RNHS
RUTLAND NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

FIELDFARE

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Sallow Kitten moth.
Photo R Edwards.

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Welcome

On our first Glowworm count this year in early June, just as twilight was turning into night and the day's heat had subsided a little, we walked out into a countryside drenched by a beautiful full moon. Before we even spotted the familiar green glows on the verges, the night seemed to be lit up with flying insects all around us, and I was reminded that this is the summer night shift - a whole different world of nature I only encounter on a few nights every year.
This is the first time for several years too, that we have found the glittering black Hedgehog droppings scattered about the garden. There was quite a lot of it too, and I wondered how many hedgehogs had been out there, hoovering up the beetles as they encountered one another in the dark hours. I confess I didn't get this record sent in time for our mammal report but the little black Hedgehog "sausages" are still appearing in our parched garden so apologies Linda - I will send in my record for the next report!
This omittance did make me wonder how much wildlife we actually do miss, not only during the hours we sleep but also the evidence we see during the day but do not register as important, as Linda has pointed out in her Mammal report. Signs like droppings and tracks must be just as vital to our records as the wildlife we actually see during the day. Hedgehogs are an example of how a once common countryside mammal is now having a hard time surviving from one more man-made threat but it is lovely to see the evidence back in our garden again after so long. Night-time is just as active as the day-time; foxes, badgers and rabbits all leave their calling cards scattered about the countryside. Mice and Voles, food for their predators sometimes leave their furry remains as pellets underneath trees. Night flying moths and insects are food for the bats. They are out while we are in!
Well not quite. Our outdoor event for September, will be an evening walk in the village of Ketton. Ann Gleave from the Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Group has offered her time and knowledge to lead us on a Bat walk around the village to identify different species found there.
It will be good to see you there!

DIARY DATES

RNHS Outdoor meetings.

The following events are correct at time of publication but may be changed at short notice. Please book your place with the person who will be leading the walk; phone numbers are beside the listing. Make sure you are wearing appropriate clothing for the time of year and if the weather is bad on the day, please check first by ringing the walk leader. Details of events appear in the Annual programme but bookings are arranged many months in advance so dates and venue can change at any time. See round badge on the front page of website at www.rnhs.org.uk for best up-to-date information.

Saturday 12th September, 7.00pm. An evening Bat walk at Ketton with Ann Gleave from the Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Group. A chance to see Pipisrelles in the village or Daubentons over the river. The weather can be cool after sunset at this time of year, so wear warm clothes. Bring a torch and detector if you have one. **Meet:** Aldgate, Ketton. MR: SK983042. WTW: record.pavement.brisk. Park either side of the road without blocking the gateway. Contact Linda (07749636919).

Saturday 17th October. Fungi walk with RNHS fungi recorder Kate Fortune Jones. Time and place is yet to be decided. An email will be sent to members as soon as it is arranged. Please also look on the website nearer the time.

RNHS Indoor morning/evening meetings.

Evening meetings are usually on the first Tuesday of the month from January to April and October to December at the Volunteer Training Centre (VTC) LE15 8AD. MR: SK883 083. Note that our November meeting will be on a Friday in the morning. No need to book - just turn up.

Tuesday 6th October, 7.30pm. Farming for wildlife with **Nicholas Watts from Vine House Farm.** Nicholas is well know for his dedication to nature. He was made an MBE in 2006 for his services to farming and conservation. Join him as he shares his insights on how farming and wildlife can thrive together.

Friday 6th November. 10.30am. As a follow up to our Dragonfly visit to Grantham canal in July, **Tony Clarke, Wildlife and Nature photographer** will give a talk on **Dragonfly and Damselfly identification.** After a short refreshment break, he will discuss their behaviour and highlight some rarer species.

Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust.
www.lrwt.org.uk/events
Monday 19th October at VTC. 7.30 - 9.30pm.
How Peregrines are thriving in Leicester City Centre.
Jim Graham, project lead for the Leicseter Peregrine Project will talk about the breeding pair of Peregrine falcons on Leicester Cathedral.
£2.00pp donation. No need to book.

Congratulations!

1936, was a rather special year. It was called the year of "The Three Kings" and on **July 28th** that year, it was also the day our President was born. 1966 was another special year. It was when Phil joined the Rutland Natural History Society and made such a huge contribution to it's success. We hope you had a 90th birthday to remember Phil, and we wish you many more to celebrate in the years to come! From all your friends at the Rutland Natural History Society.



WEATHER

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June 2026.

Atmospheric pressure and wind. A month without extreme highs or lows, the lowest was 997mb on the 4th but this was the only pressure below 1000mb, and the highest was 1028mb on the 22nd. Winds were S-W during the first 12 days and then variable to the end. The month was notable for some very high temperatures from the 21st to the end. For details see below.

Temperature. Nationally, this month produced the warmest June day ever recorded. On the 24th, Gosport in Hampshire recorded 36.1ºC, Merrifield Somerset had 36.7ºC on the 25th and Santon Downham in Suffolk had the highest on the 26th at 37.3ºC. The Met. Office had issued a red extreme heat warning for this period. I also recorded my highest June day maximum on the 26th at 37.5ºC. As previously noted, my maximum temperatures are high due to the nature of the garden that the screen is located in, but are valid for self-comparison purposes. This month produced the highest mean maximum I have ever recorded, at 19.5ºC it was just warmer than June 2025 at 19.16ºC.

Precipitation. A total here of 34.0mm (1.34 inches) which is 62% of my long term mean of 36 years. It all fell as liquid and 84% of this total fell in the first 11 days. By the end of the month everything was obviously parched.

July 2026

Atmospheric pressure and wind. There was only one day in the month when pressure was low, 1004mb. on the 26th, apart from this, all pressures were above 1012mb. and mostly considerably higher. Winds were NW-E until the last 4 days when they were SW-W. This persistent high pressure was due to a large anticyclone north of the British Isles which moved very slowly further out into the Atlantic.

Temperature. A very warm July with 10 days in which the temperature exceeded 30ºC. The overall mean here was 21.96ºC which is the highest I have recorded in 36 years and therefore of course, also in the decade 2017-2026. The second highest in that decade was July 2018 at 20.66ºC and the second highest overall was July 2006 at 21.02ºC. In this current month there were 2 nights when lows of 8.0ºC and 8.7ºC were recorded on the 18th -19th and 17th -18th respectively.

Precipitation. Rain fell on only one day, the 25th, and gave us a total of 0.7mm. (0.03 inches) which is 1.3% of my long term mean and also the lowest total of any month in my whole reporting period. The next lowest was 1.7mm in May 2020. An official drought has been declared, and Anglian Water has imposed a hosepipe ban but Severn Trent hasn't, up to the time of writing.

