to come to terms with our varied climate they weren't the only ones!

Late July produced by far the biggest numbers in the Lyndon traps with over 300 moths caught on 22nd July and a count of over 400 on 29th including 2 new macros for the site which also revealed information about many moths powers of dispersal and the nature of migration in our changing climate. Least Carpet, of which 3 appeared in the trap, is enjoying a population expansion in recent years, originally classed as locally rare in the south of England but now as locally abundant with a range expansion through the Midlands up to Yorkshire. With ivy as its main larval foodplant the only surprise is that it has taken so long to get to Lyndon. By contrast, Beautiful Marbled was only first recorded in Britain in 2001 and is still classed as only an occasional immigrant to the south coast of Britain from southern and eastern Europe. For it to appear in a central area such as Rutland Water is therefore a major event not least because of its preference for open, sparse and sunny habitats! The only explanation for its arrival can be the days of tropical weather that would have blown it over the English Channel and beyond. It is, of course, a first record for area VC55. Mention here should also be made of a Jersey Tiger seen by the observer in a Manton garden. As its English name suggests it is mainly recorded in south-west England and the Channel Islands but has in recent years been reaching as far as Bedfordshire where it has been recorded in small numbers. It may therefore be the case that this moths displacement has been a relatively local one and it will be interesting to see if Rutland sightings of this attractive moth increase in future years.

Totals have been slightly down at Lyndon which is not surprising as many plants would have dried up prematurely in last year's hot weather making it difficult for the larvae to find food. If climate scientists are correct and this becomes a more frequent phenomenon this will have implications up and down the food chain. Pug and Prominent moths in particular were well down until the end of July as were Hawk-moths although 2 Eyed Hawk-moths on 2nd July were welcome. 5 new macros were recorded for the site including the pair mentioned above, the others being Spruce Carpet, Small Scallop and Grass Rivulet with the latter being surprisingly rare given the abundance of Yellow-rattle, its preferred foodplant. One trap was tried at Eggleton near Harrier hide on the south side of the reserve and this yielded 2 reed-bed specialists in Smoky Wainscot and a possible Obscure Wainscot. Shacklewell was also trapped once and produced a good range of common moths.

Records received from the east of the county (rare in themselves) show how species can sometimes hold on in small pockets of landscape when the surrounding area has radically changed. There is little sign left of the former Ryhall Heath save for plants such as Gorse but 2 traps put out on successive nights at each end of the road/track known as the Drift running between Ryhall and Pickworth produced Reddish Light Arches and Four-spotted in good numbers. Both are more common on railway embankments or bare soils such as East Anglian Breckland. The trapper was also pleased to get Small Elephant Hawk-moth, Pine Hawk-moth and Maple Prominent which again are more likely to be found on thin soils.

Other moths reported included Hummingbird Hawk-moths at 2 locations and Diamond-back Moths in small numbers at 3 locations. An Emperor Moth was reported by Barnsdale Creek, an Old Lady in an Oakham garden and a Coxcomb Prominent near Pickworth. The main larval find were Ermine caterpillars on a hedgerow near Empingham.

Thanks to the following for their records:- V Arnold, D & J Ball, P Bennett, A & L Biddle, T Caldicott, R Edwards, C Gallimore, M Grimes, J Harris, R Lemmon, M Markham, A Russell, P Scott.

PLANT GALLS

May 2019

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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A good month for plant galls with reports from 11 sites around the county, many of course run-of-the-mill but two were occasional appearances and two others

were new to our records. The 14th of the month saw a mite gall on lime at Great Casterton which hadn't been seen since 2016, and the 23rd saw another mite gall on mountain ash at George Henry Wood last reported in 2018 and before that in 2013 in Ketton Quarry.

This month was also noteworthy for two new galls, i.e. not previously reported. On the 21st from Empingham there was a gall on Almond, itself an unusual substrate, caused by an Ascomycete causing considerable damage to the leaves. The next day came a report from Stretton of a smut fungus, which caused changes to the flower structure of Goatsbeard.

Finally a comment on Oak galls which are beginning to appear. The British Plant Gall Society (BPGS) has asked for observations on Currant galls on Oaks. I don't know what the response has been but it reminded me that we haven't had any reports of them since last year, and then only 2, so I shan't be able to contribute much to the debate.

June 2019

A much quieter month with reports from 5 venues giving a total of 28 galls. On the 12th there was a report of a rust gall on Goat Willow from Wing, not an area we have had reports from in the past, so very welcome. On the 14th Pocket plum was noted on Sloe on Verge 5. Red Hill on the road from Morcott to the Harringworth-Seaton Viaduct on the 23rd gave 12 results and Pickworth Drift on the 27th gave 13. These were all standard galls but all add to the overall picture.

