



Water bird workshop, Exton, September 27, Anthony Biddle

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With this *Fieldfare* • your 72-page ***Annual Report 2014***
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It's been a good autumn! The September Water Bird workshop at Exton (see photo above) and the Fungal Foray at Clipsham were both educational and enjoyable, and well supported by members, bringing to an end the season of 'workshops', which have been a great success thanks to our Recorders.

A huge thank you to all who contributed to the *Annual Report 2014* (delivered with this *Fieldfare*), and to Hendrina Ellis who edited it. There is a vast amount of work in this comprehensive document about the wildlife of Rutland.

In *Fieldfare* there is an innovation – the *Annual Programme 2016* on page 20, covering indoor and outdoor activities, so you can plan the year ahead. Further details of events will appear on the website and inside *Fieldfare* during the year.

Page 3 gives details of the French trip to the Morvan in June (note change of date), join us if you can.

Finally, we are delighted that on 28th November a new society will be launched at Rutland Water. RNHS is collaborating with LRWT in the formation of **Wild Futures**, a society for people of 18–30 with enthusiasm for the natural world who wish to develop their knowledge and skills and who may want to pursue a career in wildlife conservation or related fields. Becky Corby of the Rutland Water Volunteer Training Centre has written an introduction to **Wild Futures** on page 2.

Linda Biddle, Chairman

Wild Futures – setting up a new Society



We – the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) and the Rutland Natural History Society – are currently setting up a new Society, to be called *Wild Futures*, based at Rutland Water Nature Reserve, for people aged 18–30 who have a general love of the natural world and who may be embarking on a career in wildlife conservation or related fields. It will provide members with the opportunity to be part of a wildlife-focused social network in Rutland, gain knowledge and experience, and have access to mentors with a variety of expertise through its connections within the LRWT and the RNHS.

Wild Futures will hopefully attract young volunteers previously involved in Rutland Water Nature Reserve's (RWNR) *Wild Skills* group (for 13-18 year-olds), as well as Trainee Reserve Officers past and present, work placement students from Brooksby and other local colleges/universities and other people engaged through activities at the Volunteer Training Centre.

The overall aim of *Wild Futures* is to create opportunities that encourage knowledge exchange between generations. By investing knowledge through a programme of talks, workshops, field and practical experience, as well as advice and coaching by mentors, LRWT and RNHS will create a pool of people equipped with a range of broad wildlife knowledge and the practical and transferable skills needed for a career in the conservation sector. These people will then hopefully go on to be the members, volunteers, trainees and staff of LRWT and RNHS of the future, and in turn invest their knowledge and skills in the next generation of *Wild Futures* members.

Membership will be by subscription (£25.00 per year) and will include membership to both RNHS and LRWT. The group will meet on a bi-monthly basis, at the weekend at the Volunteer Training Centre (as this will suit those at university/working), plus any other trips, talks, etc., the society want to organise in between. Membership to both LRWT and RNHS would give access to both organisations' programme of talks, activities, and newsletters etc.

This is a local project, for local people, about investing knowledge and skills in those who will go on to continue our work into the future, and we hope that the RNHS will be able to take a full and active part.

Becky Corby becky@rutlandwater.org.uk



A *Wild Futures* member, Amelia Woolford, with Sir David Attenborough on the day of the official opening of the Volunteer Training Centre



Volunteer Training Centre LRWT, Eric Renno

RNHS French trip to Bourgogne 2016

Tuesday 14 June to Monday 20 June (note change of date from that initially announced)



Next year a group of RNHS members are heading to France for an overseas Society trip, and will be based in Château-Chinon, the principal town of the Morvan, an ancient wooded highland area in Burgundy. It's unspoilt, thinly populated, quiet and very lovely. To the south it's bordered by the Loire, and other important waterways run through or near it. It's a key place in French history, being a stronghold of Gallic tribes and subsequently the Romans, and important historical sites from both those eras, and more, are everywhere. In more recent times, it was a stronghold for French resistance fighters in the Second World War.



The lovely farmland to the south is the homeland of Charolais cattle, and herds can be seen everywhere. As the land gets higher, it becomes thickly-wooded, and although much of that woodland is nowadays coniferous, there are still large areas of ancient woodland, especially beech and oak. There are many important areas of sphagnum bog, and other forms of acid grassland, with attendant flora and fauna. Much of the Morvan is designated a Natura 2000 site, because of the protected species found there.