BOTANY

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June and July 2026

Hotter than ever! An arid landscape and too much sun to venture out very often. This must be the reason why there have been few findings reported, all but a handful from the same observer, so thank you to her. Most of the recordings show confirmation of plants appearing this year as in other years; plants like **Common Spotted Orchid, Bee Orchid** and **Common Gromwell** at Bloody Oaks Quarry, **Yellow Rattle, Lady's Bedstraw,** and **Pepper Saxifrage** at Merry's Meadow, or **Water Figwort, Black Horehound** and **Yellow Water-lily** at Oakham Canal. It's important to make sure that such plants continue to appear each year. One plant which had only been recorded in one spot in the last ten years is **Dropwort** until Tim Collins recorded it just south of North Luffenham in July. It looks very like **Meadowsweet** and is easily dismissed as such on casual glance. It could well be much more common but not recognised as being different.

There was one new plant recorded. Carolyn Baxter found **Dewberry** in Wardley Woods in July. This is a member of the Rubus genus along with Blackberries, Raspberries and many more. It is like Blackberry, but instead of being upright and arching it trails along the ground. It was previously recorded in 2017 and 2018 in Clipsham Park Woods.

It might not be a good idea to go out in the heat,but there is lots of botany to see elsewhere. Plantlife and BSBI have lots of interesting and informative/educational videos on YouTube, whilst Cambridge Botanical Gardens have a video tracing the evolution of plants, as they spread all over the world. We wouldn't be here if they hadn't!

Thank you to Carolyn Baxter, Marian Markham and Tim Collins for submitting records.



Dewberry.
Photo C. Baxter

BIRDS

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June 2026.

Highlights. Rutland Water had a Bittern (23rd) and Little Terns (8th and two on 27th). A Montagu's Harrier was at an undisclosed site.

Rutland Water. (See also Wildfowl Count). There were 20 Avocets (16th), five Little Ringed Plovers (16th), five Curlew (27th), a Black-tailed Godwit (26th) and a Green Sandpiper (22nd). There were two Caspian Gulls and a Yellow-legged Gull (26th). There were 61 Common Terns (16th) and two Arctic Terns were seen (6th) with a Black Tern (17th, 18th). Hobbies and Marsh Harrier were regular all month.
Eyebrook Reservoir. A Whooper Swan remained to (13th) when there were ten Common Scoter. A Caspian Gull was seen (27th).
Other Sites. Shelduck, Gadwall and Shoveler bred at Fort Henry Ponds with a pair of Wigeon (20th, 27th). Two Mandarin Ducks were by Rygate Lake (5th) where Gadwall and Shoveler bred. A Barnacle Goose remained at Banthorpe GP all month. Grey Partridges were at Banthorpe and Mounts Lodge. Fort Henry had an Oystercatcher (7th) and calling Curlew were in Exton Park (9th, 28th). Barn Owls bred at Geeston and Exton and Little Owls were at Mounts Lodge. Peregrines bred again in a crow nest and a Hobby was in Exton Park (6th).



Curlew. Photo P. Scott

July 2026.

Highlights. Rutland Water had four Cattle Egrets (4th), a Bittern (6th) and a Little Tern (2nd). A Quail called in Exton Park (5th).

Rutland Water. (See also Wildfowl Count). A Garganey was seen (26th, 28th). Some wader counts included 16 Oystercatchers 165 Lapwings, a Little Ringed Plover, six Curlew (all 21st), 42 Black-tailed Godwits (5th), a Ruff (4th, 5th), five Common Sandpipers (21st), four Green Sandpipers (6th, 21st), 20 Redshanks (18th) and two Greenshanks (21st). Yellow-legged Gulls were noted from (18th) and a Caspian Gull was regular. There were 27 Common Terns (21st).
Eyebrook Reservoir. The Whooper Swan remained to at least (18th). Gadwall and Ducks bred and there were four Red-crested Pochard (11th). A Marsh Harrier was seen (18th). Some wader counts were 107 Lapwings (26th), a Ringed Plover (10th), five Little Ringed Plovers (26th), 50 Black-tailed Godwits (18th), a Ruff (11th), three Dunlin (18th), three Common Sandpipers (18th) and three Green Sandpipers (26th). There were 20 Redshanks (18th) and a regular Yellow-legged Gull. A pair of Stonechats and a Yellow Wagtail were seen (26th).
Other Sites. Two Barnacle Geese were at Banthorpe GP (1st). Fort Henry Ponds had two Wigeon all month, four Teal (18th) and a Great White Egret (19th). A Curlew held territory in Exton Park where there was a Marsh Harrier (24th), an Osprey (24th, 27th) and a Hobby (31st). There were 20 Ravens over Burley Wood (31st). Spotted Flycatchers bred at Ridlington and near Brooke.

My thanks to the following for records for June and July: T.P.Appleton, C.Baxter, B.Fox, LROS, T.Mitcham, J.Morrell, C.I.Park, RWNR, S.Woodward

Wildfowl counts June and July 2026

	RW 16.06.	RW 21.07.	FHP and Exton Park 12.06.	FHP and Exton Park 18.07.
Canada Goose	1131	1071	3	
Barnacle Goose	1	1		
Greylag Goose	1115	1016	10	
Mute Swan	278	408	7	5
Whooper Swan	1			
Egyptian Goose	72	101	2	
Shelduck	3	2	2	1
Mandarin Duck	5	20		
Shoveler	23	4	5	1
Gadwall	622	924	14	5
Wigeon		1		2
Mallard	665	1298	59	80
Teal	7	48	2	4
Pochard	17	3		
Tufted Duck	143	735	12	4
Little Grebe	6	25	1	4
Great Crested Grebe	183	283		
Grey Heron	11	26	2	5
Great White Egret	18	29		
Little Egret	66	163		1
Cormorant	259	748		8
Moorhen	19	60	6	19
Coot	310	352	30	32
Kingfisher		1		
TOTAL	**4955**	**7319**	**149**	**171**

	Banthorpe GP 12.06.	Banthorpe GP 17.07.
Canada Goose	2	6
Barnacle Goose	1	
Greylag Goose	8	2
Mute Swan	2	2
Mallard	17	3
Grey Heron	1	1
Little Egret	1	
Cormorant	2	1
Moorhen	1	2
Coot	4	7
TOTAL	**40**	**24**