July 2019

As is to be expected, this was a busy month for plant galls with reports from 9 sites. Ketton Quarry produced a total of 18 galls on the 3rd and 4th, and Wing some 22 on the 11th. This latter is a new site for searching for galls and is part of the survey of Wing parish which is currently ongoing. Notable were 2 new records, one on Red Valerian and the other on English Elm. The former was given as 'rare but widespread' in 2011 and reported largely from the South Coast; but since then has spread northwards and is much more frequent. That on Elm is rarely reported probably due to the scarcity of its host.

Egleton on the 18th gave a total of 32 galls, this is usually a good site due to the variety of plants it contains.

Rutland Water again produced some 24 galls, this time at Lyndon on the 31st. Of interest here was 'choke' on False Oat grass and the rust on Almond Willow which is not all that common. There were also 4 galls on Oak, which is normally a prolific host but this year seems to be falling by the wayside; Spangle galls in particular seem to be missing.

Thanks to L Clark, M Grimes, R Lemmon and P Rudkin for their reports.

ORTHOPTERA

RECORDER Phil Rudkin

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May, June, July 2019

"Summer is on hold after a month's rain in 4 hours". 11 June 19.

"Worst rain in 7 years and more on the way" 12 June 19.

"More storm mayhem, but the end is in sight to monsoon June". 13 June 19.

"Cheer up, summer's here at last". 14 June 19.

"Lightning strikes...1,000 times". 20 June 19.

Above are the headlines in my daily newspaper! As the 'Fieldfare' is now every 3 months, this is a reminder of the weather conditions. Goodness knows how the wildlife coped? But, after several field meetings and surveys recently: normality is resumed, and apart from the Lesser Marsh Grasshopper: the orthopterans are thriving!

Roesel's Bush crickets are still in their masses; drowning out other species with their electrifying stridulating. It is pleasing (at this early stage), to have a few new

sites recorded. Lizzie Waring and Marian Markham have joined our small team, both coming up with new sites. Lizzie's sharp eyes noticed a movement in the grass verge at Egleton, which turned out to be a Slender Groundhopper. Marian observed adult Speckled Bush Crickets in the Pocket Park, at Langham, and sent me some stunning images.

Three Rutland Water Surveys were carried out: one at the Egleton reserve, and two at the Lyndon reserve. Ketton Quarries SSSI had a welcome large colony, of Field Grasshoppers; found on the dry, dirt tracks in 'The Valley' area, in their normal stronghold. Common Green Grasshopper was, as always the first to be heard stridulating, at Leighfields Fish Ponds. Tim Caldicott is the biggest contributor, and has sent in his usual excellent spreadsheets. Tim's new allotment in Wing village is well covered by him. Also, by the village wildlife survey; when we invaded his plot: by courtesy of Linda Clark!

Phil Rudkin.

8 July 2019

Crickets

Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Metrioptera roeselii*

First sightings of the season: Nymphs located at: Martinsthorpe, in the Gwash valley, on 13 May, and south-east of Pilton village, on 25 May.

Regular haunts visited during June: Wing Fishing Lakes, Leighfield Fishponds, Martinsthorpe, Ridlington, and the Egleton Reserve, Rutland Water (first orthopteran survey). Numbers maintained at all of these sites!

July records: Massive numbers of stridulating males, (females observed), in rough grassland, on 10 July, at private site, in the south of the county.

The second Orthoptera Survey at Rutland Water, took place at the Lyndon reserve, on 12 July, and again on 31 July. Numbers excellent! Last sightings: Ketton Quarries, SSSI, on 30 July.

Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus fuscus*

First sighting of the season: One nymph, observed at Martinsthorpe, the Gwash Valley on 17 June.

Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima*

First sightings of the season: Nymphs located at: Martinsthorpe, on 14 June. More nymphs, at Leighfield Fishponds and Wing Fishing Lakes, up to 21 June.

July records: Adults, one observed at Crown Well Bridge, Wing, on 11 July, one, at Gibbets Gorse, Rutland Water, on 19 July, and one on 26 July.

New site: Munday's Close meadow, Langham, One female, on cranesbill leaf, 19 July. One female with a male, sitting on hogweed leaf, 20 July, and still there on the 21 July. SK848112

Groundhoppers

Slender Groundhopper, *Tetrix subulata*

First sighting of the season: New site: Two, identified, in Wing village allotments, on 24 June, SK889029. New site: One, found and identified, at the side of grass footpath, near the Badger Watching Hide, Egleton reserve, Rutland Water, on 30 June. Field 34, SK879073.

Grasshoppers

Common Green Grasshopper, *Omocestus viridulus*

First sightings of the season: One stridulating male, Leighfield Fishponds, on 15 June.

New site: Four, stridulating males, in rough grassland, on 10 July, at private site, in the south of the county.