Our aim will be to travel around different parts of the general area, visiting sites recommended for their wildlife value. The outline itinerary is as follows (the exact order of days will be confirmed to participants later):



- 1 Château-Chinon and the surrounding area, including a walk through ancient woodland to the source of the River Yonne, and also to les Gorges de Canche, where the unusual microclimate means that a woodland mix characteristic of 5000 years ago, with its maples and limes, still flourishes.
- 2 Exploring the Morvan: La Tourbière de Champ Gazon (sphagnum bog), and les Prairies paratourbeuses de Montour (marshy/boggy acid grassland)
- 3 The Canal du Nivernais and the surrounding area - riverine habitat very good for invertebrates and birds - with hopefully a visit to the RNHS President Joss Hanbury's farm.



- 4 Exploring the Loire – a visit to the Réserve Naturelle de la Loire, for birding along the river-banks and the many sandbanks (terns especially important). Later, visits to two more nature reserves: le Coteau de Chaumoisis (calcareous grassland) and La Domaine de la Beue (damp grassland and reedbeds)
- 5 Les Mardelles et Tourbières de Prémery – sphagnum bog habitat to the west of the Morvan

We will be spotting additional areas to explore as we travel around. There will also be the possibility to visit other places of interest, for instance:

The Morvan Eco-museum

The Museum of the Resistance

The Museum of Charolais breeding and farming

The Gallo-Roman fortress of Bibracte on Mont Beuvray, an archaeological site of staggering size.



The initial hotel booking for the group has been made. The dates have changed, so if anyone still wishes to join, we can try to get further hotel bookings, but can't guarantee this. (There are other hotels in Château-Chinon.) All participants make their own way there and back, which can be by own car, fly-drive, or train (this option is dependent on there being enough spare capacity within the transport of the group). Please contact Linda Biddle for more information if you are interested.

A selection of photographs from the visit by Ann and Linda in July of this year can be seen on the RNHS website, or on Flickr here:

<https://www.flickr.com/photos/annabelindah2/albums/72157660781553405>

Ann Tomlinson

DIARY DATES

RNHS FIELD TRIPS

Full details of all these events can be found on our website at www.rnhs.org.uk. If the weather is bad, please call the 'Queries' phone number in case of cancellation, or check the website.

Sunday January 10, 10.30 am

First walk of the year at Hambleton Peninsula

Led by Linda Biddle, enjoy a bracing walk – it can be very cold by Rutland Water, wear warm clothes and waterproof walking boots or wellingtons. We have permission to park in the Fishermans' Car Park; turn right by the church, go through the gates, over two cattle grids, parking is further along on the left. (Grid ref: SK902071.) Queries: Linda on 01780 762108

Sunday February 21, 10.00 am

Winter water birds at Rutland Water

Led by Lloyd Park. Meet at Egleton Reserve Car Park – warm clothes and waterproof boots as above. There may be a charge for a reserve permit. Queries: Ann Tomlinson, 01780 721622

RNHS EVENING MEETINGS

These take place at Voluntary Action Rutland (VAR), Lands End Way, Oakham LE15 6RB. Tea and coffee, free.

Tuesday December 1, 7.30 pm

A year in the life of a wildlife photographer

By Steve Houghton, Wildlife Police Officer and photographer from Leicestershire.

Tuesday January 5, 7.30 pm

Wildlife of Costa Rica

By John and Viv Mitchell, RNHS members, an illustrated talk about this fascinating and biodiverse country.

Tuesday February 2, 7.30 pm

Meadowland

By Michael Jeeves, Head of Conservation with Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, an illustrated talk on this important aspect of the countryside.

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST, RUTLAND GROUP

For events in Leicestershire and Rutland see www.lrwt.org.uk or phone 0116 262 9968. The venue for indoor events is moving from the Bird Watching Centre, Egleton (2015), to the Volunteer Training Centre, Hambledon Road, LE15 8AD, in 2016. Entry £1.