BUTTERFLIES

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January - March 2026

January was mild and wet and there were no reports of any butterflies.
February
The mild, wet and very dull weather continued into February until the 20th when high pressure finally brought sunny skies and the first sightings.
The first butterfly record of 2026 was an early **PEACOCK** at Ketton Quarry (KQ) on 24th February.
The next day the 25th February was warm, dry and sunny and **BRIMSTONE** appeared with single males at 2 separate locations in Oakham (OK) and also 2 males in Uppingham (UPP).
There were now 8 **PEACOCK** at KQ on 25th and 2 at Quarry Farm (QF).
Also an early fresh pristine **COMMA** was seen in an OK garden on 25th February.
March
March was mild and much drier than the first 2 months of the year.
BRIMSTONE records were concentrated into 2 short periods between 2nd-5th and 17th-21st March.
There were 2 at Manton (M) on 2nd and singles on 5th at UPP, OK and Langham (L) with 4 at Priors Coppice (PC).
Records continued with 7 at KQ on 17th and a maximum of 16 at KQ on 18th March - described by one observer as "like a summer's day" Also on 18th March singles were at L and UPP with 3 males at Egleton (EG). On 21st March singles were at OK and UPP.
PEACOCK records followed the same pattern as Brimstone with singles at UPP, L and EG all on 5th March. Numbers then grew with 3 at PC on 5th March, 9 at KQ on 17th and a maximum of 18 at KQ on 18th. Also on 18th March there were singles at L and Lyndon (LY) and 4 at EG.
A single **COMMA** was seen at PC on 5th March.
A single **RED ADMIRAL** was seen at EG on 18th March.
Finally a single **SMALL TORTOISESHELL** was seen at LY on 18th March.

I would like to thank Tim Caldicott, David Needham, Alistair Lawrence, Donnie Smalley, Nigel Webb, Malcolm Dixon, Marian Markham, Tim Collins and John Rodgers for sending in their records.

April - May 2026

April was warm, sunny and very dry. May started with a record-breaking very hot Mayday and then continued in similar vein with prolonged warm dry spells until the 20th when a heatwave started.
The rest of the month was very hot and sunny and extremely dry with hardly any rain at all.
This was of course perfect weather for Spring butterflies.

GRIZZLED SKIPPER was seen at Bloody Oaks Quarry (BOQ) with 2 seen mating on 25th April (see photo below) and 2 were at Ketton Quarry (KQ) also on the 25th.


Photo A. Lawrence.

Again on the same day, 25th April, there were 3 **DINGY SKIPPER** seen at KQ.
ORANGE-TIP began to emerge in early April with records from Ashwell (A) and Egleton (EG) on 2nd, Langham (LA) on 8th and 23rd, Oakham (OK) on 13th and UPP (UPP) also on 13th. May saw 2 at KQ on 4th and 4 at UPP on 10th.
In April **BRIMSTONE males** were seen at UPP (3) on 2nd, KQ (2) on 4th, KQ (6) on 8th, EG on 9th, KQ (3) on 21st and at OK (2) on 30th. **BRIMSTONE females** were seen at BOQ on 25th April and OK on 30th.
LARGE WHITE was recorded at EG on 29th April.
SMALL WHITE was first seen at LA and EG on 8th April. On 9th April 4 were at UPP and 5 were at KQ.

Very common in UPP throughout April and May and no doubt elsewhere.
GREEN-VEINED WHITE was reported from EG and OK in April (no dates) and UPP on 13th, 20th, 23rd and 25th May.
SPECKLED WOOD was first reported from KQ on 6th April and again at KQ on 13th April. A single was in LA on 22nd April.
SMALL HEATH was seen in May with 2 at KQ on 21st, 2 at BOQ on 24th and a single at UPP on 31st.
A single **RED ADMIRAL** was seen at OK on 30th April and at LA on 8th May.
PAINTED LADY was recorded in May at EG on 5th May and at LA on 27th May.
PEACOCK was reported from OK on 15th April.
There were no further records until May with singles at UPP on 1st and 11th.
There was only one record of **GREEN HAIRSTREAK** with a single at KQ on 6th April.

HOLLY BLUE numbers were excellent in Spring this year after very successful breeding by the first brood.The first record was on 6th April at LA followed by daily sightings of many individuals from gardens in OK, LA, UPP and elsewhere. Numbers slowly reduced in May with the last record of a single in UPP on 31st May.
Finally, **COMMON BLUE** records were lower this Spring with a single seen at LA on 25th May.

I would like to thank Alistair Lawrence, John Rodgers,Tim Caldicott, David Needham, Donnie Smalley and Marian Markham for their records.



Above. Painted Lady.
Photo C. Baxter

June and July 2026
Last year June and July 2025 had 3 heatwaves which allowed 'butterflying' to be enjoyed by many.
This year, that number was surpassed by 5 heatwaves in one of the most extraordinary summers that Central and Southern England have ever had.
Long spells of very hot sunny weather with virtually NO rain at all has left a parched landscape by early August.
This may cause problems with the foodplants for the generation of caterpillars yet to appear this year.
Only time will tell.
LARGE SKIPPER was recorded from Ketton Quarry (KQ) with 2 there on 16th June and a single at Uppingham (UPP) on 18th June. There was a single at Bloody Oaks Quarry (BOQ) on 3rd July and the last record was one at Braunston (BR) on 24th July.
A single **SMALL SKIPPER** was seen at KQ on 14th June and singles were seen at Langham (LA) on 2nd and BR on 24th July.
The first adult of the second **BRIMSTONE** generation appeared in the last week of July at BR.
LARGE WHITE was as usual under-reported but was abundant and widespread. A single very worn adult which died later that day was seen in UPP on 18th June and would have been one of the last of the first brood.
The last record was one at BR on 28th July which was almost certainly one of the first of the second brood. It will be interesting to see if there is a third brood later in the autumn.
SMALL WHITE was abundant this year.
It was reported at KQ with 2 there on 19th June and 5 at KQ on 2nd July. The last record was one at BR on 25th July.
There were just 3 records of **GREEN-VEINED WHITE** with singles at Quarry Farm (QF) on 7th June, UPP on 16th June and BR on 26th July.
For the second year in a row Terry Mitcham found a **CLOUDED YELLOW** in the same place at Belmesthorpe (BTH) on 17th July. It was in a sheep-grazed field feeding on bird's-foot trefoil.
SPECKLED WOOD was widely reported.
At Pickworth Great Wood (PGW) there were "several" on 9th June and it was said to be "numerous" on 14th June.
It was seen on 12 occasions in June at the Uppingham School Arboretum (UPP) with 9 there on 22nd June. In July reports came from KQ, BOQ, LA, UPP, BR, PGW, Oakham (OK), EG and Manton (M) with the last at UPP on 31st July.
SMALL HEATH was seen in June with 2 at PGW on 9th and a single at KQ on 14th. Records then stopped until singles were seen at Merry's Meadow (MM) on 26th July and LA on 27th July. These 2 individuals, recorded 6 weeks apart, represent the last of the First Generation and the first of the Second Generation.
RINGLET started appearing in mid-June with the first record being a single at KQ on 14th. An abundant species which suffers badly from drought conditions and may explain the lack of reports. Next years numbers will be interesting.
MEADOW BROWN also started appearing in mid-June and the first record was 3 at PGW. The effects of drought on the foodplant grasses will require monitoring. The last record was 4 at UPP on 31st July.
GATEKEEPER were very common again this year, appearing as usual in July with the first being a single fresh pristine male in UPP on 2nd July. Then there were singles at LA and EG on 6th, UPP on 13th, LA on 31st and lots at BR on 24th-31st where it was described as "abundant".
MARBLED WHITE appeared to be expanding it's range last year and it continues to do so this year with a single record at a new site- Langham (LA) on 4th July.
The first records were singles at KQ and Leighfield (LF) on 14th June. Records increased at the usual sites for this species (KQ and BOQ) and there were reports of singles at North Luffenham (NL) on 3rd and 29th and 3 at Tolethorpe (TO) on 7th July. By the end of the month on 28th July numbers had increased to "numerous" at BOQ.
The only record of **SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY** was a single at Mounts Lodge in Great Casterton (GC) on 9th July.
DARK GREEN FRITILLARY was first seen at KQ on 14th June and 2 were at BOQ on 28th June.
A great record of a single **PURPLE EMPEROR** fly-by was seen at the campsite at Lyndon Top (LYN) on 6th July. A nice reward for helping out at the Birdfair for 2 observers.
RED ADMIRAL was seen at PGW on 9th June and UPP on 19th June. In July 2 were at KQ on 4th and singles were