Field Grasshopper, *Chorthippus brunneus*

First sightings of the season: New site: 5 nymphs observed, near footpath, south-east of Pilton village, on 9 June, SK920024.

New site: Ten plus adults, observed in Wing village allotment, 29 July, SK889029.

Large colony, located on dirt track, in Ketton Quarries SSSI, in regular habitat, in The Valley, 30 July.

Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus parallelus*

First sightings of the season: Adult noted at Leighfield Fishponds, on 28 June. During the Rutland Water surveys, at: Egleton reserve, on 30 June, and the Lyndon reserve on 12 and 31 July, numbers of adults and nymphs very high!

New site: Four late instar nymphs, caught and identified, in rough grassland, at private site, in the south of the county, on 10 July.

New site; Two stridulating males, and 6 plus nymphs observed, in Wing village allotments, On 11 July, SK889029. Large colonies in the BBQ area, and 'The Valley', Ketton Quarries, 29 July.

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, Chorthippus albomarginatus

First sighting of the new season: The Egleton Rutland Water survey, on 30 June, only 4 nymphs were located. New site: Six, stridulating adults, in rough grassland, at private site, in the south of the county, on 10 July. Numbers of this species down at the last check, therefore, we will keep an eye on this grasshopper in the next few months!

Phil Rudkin.

8 Jul 2019

Thank you to our recorders for their contributions: Tim Caldicott, Linda Clark, David Cotter, Martin Grimes, Marian Markham, Phil Rudkin, Lizzie Waring.

OTHER INSECTS AND INVERTEBRATES RECORDER Gill Chiverton

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May 2019

Large Red Damselfly

Pyrrhosoma nymphula

Hairy Dragonfly

Brachytron pratense

Broad-bodied Chaser

Libellula depressa

16-spot Ladybird

Tytthaspis 16-punctata

14-spot Ladybird

Propylea 14-punctata

Cream-spot Ladybird

Calvia 14-guttata

22-spot Ladybird

Psyllobora 14-punctata

24-spot Ladybird

Subcoccinella 24-punctata

Hoverflies

Chrysotoxum cautum

Xanthogramma pedissequum

Hornet

Vespa crabro

Buff-tailed Bumble Bee

Bombus terrestris

Common Carder Bee

Bombus pascuorum

Red-tailed Bumble Bee

Bombus lapidarius

Odonata **DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES**

One noted at Ketton Quarry

One female on 16th at RW Lax hill

Two (male and female) on 24th at RW Lax hill

Two females on 24th at RW Lax hill

Coleoptera **BEETLES**

One seen at Martinsthorpe

One seen at Martinsthorpe

One seen at Burley Wood

One seen near Pilton

One seen near Pilton

Diptera **FLIES**

One seen on 21st and two noted on 23rd – both near Pilton

Two seen on 31st near Pilton

Hymenoptera **ANTS, WASPS, BEES & RELATIVES**

One noted at Ketton Quarry

A nest of these bumblebees recorded at Barrow

One noted nectaring at Clipsham Park Wood

One queen seen nectaring at Bloody Oaks Quarry

Kentish Snail
Monacha cantiana

June 2019

White-legged Damselfly
Platycnemis pennipes

Southern Hawker
Aeshna cyanea

Emperor Dragonfly
Anax imperator

Four-spotted Chaser
Libellula quadrimaculata

Broad-bodied Chaser
Libellula depressa

Common Darter
Sympetrum striolatum

Hawthorn Shieldbug
Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale

Bishop's Mitre Shieldbug
Aelia acuminata

Blue Shieldbug
Zicrona caerulea

Pied Shieldbug
Tritomegus bicolor

Woundwort Shieldbug
Eysarcoris fabrici

24-spot Ladybird
Subcoccinella 24-punctata

Hoverflies
Chrysotoxum cautum
Chrysotoxum verralli
Episyrphus balteatus
Syrphus ribesii
Volucella inflata

Negro Ant
Formica fusca

Tree Bumble Bee
Bombus hypnorum

Red-tailed Bumble Bee
Bombus lapidarius

July 2019

White-legged Damselfly

Gastropoda SNAILS

Noted on 23rd throughout George Henry Wood
2-3 noted on 25th at Bloody Oaks Quarry

Odonata DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES

One seen at Leighfield Fishponds on 15th and
four seen at Leighfield Fishponds on 28th

One noted near Ridlington

One seen near Pilton, one at Ridlington and
two noted at RWNR wet meadow

One noted at Leighfield

One seen near Pilton

One noted near Ridlington

Hemiptera BUGS

One seen in Oakham garden

One seen near Wing fishing lakes

One noted on allotments at Wing

One noted on allotments at Wing

50+ noted on Hedge Woundwort plants on
allotments at Wing

Coleoptera BEETLES

One noted near Pilton

Diptera FLIES

Noted near Pilton – two on 1st and four on 19th
Single insects noted at Martinthorpe and Wing
100+ seen on 30th near Ridlington
100+ seen on 30th near Ridlington
Single insects seen near Pilton, Martinthorpe and Manton