Monday December 14, 7.30 pm

Fish in Rutland

Wildlife photographer Jack Perks will be talking about fish in Rutland. Yuletide refreshments will be provided! *This event is the last to be held at the Bird Watching Centre, Egleton.*

Monday January 18, 7.30 pm

The ups and downs of Barnack Hills and Holes

A talk by Chris Gardiner, Senior Reserve Manager at Natural England, who has looked after this lovely NNR for many years. *From this date on, evening events in 2016 are being held at the Volunteer Training Centre, Hambledon Road, LE15 8AD.*

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST, BOURNE GROUP

For details of LWT Lincstrust events, see www.lincstrust.org.uk, or phone 01507 526677 in office hours. Bourne group events are held at the Methodist Church Hall, Bourne.

Thursday February 11, 7.30 pm

A year in the life of a bluebell wood

Dr David Sheppard is the Volunteer Reserve Manager at Rigsby Wood nature reserve. He will talk about the wood and its varied wildlife through the year.

September 2015

Atmospheric pressure and wind

There was a period of high pressure from the 5th to the 10th, and this was followed by a spell of low pressure to the 18th, during which time the month's lowest pressure – 993 mb – occurred on the 16th. From the 25th to the end of the month there was a typical anticyclone with high pressures, wind speeds low or zero and often clear skies. There were however some cool, misty mornings with considerable deposits of dew. Winds were NW-E from the start until the 11th, then variable until the anticyclone referred to above, when they were generally westerly.

Temperature

A very cool month, the mean minimum at 13.4 °C was the lowest for September in the decade 2006-15 and the mean maximum, 18.9 °C, was the 7th lowest in the same period. A notable feature were low minima, unusual at this time of year, for example 4.3 °C on 4-5th and a series of three in the anticyclonic episode above, namely 3.5 °C on 24-25th and 4.0 °C on 25-26th and 26-27th.

Rain

A dry month with a total recorded here of 29.1 mm (1.21 inches) which is 58% of my long-term mean of 25 years. There was a relatively wet week, the 11th-17th, in which 14.3 mm or 49% of the month's rain fell, but in the last 7 days of the month, in the high-pressure period referred to, no rain fell.

Earth tremors

There have been three reported in Rutland this year, the first on January 25th, which I mentioned at the time, then two more since. There was a 0.8 Richter on May 26th and then a 2.8 Richter at about 22.40 hours on Tuesday 22nd of this month. It occurred about 2 km below Cottesmore and the effects were felt further afield, including in Stamford and Melton Mowbray. No serious damage was reported.

October 2015

Atmospheric pressure and wind

Pressure started high, in fact the month's highest, 1033.5 mb, was on the 1st but 5 days later the month's lowest, 999 mb, occurred on the 6th. The rest of the month was generally anticyclonic and this was reflected in wind speeds, which were generally low, although there were 3 days, the last in the month, when winds were gusty up to 10-14 knots at 09.00 hours. Wind directions were broadly N-E up the 19th and then SE-W for the rest of the month.

Temperature

Not an exceptional month, the overall mean, 11.32 °C, was 5th in the decade 2006-2015. The lowest minimum was 0.6 °C, which was on the night of 24th-25th, and the previous night was also cold at 2.5 °C. The highest daytime maximum was 21.5 °C on the 30th.

Rain

The total here for the month was 57.7 mm (2.27 inches) which is 91% of my long-term mean of 25 years. No rain was detected on 15 days and on a further 8 days amounts were below 1 mm.

My source for national figures has dried up and at the moment I have been unable to find another source.

Christmas books with a natural history angle

Two books I highly recommend: Nick Davies (2015) *Cuckoo: cheating by Nature*, published by Bloomsbury. Beautifully written, scientifically rigorous, opening a new world of animal behaviour – and based on field work at Wicken Fen.

and

Mark Cocker (2014) *Claxton*, published by Jonathan Cape. A collection of 'Country diary' type essays, based on his local countryside in Norfolk but sometimes further afield, arranged month by month. Great writing, a constant delight, and so good to pick up when sleepless!

Hendrina Ellis

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

*The Stone House, Reeves Lane, Wing LE15 8SD. Telephone: 01572 737343.
E-mail: chasgall@hotmail.com*

July to October 2015



Smooth newt, Peter Scott

My apologies for failing to produce a report for the last *Fieldfare* due to domestic commitments.

Although there have been no records of Adders in the four months, all the other herps have been seen at least once.