seen at UPP on 22nd and 23rd.
PAINTED LADY is an immigrant and this year has been exceptional. It was described as "abundant" by one observer and it has certainly been under-recorded. First reported at Walk Farm at Pickworth (PWF) on 17th June it was then seen throughout Rutland with the last reports from BR daily between 24th and 31st July.
June and July are quiet months for the **PEACOCK** and although they can be seen in these months, it is late July when they start increasing again. So there were a few reports scattered across the County. The favoured nectar plants are willows in Spring but change for the Summer populations to thistles, buddleias and teasels. The final record is a typical observation of a group of 11 adults feeding on teasels by the River Gwash at TO on 25th July.
S**MALL TORTOISESHELL** was seen at 2 locations - in June at PWF on 17th and at BR on 23rd.
The **COMMA** was recorded in June at PWF on 17th and in July at PWF on 23rd and BR on 24th.

Tim Caldecott found a **BLACK HAIRSTREAK** near Rutland Water at Gibbet's Gorse Meadow (GGM) on 14th June and another at GGM on 22nd June.
The **HOLLY BLUE** continued to have a good year with 2 at PGW on 9th June and a single at LA on 22nd July. These 2 individuals, recorded 6 weeks apart, represent the last of the First Generation which feeds on Holly and the first of the Second Generation which feeds on Ivy.
There were just 2 records of **BROWN ARGUS -** both in July, with singles at LA on 22nd and at Quarry Farm (QF) on 27th.
COMMON BLUE was seen in June at BOQ on 6th, KQ on 14th, and PWF on 17th.In July there were singles at TO on 7th, BR on 24th and LA on 24th, 27th and 31st.

I would like to thank the following for their records:
Alistair Lawrence, David Needham, Tim Caldicott, Marian Markham, John Rodgers, Donnie Smalley, Nigel Webb, Charles Gallimore, Linda Biddle, Anthony Biddle, S.Newcombe and Terry Mitcham.

FUNGI

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Below are some photos shared by Kate of Fungi taken during these exceptionally dry and hot months - a quiet time for fungi anyway. All taken in places visited in Rutland



Blackening waxcap.



Young Driad's Saddle



Snakeskin Grisette



Lurid Bolete

GLOWWORMS

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2026 RNHS Glowworm report.
There have been a few issues with recording on some of the sites we have monitored this year, so the report is less comprehensive than in previous years. When compared to the 2025 report, the count on all sites were much lower.

Glowworms, (*Lampyris noctiluca)* are beetles and are therefore insects which undergo several stages in itheir life cycle. After a female Glowworm has mated, she soon afterwards lays her eggs and then dies. After a couple of weeks, the eggs hatch and usually spend the rest of

the summer and the following summer (sometimes two depending on food availability) feeding on snails and slugs. So there is a two or maybe even three-year gap between a female laying her eggs and the next generation of adult Glowworms appearing. What has caused the decline this year? With no discernible change in habitat except maybe Burley woods, it could just be a naturally occurring dip which happens with many species. But it could also be due to the intense and prolonged summer heatwaves we have been experiencing, reducing food availability and moist habitat for the growing Glowworm larvae.

Below are the results for those sites recorded.

Glowworm record Barrowden Luffenham road and Back road 2026
L= Luffenham road. BR= Back Road.

Date/Time	Female	Male	Larvae	Weather/ temp	Notes
Friday 29th May. L	0	0		Mostly clear with almost full moon/18	
BR	0	0	0		
Monday 8th June. L	1	0	0	Clear/ 14	GR: SK947006. Outside 30mph sign.
BR	0	0	0		Left 11.15pm
Monday 15th June. L	7	0	0	Cloud 15	
BR	6	0	0		3 in res garden short grass. Left 12.00
Monday 22nd June. L	8			Cloudy 21. Muggy after rain	Start:10
BR	6				Left 11.55
Sunday 28th June. L	7	0 lure at 30mph sign		Clear. 17. Almost full moon.	Start: 10.20.
BR	7	0. Lure between lights			Finish: 12.01
Monday 7th July. L	7	0. Lure Glowworm sign		Cloud. 22. No moon	10.30 – 12.15
BR	6	0. lure fist gate			
Monday 14th July. L	1	0		dull	
BR	0	0			
Monday 21st July. L		Count finished			

Glowworms. Other sites recorded.

Place	Date	Weather/temp	Female/larvae	Male	Notes
Burley wood	29/05/26	18 degrees/clear almost full moon	1/0	1	
Burley Wood	19/06/26		13/0	27	Lures used
Essendine	15/06/26		3 at village end/0		Lower section mowed to 2 me-tres away from road. Bare earth in places
Ketton Q	11/06/26		6/0	0	
Ketton Q	26/06/26		33/0	0	

INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

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June and July 2026
June
Highlights. Longhorn beetles are still making an appearance along the woodland edges where they are drawn to umbellifers such as Cow parsley and Hogweed. This is also when many species of Soldier beetle can be seen in numbers. A rare beetle for Rutland (a female) was found in an Uppingham garden and verified by Naturespot as *Tillus elongatus*. (See opposite). The males look like a black Soldier beetle, but the female has a reddish-brown collar (pronotum). Both have serrated antennae and have slightly hairy wing cases.
Bees/Wasps/Ants.
Bumblebees were out foraging in most areas frequented. The queen **Early Bumblebee** (bright orange tail and two light yellow bands) was seen at Hebe's wood and Egleton early in the month. **A Red-tailed Bumblebee** was seen at Ketton Quarry (14th). As the month progressed, the parasitoid wasps, and cuckoo bees appeared on flowers and foliage. A **Digger Wasp**, probably *Ectemnius sp*. was seen on Hogweed at Wardley woods and again at Egleton on 27th. This parasitic wasp digs in soft wood with its powerful biting jaws. Several species of **Ichneumon wasps** were seen. Some are so alike that they are difficult to identify, but all are parasitoids and most attack the caterpillars of butterflies and moths to lay their eggs. The Ichneumon - *Amblyteles armoratus* was seen by Marian Markham in Langham churchyard (17th) and confirmed by Naturespot. Another similar, was sitting on a leaf in Wardley woods on (7th) and another Ichneumon sp. seen at Lyndon (28th).
Beetles.
There are many species of Soldier beetle, with similar colourings and some are not easy to identify to species. **The Common Red Soldier beetles** are nearly always seen in numbers on Cow parsley or Hogweed and have been spotted at Wardley (7th), Seaton meadow (16th), Hebes wood (12th), Lyndon (27th) Egleton (28th). As stated earlier, *Tillus elongatus,* a female was seen in Uppingham on an outside wall (5th). It typically lives in old dead wood, so may have accidentally arrived there on clothing after visiting Wardley or Stoke woods. Other beetles recorded in Wardley woods (7th) were two Longhorns – *Grammoptera ruficornis,* a small beetle, seen in small numbers and the more striking *Rutpela maculata* seen also at Egleton (27th). The **Longhorn Wasp Beetle,** *Clytus arietus* was in Munday's close Langham (13th). Another Longhorn, *Pseudovadonia livida* was in Langham churchyard (17th)**. Swollen-thighed beetles**, both male and female, the male often with a bronze hue instead of greenish blue iridescence, seen at Hebe's wood (12th),Wardley (7th) and Langham churchyard (19th). A **Lesser Stag Beetle** spotted in Langham (19th).
Bugs.
A **Dock bug** was seen on the grassy ride at Wardley (7th) and at Langham churchyard (10th). A **Tortoise bug** was also at Langham churchyard (10th). Towards the end of the month a **Hairy Shieldbug** was in an Uppingham garden (27th) and Lyndon (28th). Near the visitor centre, a **Red bug (***Deraeocoris ruber)* was seen eating a Ladybird almost a big as itself.


Tillus elongatus.
C. Baxter

Dragonflies and Damselflies.
A male **Beautiful demoiselle Damselfly** was seen at Wardley near the entrance to the wood in the same place as it was seen the year before (7th). A **Southern Hawker Dragonfly** was in Jacky Morell's garden (16th). A morning at Egleton on 27th revealed both male and female **Ruddy Darters** near Frans Pond. Of the blue **Damselflies,** the **Azure** and the **Common Blue** Damselflies were identified as well as the less striking females. The next day, at Lyndon, apart from the Common Blues, there was a male **Banded demoiselle (**28th).
Flies and Hoverflies.
Hoverflies were out in abundance. In Wardley woods there were two variations of the **Hoverfly** *Volucella bombylans* – one with the red tail and the other with a white tail (7th) Wardley and Egleton. They are superb bumblebee lookalikes, but their fly eyes give them away. Another big hoverfly seen at Egleton (28th) is *Volucella pelucens*. It is quite striking when seen, with a white band across its abdomen. **The Narcissus Bulb Fly** was in Langham churchyard (17th). Other fly species found at Gibbets gorse (28th), were the **Ball thistle gall fly** and the **Golden-tailed Leaf Walker (***Xylota sylvarum)* a really spectacular hoverfly. There were numerous **Marmalade Hoverflies** in all places visited.
Grasshoppers and Crickets.
A nymph **Speckled bush Cricket** seen on a Stinging Nettle leaf at Wardley, (7th) and **Roesels Bush Cricket** nymphs at Hebe's wood on (12th).

July.
Not so many records came in for July, although despite the soaring temperatures, there were plenty of insects, especially Butterflies and Dragonflies around the reserves and canals.
Bees/Wasps/Ants.
A large **Buff/white-tailed bumblebee** was seen in Wardley woods early in the month (04/07) and Gypsy Lane Uppingham (17th). Smaller worker Bumblebees were seen in all areas visited. A **Red-tailed bumblebee** was seen (21st) in Wardley. A species of **Nomad bee** *(Andrena sp)* was seen in Wardley (4th) the bright yellow pollen basket easily seen on the hind legs of the female.
Beetles.
Common Soldier Beetles – orange coloured with black

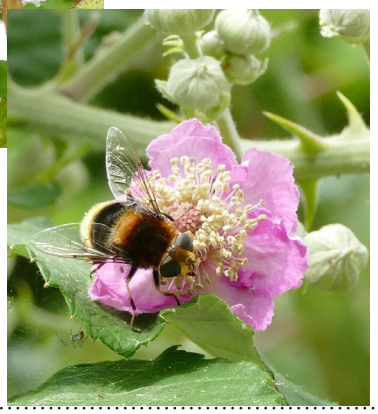
wing tips crawling over Creeping Thistle in Wardley (4th), Gypsy Lane Uppingham (17th). The **Longhorn beetle (***Rutpela maculata)* was seen again at the edge of Wardley woods (21st). A tiny **Bean Weevil** also spotted in Wardley on (4th).

Bugs.

Nymph of the **Common Green Shieldbug** seen in Wardley (21st). A nymph of the **Dock bug** also Wardley (21st).



Left: Volucella bombylans (v bombylans). C. Baxter



Right: Volucella bombylans (v plumata) C. Baxter

Dragonflies and Damselflies.

A male **Black-tailed Skimmer** seen at Lyndon (14th) and onother one at Pickworth around the same time. A bright green female **Banded Demoiselle** was seen posing on a hawthorn leaf one evening in Gypsy Lane Uppingham on (17th). On the same evening a **Southern Hawker** was hanging from the hedge beside the path.

Flies and Hoverflies.

Marmalade Hoverflies are still the most abundantly identified in July. A male **Long hoverfly (***Sphaerophoria scripta)*)was seen near Waderscrape hide RW (13th). Jayne Walker saw a **Hornet mimic Hoverfly** - another large colourful hoverfly in Exton (12th). **A Scorpion fly** was seen in Wardley woods on (21st).

Crickets and Grasshoppers. A nymph of a **Roesels Bush Cricket** was seen on low vegetation in Wardley on (4th). A **Field Grasshopper** in Langham (13th), A **Meadow Grasshopper** was in the field leading into Wardley woods (4th) and (21st) and in Merry's Meadows (26th) An **Oak Bush Cricket** hopped onto Tricia Marston's head in Braunston (19th) and another one in Ridlington was found in a green garden waste bin (21st). A **Lesser Marsh Grasshopper** was seen in Langham churchyard and identified by Naturespot (31st). A bright green, **Green Leaf Hopper** *Cicadella viridis* was seen at Wardley (21st).