Hymenoptera ANTS, WASPS, BEES & RELATIVES

Three recorded on 22nd near Glaston

One noted on 17th at Manton and two noted on 14th
at Martinthorpe

Workers seen at Bloody Oaks quarry on 22nd and at
Morcott on 23rd

Odonata DRAGONFLIES & DAMSELFLIES

Single insects noted on 6th and 11th at Crown Well

Platycnemis pennipes

Common Blue Damselfly

Enallagma cyathigerum

Southern Hawker

Aeshna cyanea

Brown Hawker

Aeshna grandis

Black-tailed Skimmer

Orthetrum cancellatum

Ruddy Darter

Sympetrum sanguineum

Parent Shieldbug

Elasmucha grisea

Blue Shieldbug

Zicrona caerulea

Violet Ground Beetle

Carabus violaceus

Soldier Beetle

Rhagonycha fulva

14-spot Ladybird

Propylea 14-punctata

7-spot Ladybird

Coccinella 7-punctata

Blister Beetle

Ischnura cyanea

Swollen-thighed Beetle

Oedema nobilis

Hoverflies

Chrysotoxum festum

Chrysotoxum verralli

Helophilus trivittatus

Volucella inanis

Volucella zonaria

Tree Bumble Bee

Bombus hypnorum

Vestal Cuckoo Bee

Bombus vestalis

Bridge and one seen on 30th at Wing allotments

One noted at Ketton Quarry and one female seen at Langham

One seen at RWNR wet meadow

One noted at Wing allotments

Two seen at RWNR shoveler hide and reedbed

One female seen at Langham

Hemiptera BUGS

One adult insect and a 5th instar noted at RNHS event at Ketton Quarry

Two seen at Wing allotments

Coleoptera BEETLES

One noted on long track at Pickworth

Good numbers noted at RNHS event at Ketton Quarry and also on Verge 8

One seen at Ketton Quarry

Single insects noted on Verge 8 and Ketton Quarry

Two noted on Verge 8

One insect noted at Ketton Quarry and two seen on Verge 8

Diptera FLIES

Two seen close to river Chater near Wing

Two seen on Wing allotments and one noted at Crown Well bridge Wing

One seen RWNR near Gibbet Gorse

One noted at Wing allotments and one seen RWNR

One seen RWNR near Gibbet Gorse

Hymenoptera ANTS, WASPS, BEES & RELATIVES

One seen on Wing allotments

At the beginning of the month a nest of these bees was reported under the floor of a summerhouse in Uppingham

NOTES

A late record of Hairy-footed Flower Bees Anthophora plumipes from April – they were noted nesting in the mortar of a wall in Barrow. There are some interesting hoverfly records and also a good variety of shieldbug records from the past three months. Notably no harlequin ladybird records were received.

Many thanks to the following people for sending in records:-

D. & J. Ball, A. & L. Biddle, T. Caldicott, G. Chiverton, R. Edwards, C. R. Jones, R. Lemmon M Markham and D. Needham.

GLOW-WORMS

RECORDER Linda Worrall

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June/July 2019

Barrowden, Verge 3, Luffenham Road cSK 948 005

1&2.7: 1 at foot of west verge, next to a house gate, under tree, near street light, not easy for male to find. Not seen there for many years. No glows in usual place higher up verge. Verge regularly patrolled during June and July by R and V Fraser.

Barrowden, Verge 17, Back Road cSK 945 003

30.6: 1 on south verge by field gate, short grass, adjacent to house of R and V Fraser, who also regularly patrol Verge 17.

2.7: 2 on north verge where new gates have recently been installed by farmer, ie one between the gates and one in pile of rubble, dimming as watched, out 20 minutes later, hopefully mated. Also 1 on south verge by field entrance opposite Drift Close, an unusual location.

6.7: 1 on north verge in long grass close to new gates.

18.7: 1 on north verge, in short grass opposite field gate on south (see 2.7 south).

24.7: 1 on north verge in long grass further back from road (see 18.7).

Poor numbers for Barrowden. Visitors disappointed. Dates started and finished later than usual and some glows where not normally expected and absent from more usual ones. Their heartland of long stony field edge halved by ploughing over the last 2 to 3 years and two field gates added recently. In hot summers (eg 2018) snails may have aestivated and not been available for larvae to feed upon; snails not currently plentiful. Verge mowing, though, is less unsuitable.