There were only two records of **Frogs**, one in wet woodland at Rutland Water Nature Reserve in August and one in a Wing kitchen in September. **Toads**, on the other hand, were seen in all four months. There were toadlets in a Wing garden in July, and they were seen in Leighfield and at Prior's Coppice in August. A dead toad was found at Leighfield in September and two further road casualties were found in Wing in October. Finally a toad was disturbed under one of the reptile sheets at Rutland Water on 29th October. There were not as many road casualties this year, although there could be many reasons for this.

The only newt records were of **Smooth Newts** in a Wing pond and a male **Great Crested Newt** sheltering under a bucket in my garden in Wing in October.

A **Viviparous Lizard** was seen basking at Ketton Quarry on July 11th and a **Slow Worm** was found in an Egleton garden in July.

Grass Snakes were reported from Exton, Leighfield, Ketton, Ryhall and Wing in July, August and September, although two of these were deceased. At Rutland Water six were seen in July but none after July 30th. The reptile squares were inspected eight times during the four months and although grass snakes were only found under five squares on two occasions, the squares did reveal four species of small mammal plus a toad (and numerous ants).

My thanks to T P Appleton, T Caldicott, M Grimes, A Hill, R Lemmon and T Mitcham for their records.

BIRDS

RECORDER Terry Mitcham

*30 Sutherland Way, Stamford PE9 2TB. Telephone: 01780 751268.
E-mail: joterpat@btinternet.com*

September/October 2015



Waxwing, Peter Scott

The overlap between summer and winter is always interesting for bird watchers and this year proved to be no exception, with many scarce or rare species passing through the county – Brent Goose, Spoonbill, Glossy Ibis, American Golden Plover, Jack Snipe, Great Skua, Wryneck and Great Grey Shrike, Bearded Tit and Woodlark. Rutland Water attracted its regular Black-necked and Red-necked Grebes and the first winter swans dropped in at Eyebrook. There was a good passage of Whinchats and an improved showing by Stonechats, which have been scarcer in recent winters. By the end of October Redwings and Fieldfares were with us – will they be joined later by Waxwings? Let's hope so!

My thanks to the following for their records: T Appleton, P Bennett, M Branston, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, Dr C H Gallimore, M & G Griffin, M Grimes, A H J Harrop, LROS, I Misselbrook, T Mitcham, B Moore, P Rudkin, RWNR, D Trevor, L Worrall

See also Wildfowl Counts on page 10.

Abbreviations and map references are given in the *Annual Report 2014*, on page 72 and the inside back cover.

Bewick's Swan
Whooper Swan
Pink-footed Goose
Greylag Goose

Two were at EBR on 27.10.

Two were at EBR on 14.10, with three different birds next day.

Birds were heard over Leigh on 26.09. One was with Greylags at FHP on 11.10, 60 flew over Leigh on 14.10, and two were in RWNA on 30.10.

413 were at FHP on 11.10.