Thanks to J.Morrell, L&A Biddle, T. Marston, P. Scott and M. Markham for sending in records.

MAMMALS

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April – July 2026

The very dry spring has been followed by an even drier and very hot summer. Many of our native mammals will be finding survival difficult, especially badgers, because not only will earthworms have retreated far below the soil surface, but also the ground itself is hard and unyielding. Badger scuffling on roadside verges are clear signs of their activities. Only one dead **Badger** has been reported, from between Ridlington and Brooke but there have surely been many more. However, Badgers have been seen regularly in Marian Markham's Langham Garden throughout the period. At Ridlington in April and May, both the village green and playing field have been home to **Moles**, their presence evidenced by many molehills. The permanent grassland of these areas are ideal situations for earthworms to thrive, and so perfect habitats for Moles. They may be the most numerous of our mammals nationally, but as I have reported before, are hugely under recorded perhaps because everyone takes them for granted, and maybe not of interest. Like the Badgers they will be struggling under the present drought conditions.

Hedgehogs have been star performers at Langham, appearing almost every night on the trail camera, usually singly, but occasionally two. At home in Stamford, we had a resident hog which also appeared regularly, and then one night much to our delight, was joined by another, after that, one at a time until late May. There was then a large gap, and we eagerly awaited the arrival of hoglets, but sadly our first indication that there had been a birth, was finding a small 10cm hoglet dead on the lawn. It had no sign of damage, and looked in good condition, so we have no idea why it died, unless it was abandoned by the parent in the unfavourable conditions.

One **Otter** was seen in June on an early morning visit to the Lyndon reserve, at shallow water hide. The LRWT has held regular morning Otter watching sessions at the Lyndon reserve of RWNR during spring and summer and those who attended have usually been able to see at least one Otter, sometimes several, so it is an experience not to be missed. If you do go, then please let us know what you see!! Of course, this is evidence that Otters continue to do well at RWNR, and it would be good if we had more reports of them.

A **Fox** was a visitor to the Oakham garden of John and Jan Rodgers at the beginning of June, spotted by the trail camera, but none appeared at Langham, where they used to be regular visitors. There were two observations of **Weasel** this time. In May one crossed the roadway by Tunnely Wood at Exton, and in a lucky sighting, Jacky Morrell saw one crossing the road between Preston and Wing as she delivered the June Fieldfare. A **Stoat** ran across the road at Brooke Hill Braunston at the end of July.

Numbers of **Brown Hares** have been reported from Bloody Oaks, Manton, Ridlington, Preston, Great Casterton, Pickworth, Lyndon, Edith Weston, and Ryhall Heath, usually in ones and twos. The largest number was 8 counted at Cottesmore airfield. **Grey Squirrels** are still commonly

seen, at RWNR, Pickworth woods, and many member's gardens, including the Langham garden of Marian Markham. **Rabbits** abound in some parts of the county, reported from Ridlington village green and playing field, and also at Quarry Farm Great Casterton, and hedgerows at Tolethorpe and Little Casterton.
Seven **Fallow Deer** ran through Pickworth wood in April with groups of five and six seen in Tunnely wood, Exton in May, and a single animal was seen at Banthorpe. **Roe Deer** are reported from lagoon seven RWNR, Horn Mill Exton and two separately from the Pickworth area. **Muntjac** made numerous appearances at Langham, a single at Waterdown, Braunston, and evidence (droppings) found in a garden at Brooke.
At Gibbets Gorse, RWNR a **Wood Mouse** made a brief appearance, seen by Tim Caldicott. There were a couple of Wood Mice in Marian's garden at Langham, and as usual many many more were seen on the trail camera during the spring-summer period of camera trapping at Cherry wood. There were few **Voles**, and even fewer **Common Shrews** in this part of RWNR. For the present we have finished this trapping project, but we shall restart in early autumn and hope to publish the overall results next spring.
The Water Vole monitoring is also going through a replanning session; all the old rafts taken in, and a lot of new ones produced to be located around the edge of the water in September. Any (reasonably fit) members with energy and interest would be welcome to come and see how it goes! Before removing the old rafts, a count was done showing tha**t Water Voles** are doing well in Snipe hide channel, Dog kennel stream and the pollards region of the reedbeds. A single Water Vole was observed at Waderscrape as it swam in front of the hide in June.
Many thanks to our reliable and stalwart recorders for your reports. I apologise for missing the last edition of Fieldfare. Holidays and computer difficulties conspired to prevent me getting it done in time.
Recorders this time: - A Biddle, Tim Caldicott, Charles Gallimore, Marian Markham, Terry Mitcham, John and Jacky Morrell, John Rodgers, Steve and Donnie Smalley and W. O. Smith

MOTHS

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June and July 2026

It is usual in most years for spring to be followed by a sudden and considerable increase in moth numbers from early June, and this year the trend has been especially marked with higher humidity levels triggering the emergence of local species, supplemented by influxes from southern areas and the continent. Some arrivals are regular, **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** reports were received from 10 locations, **Dark Sword-grass** and **Diamond-back Moth** appeared in traps, but the biggest numbers were of **Turnip Moth** which is locally common and a partial immigrant with one count of over 300 and substantive double-figure counts in other traps which were well above normal records. **Small Mottled Willow** is a species the recorder is less familiar with but has been seen in numbers in every trap this year; invasion years are sporadic but can be recorded in thousands when they occur and it will be interesting to see if local numbers are replicated elsewhere in the country.



Hummingbird Hawk-moth. Walk Farm Pickworth. Photo A Biddle

The hot weather has given good opportunities for trapping. The Lyndon trap was operated on 5 occasions, 92 species were recorded on 20th June including occasional species such as **Maple Prominent**, **Four-dotted Footman** and **Small Fan-foot**. The night of 26th June was part of the Rutland Water bioblitz and a humid night produced 98 species including **Peach Blossom**, **Buff Arches** and **Muslin Footman,** while 35 micro moth species among these, is the highest number recorded in one session. It must be said that digital technology apps, although not perfect, certainly help with speeding up identification. July counts were lower with 39 species on 5th July, 63 on 13th and 71 on 27th including **Maiden's Blush**, **Cream-bordered Green Pea** and a camouflaged **Coxcomb Prominent** on a nettle leaf. 25 micro species included a **Lesser Wax Moth** which feeds mainly on old wax in abandoned beehives.