Ketton Quarry Reserve cSK 978 053

4.7: Jenny Harris reports 9 glow-worms: 1 on north side of the Pit Lane Industrial site carpark in vegetation on the edge of the gravel, 1 in short vegetation in the gateway into the reserve from the carpark; a further 3 in the flat area inside the reserve gate, 3 in the barbecue area and 1 just inside and to the right of the gate into The Valley. These numbers are not as high as recent years, and it is aimed to search other parts of the reserve next time.

Note: I understand that Rutland County Council is currently considering the development of allotments in Pit Lane close to the reserve into office and light industrial units with 70 parking spaces, in association, it would appear, with thousands of houses at St George's Barracks next to Rutland Water and also at Stamford North. Your County Councillor would know more.

Northamptonshire: Fineshade Woods cSP 982 983

5.6: Barrie Galpin saw 3 at Top Lodge, including one in the middle of his lawn, which he had mown that afternoon.

4.7: 6 seen on lanes around field in front of Top Lodge, but none in long grass of field itself, upon which application had been made to install a static caravan site. Adult males nearby could be attracted by the lights and not see and mate with females elsewhere, and larvae could be destroyed, as they do not necessarily live their two years before pupation in the same places in which adults briefly glow. Following many other objections, however, the application has been withdrawn.

MAMMALS

RECORDER Linda Biddle

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May - July 2019

Badgers were the stars in the exciting mammal event of this month's report. Duncan and Jane Ball were walking one evening in Pickworth wood in May, when two badgers approached noisily. "When they saw us we all froze, then they charged towards us, growling and snarling. One veered off the other went between the two of us. We were stunned and thrilled." Badgers will have had a good summer once the dry weather of the spring broke, and evidence of that is seen in active setts and badger latrines around the area.

At Leighfield an **otter** was observed by the bridge in mid-June, and the following week another was seen from the bridge at Stoke Dry as it swam from the reservoir with a large fish flapping in its jaws. A video of a similar event at Stoke Dry bridge can be seen on Facebook, this time the otter is joined by another, and the two swim under the bridge. Otter signs are still regularly found at RWNR.

Two **stoats** were recorded, one at Ketton in Pit lane, and another was dead by Shacklewell Hollow on The A606. In May a **weasel** crossed Dr Gallimore's drive in Wing, and in June others were seen at Pilton and at Gibbets Gorse. In July one emerged from vegetation onto the track at Pickworth drift, to vanish again rapidly!

The trail camera at Langham has enabled identification of individual **foxes**. In May a female with a white tail tip visited the garden almost every evening. The May evening when she failed to appear was when a male with a dark tip to his tail turned up. The regular female came less often in June, and only twice in July. In Gypsy lane Uppingham a vixen reported earlier in the year as a nursing mother was seen in June, and later in the month appeared again, looking very thin and bedraggled. Let's hope she has had a good later summer and regained some condition. In June a live cub was seen in Osprey wood and an adult and cub were dead on the A606 near Burley Wood. At Banthorpe gravel pit in July 2 cubs were observed on the shoreline.

At Whissendine a **Hedgehog** was seen almost every night between April and late June. Jenny Pearce writes "We think there have been three visitors to our garden this summer though only one on a regular basis. The second one seen in July was definitely different and it approached the food whilst our regular hedgehog was already there. The latter made aggressive motions towards it, upon which the second hedgehog made a swift exit and hasn't been seen again since!" Later the first hog seemed to have been injured, but has been ok since then. At Langham one was seen emerging from the yew hedge in the churchyard in early July, and almost every night one or more adults, sometimes with a younger one have been seen on the garden camera. In an Oakham garden two were seen courting briefly and photographed in May. In July Dr Gallimore in Wing made unfortunate discoveries - a dead hedgehog with no apparent cause on the 4th, and then on 7th another dead one - this time only the skin and paws remaining, possibly killed by a badger. A live one was then seen on the 15th, showing there must be a good population in the vicinity! Two reports have been received from Cottesmore, one collecting bedding and another of 2 mating.

Across the county **brown hares** are doing well, and have been seen in ones and twos regularly, and in one area in June a total of 18 were seen on one day in maize patches. Locations are being withheld, because there are concerns that coursers are active in our area, so please be vigilant, and report any suspicions to your local wildlife crime officer.

Only one report this time of **rabbits**, at Greetham valley, and one rat in Uppingham. **Grey squirrels** were seen on the webcam very regularly at Langham, and others at Uppingham and at Pickworth.

Marian Markham's garden camera has recorded **wood mice** on eight occasions during the three month period. **Bank voles** are reported from Langham, one disturbed in a compost heap, another caught on camera trap, and a dead one on the common by the walnut tree.

There two reports of **common shrews**, in June two found dead by the roadside in Wing, and one at Quarry farm in July. A **water shrew** was found dead on a gravelled pathway in Pickworth wood, and photographed, nowhere near any water but water shrews are commonly found in woods.