Barnacle Goose	22 flew over Leigh on 19.09, and five were at Martinsthorpe on 29.09.
Brent Goose	One was at EBR on 21.10.
Mandarin Duck	A female was at FHP on 20.09 and 11.10.
Teal	c.400 flew over LFP on 25.09, with c.300 over there on 11.10.
Pintail	Present at FHP throughout September to 17.10, with four on 02.10 and 17.10.
Garganey	One was at RWMan Bay between 09 and 18.10.
Red-crested Pochard	At RW there was one on 09.09, six on 12.09 and three on 30.10. EBR had one on 23.10 and six on 27.10.
Scaup	One or two were at RWWhit/OldHall between 02 and 16.10.
Common Scoter	A male was in RWSA on 16.09.
Red-legged Partridge	There was a covey of 32 on the road near Lynd on 18.10.
Grey Partridge	In Ext Park there were eight on 05.09 and 15 on 19.10.
Bittern	One was seen irregularly at RWEg from 23.09, with two noted on 17.10.
Little Egret	Reported from both reservoirs and Banthorpe GP, where there were 7 on 23.09.
Great White Egret	One or two were regular at RWEg/Man Bay throughout both months, with one at EBR on 05.10.
Glossy Ibis	One of the highlights of these months was one at LFP, which flew north.
Spoonbill	One was at RWSA on 01.09, and a long-staying juvenile was at EBR from 01.10 to 20.10.
Red-necked Grebe	One was at RWNA/Dam from 06.09 to the end of October.
Slavonian Grebe	One was at RWNA on 29/30.10.
Black-necked Grebe	One was in RWNA on 01.09, with two from 04.09 to the end of October.
Marsh Harrier	Singles were at RW between 13/19.09 and 30.09 and 01.10, and in Ext Park on 27.09.
Peregrine	Singles were on a pylon at Martinsthorpe on 12 and 26.09, and on the dovecote in Ext Park on 17.10.
Merlin	One was chasing Skylarks in Ext Park on 13.09, and one was at EBR on 30.09.
Hobby	There were September records of singles over Bden, Stam, Ext Park, EBR and RWEg, with the last there on 23.09.
Water Rail	One called at LFP on 11 and 14.10.
American Golden Plover	One was at EBR between 22 and 28.10. This is the second county record; the first was at RW in November 1996.
Golden Plover	Eight were at EBR on 12.10, with 32 on 18.10. c.150 were at RWEg on 30.10.
Grey Plover	One was at EBR on 01.09, eleven flew over RWNA on 22.09, with one over BW next day.
Lapwing	RW counts were 365 on 13.09, and 335 on 18.10. At EBR there were 220 on 13.09 and 210 on 18.10.
Little Ringed Plover	Three were at EBR on 01.09.
Ringed Plover	Present throughout September at both reservoirs, with 27 at EBR on 01.09 and 20 on 06.09. The only October record was one at RW on 18.10.
Whimbrel	One flew over LFP on 08.09.
Curlew	Nine were present on RW counts on 13.09 and 18.10.
Black-tailed Godwit	Up to four were at RWEg between 05 and 25.09, with two at EBR on 20.10 and one on 27.10.
Knot	A juvenile was at EBR on 14.09.
Ruff	At EBR present from 01 to 27.09, with a max of 18 on 12.09. RW had fewer birds between 06.09 and 18.10, with seven on 24.09.
Curlew Sandpiper	Two were at EBR on 01.09.
Sanderling	One was at EBR on 05.09.
Dunlin	Numbers were quite low with peaks of 15 at EBR on 06.09, and three at RW on 25.09. Present at both sites throughout both months.

Little Stint	Two were at EBR on 04.10.
Common Sandpiper	At EBR there were five on 01.09, with reduced numbers to 12.09, and five again next day. One was at FHP on 12.09. Seven were at RW on 13.09.
Green Sandpiper	One was at LFP on 02.09. Present at RW throughout both months with 11 on 13.09, and four on 18.10. At FHP there were two on 04.09, with one fairly regularly to 17.10.
Spotted Redshank	Singles were at RWEg on 04 and EBR on 08.09.
Greenshank	Present at EBR to 14.09, with a peak of four on 04 and 12.09. There were two at RW on 13.09 and one on 01.10.
Jack Snipe	One was at EBR on 29.09, with regular sightings between 04 and 09.10, and on 17/18.10.
Snipe	RW counts were ten on 13.09 and 13 on 18.10. One was at Banthorpe GP on 24.09 and two were at EBR on 18.10.
Great Skua	Singles were at RWSA on 08 and RWNA on 13.09.
Little Tern	Singles were at RWSA on 16.09 and EBR on 19.09.
Black Tern	Four were at EBR on 11.09, with one on 12/13.09. Three were at RW on 13.09, with singles 15/16 and 28.09.
Common Tern	Four were at RW on 13.09.
Arctic Tern	A juvenile was at RW on 28.09.
Little Gull	Singles were noted at RW on three dates between 01 and 21.09.
Mediterranean Gull	Singles were at RWEg on 05.09, and the dam on 22.09, with singles at EBR on 09 and 22.10.
Yellow-legged Gull	Four were at RW on 13.09, with one on 30.10. One at FHP on 23.10 was unexpected.
Barn Owl	One was on roadkill near Bden on 03.10, and one was near Brk on 09.10.
Little Owl	Singles were at Emp on 04.09, Tin on 24.09, Banthorpe GP on 01.10, and Seat on 03.10.
Tawny Owl	One was near Bden on 03.10, and calling birds were near Ryhall on 01 and RWEg (three) on 03 and 18.10.
Short-eared Owl	One flew west over Banthorpe GP on 01.10.
Kingfisher	Singles were at FHP on 26.09, EBR on 12.10, and Stam town bridge on 24.10.
Wryneck	One was ringed at RWEg on 08.09.
Green Woodpecker	Two were at QF on 28.09. Regularly seen and heard at FHP in both months.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	The only records were from Tin on 24 and QF on 28.09.
Great Grey Shrike	One passed through RWEg on 19.10.
Raven	15 were noted in the Leigh area on 18.09. A pair flew SW over QF on 28.09, and there were pairs in Ext Park on 11.10 and at FHP on 19.10. One was at Wg on 18.09.
Willow Tit	One was at Martinsthorpe on 25.09 and one or two were at LFP in both months.
Marsh Tit	One fed on thistle seed at RWBarns on 22.09.
Bearded Tit	Two elusive birds were heard and occasionally seen at RWEg from 12.10.
Woodlark	Singles flew over Leigh on 26 and Tix on 27.09.
Skylark	c.30 were 'skylarking' over stubble in Ext Park on 19.09.
Sand Martin	The only last date noted was of five at EBR on 05.09.
Swallow	A nesting site in Bden was vacated on 15.09. One over RWEg on 24.10 was the final record.
House Martin	A flock of c.50 over Bden on 07.09 were scattered by a hunting Hobby. One at RWWhit on 18.10 was the latest record.
Cetti's Warbler	One called at LFP on 11.10 and four were heard at RWEg on 18.10.
Chiffchaff	The latest birds were five at FHP on 11.10.
Willow Warbler	One was in song at RWEg on 24.09, our final record.