Right: Blood vein. 28th July trapping. Photo R. Edwards





Left: Swallow Prominent. 28th July trapping. Photo R. Edwards

Bloody Oaks was trapped on 3 occasions using the battery trap, with each session producing over 35 species these including **Purple Bar**, **Lychnis**, **Orange**

Footman and **Gypsy Moth**, the latter a probable immigrant arrival but with a complex local history. Shacklewell Spinney was used on 24th July with 33 species recorded including **Black Arches**, **Canary-shouldered Thorn** and **Four-spotted**, a possible immigrant but a species now increasing locally and recorded again at Bloody Oaks 5 days later.

Reports of moths observed by day included **Clouded Silver** and a **Vapourer** caterpillar by the cycle track from Manton to Egleton in early June, **Brown Silver-line** in the Lyndon area on 1st June. **Knot Grass** appeared at Ketton Quarry on 14th June, **Dusky Sallow** and **Toadflax Brocade** in Langham on 22nd July and a **Magpie Moth** at Merry's Meadows on 26th July. **Scarlet Tiger** was reported regularly from 6 different locations.

Thank you to the following for submitting their records: - C Baxter, P Bennett, A Biddle, T Caldicott, R Edwards, Dr C Gallimore, M Grimes, A Lawrence, M Markham, T Sexton, P Scott, W Smith.

FIELD TRIPS

Tuesday 16th June, 10.30am. Seaton Coronation meadows with Andrew Kearsey.



Seaton meadows SSSI (one larger – one smaller) are situated in the Welland Valley floodplain and are bisected by the massive Seaton Viaduct which dates from the late1880's. It is one of sixty "Coronation meadows" originally set up by Plantlife and The Wildlife Trusts to celebrate the late Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee. The original sites were chosen to represent the best surviving fragments of ancient species rich grassland to be found in every county in the UK. With over 97% of wildflower meadows lost in the last century, these original Coronation Meadows (donor meadows) have gone on to create and restore many more depleted meadows (recipient) in the country by donating seed to increase biodiversity. The Coronation Meadow Project, as it is now called, has been a great conservation success with huge biodiversity increases across all taxa.

The entrance to the meadows is near one of the viaduct arches with limited car parking, so we had to gain permission from Network Rail to park underneath one of the arches where there was space for more cars to park. Around eight of us met up with Andrew Kearsey, the Nature Reserves Manager for Plantlife on a very warm day and headed towards the largest of the two meadows, showing the bulbous purple heads of Great Burnet against the skyline. Walking out to the centre, Andrew stopped to give us a brief history of the site and then pointed out that he had brought us to the middle, because this was the main area of flooding in the wintertime and is why the fauna and flora here is so unique. We recorded many flood meadow species in flower here, including Meadow Bedstraw, Yellow Rattle and Ragged Robin. Andrew drew our attention to the various Sedges and Rushes, so typical of boggy ground and then went on to describe how parts of the meadow are on higher ground, especially around the edges, supporting different species of flora like Ox-eye Daisy and Spear Thistle.

With time moving on, we were not able to explore the second smaller meadow, so Andrew concluded a very interesting morning by telling us more about Plantlife's efforts to increase the biodiversity of our meadows throughout the country and how Joe Costley, former Reserves Manager for Seaton meadows was involved with the restoration of meadow land on the Bulwick Estate nearby by harvesting green hay from here at our very own Coronation meadow.

Species list for Seaton meadows

Butterflies	Birds	Flowering Plants	Sedges, Grasses, Rushes
Meadow Brown *Maniola jurtina*	Whitethroat *Sylvia communis*	Common knapweed *Centaurea nigra*	Spike rush *Eleocharis palustris*
Small heath *Coenonympha pamphilus*	Skylark *Alauda arvensis*	Self heal *Prunella vulgaris*	Sharp flowered rush *Juncus acutiflorus*
	Chiffchaff *Phylloscopus-Collybita*	Yellow Rattle *Rhinanthis major*	Tufted hair grass *Deschampsia cespitosa*
	Blackcap *Sylvia atricapilla*	Greater Burnet *Sanguisorba officinalis*	False fox sedge *Carex otruba*
		Meadow Bedstraw *Gallium verum*	Crested dogstail *Cynosurus cristatus*
		Ragged Robin *Silene flos-cuculi*	Yorkshire fog *Holcus lanatus*
		Birds Foot Trefoil *Lotus corniculatus*	Perennial ryegrass *Lolium perenne*
		Meadow sweet *Filipendula ulmaria*	Creeping bent *Agrostis stolonifera*
		Meadow Vetchling *Latyrus pratensis*	Yellow oat grass *Trisetum flavescens*
		Mouse-eared chickweed *Cerastium fontanum*	
		Pepper saxifrage *Silaum silaus*	
		Creeping Cinquefoil Po*tentilla reptans*	
		Ladies bedstraw *Gallium verum*	
		Spear thistle *Cirsium vulgare*	
		Ox-eye daisy *Leucanthemum vulgare*	
		Autumn hawkbit *Scorzeroides autumnalis*	

Saturday 20th June, 11am. LRWT Wymondham Rough Nature Reserve.

Wymondham Rough is a superb little 15 acre SSSI nature reserve managed by Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. With a combination of poor drainage and drier areas containing woodland, grasses and marshes, the interesting mixture of habitats allows for a great range of plant and animal life. A portion of the reserve is over 300 years old. This was our second memorial walk dedicated to Jenny Harris who managed not only this reserve but several others for the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) until she retired.

Two of Jenny's friends joined fourteen members, with Juliette Calaco-Fournieres from LRWT kindly leading the walk for us. Our visit was timed a little later than usual, hoping to coincide with the variety of butterflies recorded on the site but at mid-morning, even though it was warm, heavy cloud cover was not a promising start. However, once through the gate and into the meadow, butterflies were soon forgotten – the meadow was ablaze with colour! Before we all went off to explore the meadow, Juliette said she had checked the site the week before and found three different species of orchid in flower, so in true "Where's Wally" fashion, we all set off to find the orchids amongst the sea of meadow flowers. It took us the whole two hours or more searching the site, finding and recording the orchids and flowering plants and just before we headed back to the gate, the cloud lifted for a moment, and we remembered the reason we had chosen Wymondham Rough for our late morning June visit. The butterflies came out from their hideouts to add more colour to this wonderfully special reserve.

Thankyou to Juliette for leading the walk and checking out the site beforehand. Below are some photos of the plants and animals we found there.



Bee Orchid. C. Baxter



Southern marsh Orchid. C Baxter

Sunday 5th July 10.30am. Visit to Grantham canal at Stathern with Dragonfly expert Ian Merrill.