At RWNR in May the regular count found that all sites had an active population of **watervoles**, and at Oakham canal, both north and south of the road, there were signs of a healthy population. Unfortunately management work at the canal, putting down a footpath and removing canal side vegetation on the southern end of the canal, has meant that this population has crashed, and there were no signs at the next count! North of the road the population seems ok.

The news on other sites for **water voles** is excellent! Near Wing a very active colony has been rediscovered where a stream passes through land owned by the Ahimsa farm, and a video of theses may be seen on the Ahimsa website. Positive signs of activity

confirming presence at Shacklewell, on the Guash? were discovered during May, and unconfirmed reports of wolverines come from the Wheatsheaf at Greetham.

Fallow deer have been observed in Pickworth wood, two seen by the dawn chorus group, and others later in the month. At Exton between the A1 and Fort Henry two does were seen, each with a fawn, and accompanied by an immature female and at Walk farm a single doe was observed. A **male muntjac** visited Marian Markham's garden in May and June, and another was on Dr Gallimore's lawn in Wing during June. Others were seen at Fort Henry, Ketton, Eggleton and Hambleton. One **roe deer** was seen at Exton in Westland Wood in June.

There has even been a report of a wildcat – certainly a wild cat, at Pilton, and photographs showed that it did resemble the real thing! A lot of rewilding will have to be done before that happens for real!

*Many thanks to all of you for sending in your reports. Records received from:-
D+J Ball, C Baxter, R+L Brown, T Caldicot, C Gallimore, M + G Griffin, M Grimes,
P Langstone, R Lemon, M Manson, M Markham, D Masters, T Mitcham, J+A Pearce,
PJ Rudkin*

BATS

RECORDER Jenny Harris

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May to July inclusive have included some extremes of weather, with periods of rain, often heavy and often at night, causing one of the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) counts to be cancelled. Unseasonably warm weather earlier in the year may have resulted in early birth of baby bats (see whiskered bat record). Periods of warm, dry weather will have benefitted those babies that survived bad weather, but it was noticeable that in other parts of VC55 sharp changes in weather precipitated a clutch of grounded bats, with often three calls a day.

In May a survey was conducted for the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project (NNPP) at three sites at Rutland Water, all of which have been surveyed previously, although never all on the same night. The sites chosen were Barnsdale Wood and adjacent grassland; Hambleton Wood and Eggleton Reserve, to the west of Lagoon 2. All have a mosaic of woodland, sheep-pasture and wetland, with some mature trees. At each survey site three harp traps were erected; teams made up of members from Derbyshire, Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire, Leicestershire and Rutland bat groups handled bats found in the traps. These were then identified, sexed, their breeding condition assessed, weighed and their forearms measured, much as I do when a grounded bat is brought in. It is a very different experience at night though, handling a very lively bat by the light of a head-torch, closely watched by one's colleagues!

Daubenton's bat

Myotis daubentonii

On 25 May, during harp trapping at RW, Daubenton's bats were found at all three survey sites. At Eggleton a single adult was trapped at 1.30am (so actually on 26 May); with a forearm measurement of 38.3mm and weight of 11.2g this large female was found to be pregnant. A male and a female were trapped at Hambleton in the area between SK904070 (pasture with large oaks) and SK906068 (woodland and water's edge); while at Barnsdale one bat was caught in a trap on the grassy hill overlooking Barnsdale Creek, SK914085. During the Bats and Glow-worms visit to Ketton, Daubenton's bats were foraging as usual over the R. Chater at Sinc Bridge, Aldgate (SK982045) and the Station Road bridge (SK982043)

Whiskered bat

Myotis mystacinus

The only whiskered bat records for the period were of bats caught during trapping at RW on 25 May behind Lagoon 2, Eggleton. An adult male weighing 5.9g, forearm length 34.2mm was caught in Trap 3 (SK88170750) at 12.20am; a second male caught at 1.50am in Trap 1 (SK88240770) weighed 5.3g, forearm length 34.9mm. One of these bats, judging by the development of its finger bones, was a juvenile born very early in 2019. The former maternity roost at Seaton was not counted this year.