Blackcap	Three were at QF on 28.09.
Whitethroat	There were September records from FHP and QF with the last there on 28.09.
Lesser Whitethroat	One was at FHP on 12.09 and one remained at RWEg from 30.09 to 07.10.
Reed Warbler	A late bird was at RWEg on 03.10.
Fieldfare	In October there were three at Leigh on 12 and four at Ext on 19. c.50 were over Borderville on 27 and c.400 were grounded in fog at LFP on 31.10.
Redwing	The only records were of two over Leigh on 29.09, 12 at RWLynd on 18.10, and c.20 at FHP on 23.10.
Mistle Thrush	Flocks of 15 and 20 were at LFP on 11 and 23.10 respectively.
Spotted Flycatcher	There were September records up to 22.09 from LyndW, BW, Brk, and RWEg of up to three, but the last was at FHP on 27.09.
Robin	c.52 were counted around the south side of RWEg reserve on 24.09 as birds established their winter territories, with 44 noted there on 28.09.
Redstart	A male was near Brk on 02.09 and a female at Martinsthorpe next day.
Whinchat	The main passage period was between 04 and 22.09, with birds noted at EBR, RW, Ext Park, Luff Airfield and Martinsthorpe. Peak counts were five at Luff on 05.06 and at EBR on 08. Four were at RW on 16.09. A late bird was at EBR on 10.10.
Stonechat	Birds were noted at similar sites to Whinchats but mainly throughout October. In September there were singles at Martinsthorpe on 06 and Leigh on 18, with two at RWEg on 24. October birds were at RW (two), EBR (three on 09) and Luff Airfield, FHP and LFP, where singles were noted.
Wheatear	Autumn passage extended from 07.09 to 20.10, with one or two at FHP, Martinsthorpe and RWEg. The main site was Luff Airfield, where there were 17 on 18.09. The last was at Martinsthorpe.
House Sparrow	One or two returned to feeders at Park House, Norm, in September for the first time in many months.
Tree Sparrow	Three were on feeders at Park House, Norm, on 05.10.
Yellow Wagtail	Singles were over Leigh on 29.09, with one at Martinsthorpe next day and the last at RWEg on 30.09.
Grey Wagtail	One or two were noted at RW, EBR, FHP and Norm between 13.09 and 30.10.
Pied Wagtail	c.80 flew from a reedbed roost at LFP on 22.10.
Tree Pipit	Singles flew over Leigh on 02 and 06.09.
Meadow Pipit	c.95 flew over Leigh on 20.09 and there were 15 at QF on 28.09.
Rock Pipit	Two were at RW dam on 29.09 with one there on 13.10. Singles were also at EBR and LFP on 12.10, and EBR on 18.10.
Brambling	Three over Leigh on 14.10 were the first. From the following day to 29.10, birds were noted at RWGorse Close and Ggorse, Leigh and a Man garden, where four fed around feeders on 16 and 18.10. Six were over Leigh on 23.10.
Goldfinch	60 fed on thistles at QF on 28.09, whilst in an Oak garden up to 21 were present between 09 and 18.10.
Siskin	One was over Stam on 08.09 with four at RWBFP on 13.09 and three over Ext on 19.10.
Linnet	Well reported from the Martinsthorpe area from 18.09, with 150 present on that date increasing to c.200 on 19.10.
Lesser Redpoll	One over Leigh on 02.09 was the first of the autumn. From 12.10 onwards, c.60 were at LFP and there were 18 near HM on 23.10.
Common Crossbill	Two flew NW at Martinsthorpe on 29.09.
Yellowhammer	c.30 were along a scrubby bank in Ext Park on 11.10.
Reed Bunting	21 were noted at Leigh on 29.09.