With the weather promising to be sunny and warm (ideal conditions for both Damselflies and Dragonflies), a morning spent at Grantham canal with Dragonfly expert Ian Merrill was a day to look forward to. Unfortunately, the canal at our original venue near Dove cottage car park was completely choked with vegetation. There was no sign of water, so Ian took the decision to move on to Muston where he'd been told the canal still held water. Before we set off, Ian gave a short introduction to the life cycles and species we were likely to find in this still water habitat. Unfortunately, the weather stayed cloudy for most of the morning, making Dragonfly spotting more difficult. Many were settled for most of the time on or amongst the vegetation, so it took a keen eye to find them.

Our first discovery was the **Willow -emerald Damselfly** which Ian was hoping to find here. This is a species that seems to have benefitted from the warming climate, first seen in Rutland in 2019 and has since spread rapidly. We must have found at least half a dozen or so in this short stretch of canal. Ian showed us an interesting willow stick not much thicker than a thumbs width with what looked like perforations along its length. These are ovipositing scars made by the female Willow emerald where she lays her eggs and when they hatch, they drop into the water to continue their life cycle.

Further along we came across the blue and black bodied damselflies, easy to identify to species if you can catch them at rest and with a good pair of binoculars. We found two different species – the **Blue-tailed Damselfly**, by far the commonest of these lookalikes and probably the easiest to identify with an all-black abdomen and noticeable blue tip. The **Variable Damselfly** was another much rarer damselfly which Ian was very pleased show us and when we photographed it, Ian was able to point out the key I.D. feature that separates it from other blue damselflies: two broken blue thoracic stripes shaped like a pair of exclamation marks.

Further out in the murky still water a female **Emperor Dragonfly** was busy at work, dipping her ovipositor into the surface to lay her eggs and later still, when the sun came out briefly, more dragonflies began to make an appearance. Two darter species, despite their similar appearance were confidently identified by Ian. A female **Common Darter** perching long enough to verify the diagnostic feature for this species, was identified by the yellow stripe along the legs, which contrasted with the all-black legs of the **Ruddy Darter** which we spotted just a few moments later.

As time wore on, and the cloud cover stubbornly remained, it became clear that the species we had seen that morning, would probably be the only ones we would see that day, so after thanking Ian for leading us with some helpful I.D. tips, we made our way back home.

Below is a list of other Fauna and Flora seen on our walk along the canal at Muston.

Dragonflies and Damselflies	**Botany**	**Birds**	**Insects**
Willow Emerald Damselfly.	Yellow Loosetrife	Sedge warbler	Red Admiral butterfly x2
Blue-tailed Damselfly	Meadowsweet	House sparrow	Holly Blue butterfly
Variable Damselfly	Great Willowherb	Blackbird	Gatekeeper butterfly
Emperor Dragonfly	Water mint	Moorhen and chicks	Common Soldier Beetle
Common Darter Dragonfly	Tufted Vetch		
Ruddy Darter Dragonfly			



Left: Male Ruddy Darter.

Right: Blue-tailed Damselfly

C. Baxter





Left: Azure Damselflies.

Right: Common Darter

C. Baxter



Saturday 18th July, 10am. Ospreys at Rutland Water Lyndon



We were delighted to team up with a small party of church members from Ridlington and Manton this year, to see the Ospreys at Lyndon before they make their long trek back to Senegal for the Winter. The weather, thankfully, was cooler than it had been the previous week and our fifteen-minute trot down to Waderscrape hide was breezy and pleasantly chatty. The two hides – Waderscrape and Shallow water, are where viewing the Ospreys at this time of year out on the bay can be guaranteed. Peter, Dave and I had already spoken briefly about how the original Osprey translocation thirty years ago had resulted in Rutland birds now breeding in many areas of the county and country and when we reached Waderscrape hide, there were more information panels on display for us to read. The Trust has recently made a new role for Rutland Water Volunteers called "Information Rangers" who go around the reserve sharing their knowledge about its history, information about latest sightings etc. and there was a lovely lady in the hide there on Saturday who took the trouble to answer questions and give lots of additional information about the Osprey Project to add more interest to the morning.

Waderscrape hide is also equipped with a large, live webcam of the nesting platform overlooking the water, where you can pick up the smaller details which you possibly wouldn't see while looking through binoculars. While we were there, Maya was sitting on the Manton Bay nest with her back to us, picking at the remnants, no doubt of the last fishy meal brought in, while two of the now fully grown juveniles were sitting behind her. After a while, one juvenile flew off and Maya repositioned herself so that we could see her face looking out across the bay, swivelling her neck first left and then right to see exactly what was going on around her. Occasionally you would see the youngster's beak mumbling something quietly and then a response from Maya as she sat scanning the landscape with those piercing yellow eyes. Maybe they were waiting for the adult male to return with lunch!

Out on the bay, one of the juveniles was sitting on top of the long pole close to the nest site as if it were the nominated lookout, while two others were sitting together on the dead tree also nearby. They were waiting. I was told that it was too dangerous for the youngsters to try fishing for themselves over the water but would wait for the adult male to provide until the young were strong enough to take their 3000-mile journey south. Maya would go next and then when all the family were gone, 33 would leave, hopefully with all five making it safely back south to warmer climes.

We stayed for around an hour watching these magnificent "Fish Hawks", which 150 years ago (when times were different to how they are now), were admired by our ancestors by shooting and stuffing them whenever they were spotted over the Rutland skies or stopping off to rest on their migratory path north or south. How times have changed! The making of Rutland Water has provded a wonderful habitat for them to safely stay and breed.

Social media records.

Traffic calming in Rutland!



Spotted by Kate Fortune Jones at Normanton. July

..and another by Sarah Bedford at Whitwell. also in July



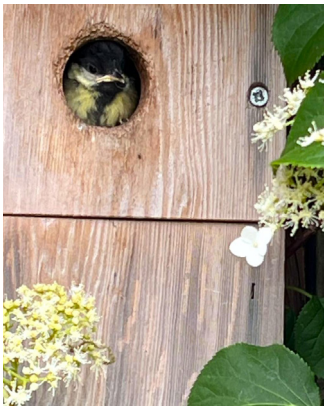
OTHER NEWS



Fox. Back garden Oakham. J. Rodgers



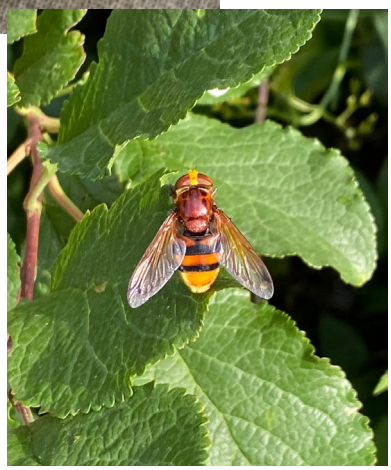
Oak Bush Cricket. Braunston T Marston



Fledged Great-tit. Ridlington. J Morrell



Black-tailed Skimmer. Pickworth. A Biddle.



Hornet mimic fly. Exton. J. Walker

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