Natterer's bat
Myotis nattereri

Once again Ann Tomlinson and her team tried to determine the roost sites and access features used by the maternity colony at St Andrew's church, Stoke Dry so that they could make a meaningful count for the NBMP. Following the theft of lead from part of the roof a consultant ecologist, Barry Collins, had been engaged by the church so that re-roofing could be done in autumn. In addition to the two NBMP counts in June (see Table 1), Barry undertook his own counts, in consultation with Ann. He counted 29 bats emerging in June, with seven from the south side of the church, 22 from a high point at the western edge of the north side of the nave. Barry forwarded a lovely video clip to Ann, showing Natterer's bats emerging from a roost site in the church and disappearing over the wall plate as they left to forage. Ann's count of 34 Natterer's on 25 June recorded only three bats using the south side of the church, and 31 emerging from the porch. Both Barry and Ann have been unable to determine how the bats find their way out of the church from their roosts inside it via the porch. Barry commented to Ann how helpful her input and knowledge of the church had been for his work there. All such information is important to feed into the plans that ecologists like Barry provide to safeguard the bats, and (particularly at Stoke Dry) their many roost sites and access routes to those roosts. Barry will be supervising the re-roofing work in autumn.

Noctule bat
Nyctalus noctule

There was a small number of records of noctules in flight around the county although these were mostly heard but not seen records. However, the first record on 20 April was an exception when, driving along the Hambleton Road near Fishponds Cottage, RW (SK890080), I watched noctules feeding over the road and adjacent plantations north of Lagoon 3. 'Feeding buzzes' were frequent as at least four or five bats were visible at any one time. The bats were still feeding on the abundant insect life when I left them to it after 15 minutes. Just west of Manton village a Noctule was heard on 4 June (SK879045). On 7 June a noctule was heard several times just south of Egleton church, SK875075 and on 24 June heard briefly on the west side of Braunston church SK832066. On 4 July a noctule was detected over Station Road, Ketton, near the level crossing (SK984040).

Common pipistrelle
Pipistrellus pipistrellus

Two roosts were counted for the NBMP at Wing and Morcott but the Morcott roost was not occupied this year. A small number of common pipistrelles emerged from Glaston church on 23 May, where others were foraging nearby. Bats were heard foraging in Aldgate, Ketton, on 4 July. The roost at Belton in Rutland, where the grounded juvenile was found on 19 July (see Table 2) held approximately 70 bats in early July. This bat was released as the bats in the roost began to emerge and it circled round the roost entrance for about 10 minutes before joining a group of emerging bats. Common pipistrelles were identified by bat detector flying up and down the brook in Langham on 18 and 29 July (SK845112). Two common pipistrelles, a male and female, were caught during trapping at Hambleton Wood on 25/26 May; one was also caught at the Barnsdale site. On 24 June a bat was observed prior to emergence sitting under the north aisle eave at Stoke Dry church and foraging activity was heard around the church later that evening.

Soprano pipistrelle
Pipistrellus pygmaeus

Soprano pipistrelles were seen and heard foraging over shrubs on the west side of Lagoon 3, RW, on 16 May at early dusk and in 5 June bats were foraging at Manton Hall, probably as they emerged from the roost there. Two roosts were counted for the NBMP (see Table 1) and a roost in Aldgate, Ketton, was also observed. At this site the bats begin to emerge early, approximately 15 minutes after sunset, the roost holding in excess of 500 bats. Rain prevented the first count in June at Braunston-in-Rutland church, but the later count seemed to show that work to prevent bats entering the church, while retaining the roost in the roof, has not adversely affected this maternity colony. Indeed, in mid-July the consultant ecologists counted more than 700 bats emerging; this would have included newly flying juveniles. Soprano pipistrelles were the most numerous species caught during harp trapping at RW. At Egleton, the first bat was caught at 9.50pm, the last at 2.30am. Here a total of 46 sopranos were trapped, with only two males among them. Of the 44 females caught 21 were pregnant; all the pregnant females weighed over 6.0g. These trapping sites were only two fields away from Egleton Church maternity roost. At Hambleton Peninsula 17 sopranos were caught with a much higher ratio of males: six males to eleven females.

A bat flew into a member's room in Langham on 27 July on a rainy night. It flew out after about five minutes, but this gave enough time for bat detector identification. On 29 July two together flew across the churchyard in Langham (SK843111) at 9.23pm.

Nathusius' pipistrelle
Pipistrellus nathusii

Four *Nathusius' pipistrelles* were caught for the NNPP. All were caught in the Barnsdale traps and all were male. The first was caught early in the evening and the last was after 2.0am. All three traps recorded *Nathusius'* and we have also found the species in bat boxes in spring and October in the wood. A male caught in the trap on the hill overlooking Barnsdale Creek was examined by expert handlers who believed, from certain physical characteristics, it had recently mated.

Brown long-eared bat
Plecotus auritus

One roost was counted for the NBMP (see Table 1). Up to six counters were involved. Two grounded male Brown long-eared bats had been over-wintered from October 2018. These bats were finally released when weather permitted, one on 13 May near Hambleton Hall; a second had been found in a workshop at Manton Sidings, about half a mile from the village. This area did not appear to have suitable roosting habitat nearby, so the bat was released near Manton Hall on 5 June.