Wildfowl Counts – September and October 2015

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook		Fort Henry Ponds/Exton		Banthorpe Gravel Pit		Holywell Hall Lake	
	13.09	18.10	13.09	18.10	12.09	17.10	10.09	15.10	13.09	17.10
Mute Swan	537	307	91	90	8	5	5	5	2	2
Greylag Goose	1131	910	390	315		1		10	91	68
Canada Goose	1408	377	102	16	6				13	36
Barnacle Goose	16	17								
Egyptian Goose	124	71			2					
Shelduck	2	4	1	1						
Mandarin Duck						1				
Wigeon	1721	2512	17	111	3	20				
Gadwall	703	764	10	29	63	85			1	4
Teal	745	821	156	272	38	43	18	50		2
Mallard	1409	1034	547	103	119	174	52	31	82	48
Pintail	51	117	3	4	3	4		1		
Garganey		1								
Shoveler	252	288	1	5	35	31			1	
Red-crested Pochard	6	1	3							
Pochard	78	42	1	64	1					
Tufted Duck	8141	2601	25	310	4	18			5	5
Goldeneye	6	23		2						
Cormorant	502	285	21	51		1		1		
Bittern		2								
Little Egret	84	59	10	3			7	1		
Great White Egret	3	2								
Grey Heron	20	23	4	4	3	2	3	1	1	
Spoonbill				1						
Little Grebe	150	117	3	5	1	4			17	5
Great Crested Grebe	425	378	31	47		1				
Red-necked Grebe		1								
Black-necked Grebe	2	2								
Water Rail	12	12								
Moorhen	131	190	5	4	48	41			19	17
Coot	2391	2054	46	186	78	81			3	4
Kingfisher	4	3	2	2					1	2
TOTAL	18660	12714	1469	1625	412	512	85	100	234	193

November 2015



RECORDER John Rodgers

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Autumn arrives with some glorious colours and a mild aspect so that there are still numerous plants holding flower, or like some, chancing their arm (if that's possible for a plant) and trying to produce seeds before the winter really sets in. I'm watching a wavy bittercress in my garden to see if it will win. The most opportunistic plants are often thought of as weeds. There is white and red dead-nettle, bristly ox-tongue, groundsel, red campion, daisy, dandelion and one of the many yellow dandelion things that I haven't yet been able to identify, all growing by the Oakham bypass near the railway bridge. I wonder what else will try to flower, and if the weather stays mild, how will we be able to tell if a flower is this year's or next year's coming early?

Not many records this time which is to be expected. We had **Water Chickweed** at Eyebrook, **Night flowering Catchfly** from Great Casterton and **Blue Fleabane**, **Tufted Vetch** and **Harebell** at or in Pickworth wood at the end of October.

Somebody asked about wild flower guides. There are so many available and what to buy depends on how you use it. Some are quite heavy and not easy to manage out on a field trip but fine for when you are back home. The true botanists pooh pooh having a guide which lets you start with the colour of the flowers but for a casual beginner it's not a bad way to begin. Graham held a copy of **Collins Pocket Guide Wild Flowers of Britain and Northern Europe** by **Fitter, Fitter** and **Blamey** which belongs to the Society, which I have. It is one that Jan and I have used many times, but I have to admit we have several different guides; looking through them all for a particular plant takes a long time and is frustrating. I have come across a little guide which aims to get you to identify the family a flower belongs to. This is the first step in recognising flowers in the way botanists do. It's a very good little guide which will be published in the new year: **A Pocket Guide to Wild Flower Families** by **Dr Faith Anstey**. There is also another book, not a guide but an introduction to enjoying flowers, which the same author wrote two or three years ago: **Flowers in the Field – How to find identify and enjoy wild flowers**. I haven't seen it as yet but if it is like the little guide I've mentioned should be very useful in encouraging newcomers. The author does a lot of work teaching flower identification to beginners. The thing to do is to look at a number of guides and pick one as a starter that suits you and then go from there. There is a good selection in the Bird Watching Centre at Egleton.