Table 1 – Counts for NBMP

Location	Species	Date	Count	Comments
Braunston -in-Rutland church	Soprano pipistrelle	10 June 24 June	N/A 548	Cancelled, rain 2 counters
Egleton church	Soprano pipistrelle	07 June 23 June	991 1002	4 counters 2 counters
Morcott (house)	Common pipistrelle	-	-	Bats not present
Stoke Dry church	Natterer's bat	Early June 25 June	12 34	3 counters
Whissendine church	Natterer's bat			Results not yet received
Wing (house)	Common pipistrelle	14 June 28 June	26 34	1 counter 6 counters
Wing (house)	Brown long-eared bat	14 June 28 June	8 11	1 counter 6 counters

At All Saints church, Braunston-in-Rutland, work under the Bats in Churches Project was completed in 2018 to exclude the soprano pipistrelles from the church interior whilst still allowing bats access to their roost sites in the south aisle roof. The count of 548 breeding females suggests the bats have not been adversely affected by the work. Additional counts at Braunston-in-Rutland and at Stoke Dry churches were carried out by consultant ecologists (see species accounts above).

Grounded bats, May to July

A total of five grounded bats were recorded in Rutland for this period, which compares with three bats dealt with for the same period in 2018 and 12 in 2017. However, the latter report included seven infant and juvenile pipistrelles from the same roost in Manton over four weeks. A male soprano pipistrelle from Empingham on 21 May had damage to the tips of both wings, with broken and exposed final joints to the third fingers and part of the edge of the membrane missing. It learned to compensate for the damaged wings during flight practice. A vet removed the short (c.1m - 2m) pieces of exposed fingertip so that they would not cause infection and he was released after two weeks care. Two non-flying juvenile pipistrelles (exact species not determined) a male and a female, were returned to separate known roosts in Cottesmore (SK907138) and Caldecott (SP860932) on 14 July and 19 July respectively; and a male common pipistrelle was released in Belton-in-Rutland (see species account). A male common pipistrelle was found in Wing (SK892032) with a broken humerus and was put down by a vet.

My thanks for records from C Gallimore, D Cole, A Tomlinson, M Markham; and for help with bat counts to A and L Biddle, L Burger, C Baxter, L Clarke, T Appleton and others at the Wing roost.

REPORTS ON RNHS FIELD TRIPS

Tuesday 18th June 2019

Visit to Grantham canal

In spite of an unpromising weather forecast the morning was dry and around a dozen people assembled in the car park of Dove Cottage Tea Rooms on the canal SE of Grantham at 11.00am. The cloud was well broken and the sun peeped through for intervals, conditions which were much better than we had expected. Leaving the corner of the car park we were led straight onto the towpath by our leader Claire Install, Senior Conservation Officer of LRWT. Dragonflies and damselflies need close inspection to give positive identification, so each of us was given a holding pot or net for any creatures caught. Next to a humpback bridge there was an area of clear water in the reedy canal. Within moments Claire whisked her large net, and caught three blue damsel flies. Amazingly they were three different species – Azure, Common Blue and Variable damselflies. Claire spent some time to explain to us how to identify the subtle differences between species, dependant on differing markings on the thorax, and we all looked at each of the damselflies in turn. While we stood in the same spot an emperor dragonfly and a migrant hawk dragonfly flew by, closely followed by a four spot chaser – 6 species before we'd been there 10 minutes.

The group meandered along the towpath, where several newly emerged four spot chaser dragonflies were seen resting on the reeds, giving ample opportunity for photography, while Claire caught specimens for us to look at when she could. We could hear birds singing in the bushes along the towpath, thrush, greenfinch, sedge warbler and wren, while a red kite soared over our heads. Pond skaters whizzed about on patches of open water, and dog rose, meadow vetchling, common and bush vetch were some of the species in flower. Some azure damselflies were seen in tandem, others in the heart-shaped mating position, and then Claire managed to catch a large fast flying hawk dragonfly. She was hugely excited to find that it was a Hairy dragonfly, a rare species found only at this site in Leics and Rutland as far as we know, and the first time Claire had caught one herself. Much photography had to take place, the dragonfly itself, and Claire holding it!! After some time we saw a ringlet butterfly, and then another blue damselfly, this time a blue tailed damselfly.

We meandered slowly back along the towpath, enjoying the sunshine and the abundance of life. Back at Dove Cottage, a café run by volunteers in aid of a hospice, hunger overcame most of us, and we ordered lunch, which we lingered over enjoying food with lots of lively conversation. It had been a fascinating morning and we'd learned a lot, with many thanks to Claire for sharing her knowledge and expertise with the large net. We look forward to having another similar meeting in the not too distant future!



Musk Thistle, Holwell Nature Reserve. Photo by Carolyn Baxter

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