My thanks to the following for their records: A and L Biddle, M Grimes, R Lemmon, R Edwards, JSR.

BUTTERFLIES

September/October 2015



Small Copper, Peter Scott

RECORDER Alistair Lawrence

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The warm days of September and early October saw increased butterfly activities and, in the case of the **Speckled Wood**, in greater number than at any previous time this year. Other summer species were also still being seen on the wing well into September.

Sightings of **Brimstone** in September came from Ketton Quarry, Clipsham Park Wood and Market Overton. During September reports of **Large White** came from Ketton Quarry, RW Egleton and Ryhall, with 4 also recorded at Exton on 13 September.

Small Whites have been seen regularly at the quarries and reserves with the highest count being 4 at Ketton Quarry on 10 September. Reports of Green Veined White came from Eyebrook, where 3 were seen on the 1st September, and also Ketton Quarry, Quarry Farm and RW Egleton.

A single **Small Copper** was seen at Bloody Oaks reserve on 11 September and a single **Brown Argus** was recorded at Quarry Farm on the same day.



Comma, field outing, Exton, September 27, Penny Robinson

Common Blues continued to be observed on the wing well into September from a variety of locations, with 7 being the highest number reported from Quarry Farm on the 3rd.

Red Admirals have been seen at a number of sites including Manton, Exton and Ridlington, whilst 4 were counted at Market Overton and 5 at Quarry Farm on 11 September.

There were single sightings of **Painted Lady** well into September and reports came from Eyebrook, Ketton Quarry, Manton and Quarry Farm.

Small Tortoiseshells were seen at RW Egleton and Lyndon during September, with 5 counted at Market Overton. There was also a single sighting at RW Lyndon on 4 October.

Peacock – during September there were single sightings of this species at Market Overton, Ketton Quarry, Quarry Farm and RW Egleton.

In September single sightings of **Comma** were reported from Ketton Quarry, Market Overton, RW Egleton and Lyndon reserves, and Exton. One was seen at Clipsham Park Wood on 4 October and 6 were counted at RW Lyndon on 11 October.

Speckled Wood – this species has been reported from a number of locations with some high counts. 15 were observed at Clipsham Park Wood on 6 September and 28 counted at RW Egleton on 11 September. On 4 October 19 were recorded at Clipsham Park Wood and in excess of 7 seen at RW Lyndon.

One specimen of **Meadow Brown** was observed at Ketton Quarry on 7 September and 9 were counted at Quarry Farm on 11 September.

Small Heaths were seen regularly at Ketton Quarry from early to mid-September. 5 specimens were noted at Quarry Farm on 11 September.

My thanks to the following for their contributions: P Bennett, C Butterfield, T Caldicott, M Grimes, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, E & P Mann, J Myers, D Needham, E Northen, B & D Parker, P Rudkin and B & J Taylor.

MOTHS

September/October 2015

RECORDER Jean Harvey

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Moths which visited a garden at Manton included a **Red Underwing** on September 14th. **Humming Bird Hawk moths** were also seen there in ones and twos on seven dates between the 16th and 25th.

The trap in a garden at Barrowden attracted a **White Point** on October 2nd. This is a migrant usually found in the South but it has also been recorded on the East coast. On the 9th another species worthy of mention was a **Dusky Sallow**. This is not a common moth these days with the loss of Elms, these being its recognised larval foodplants.

Eyebrook Reservoir was only visited once in this two-month period. On September 18th, 198 moths of 23 species were identified, this number of species being less than at the same time last year. One moth, however, was new for the site, this being an **Orange Sallow**; and there was also one **Brown Spot Pinion**, a species not seen there for the last ten years.

The Rutland Water reed beds were monitored weekly, resulting in the normal Autumn catches. Species here included **Canary Shouldered Thorn** and the **Large Wainscot**. It was particularly nice to see the 'Sallows'.

Luffenham Heath Golf Course was visited on September 17th, when 433 moths of 54 species were caught in several traps. This was a good result, so with reasonable weather the site was visited again on October 30th. This was much later than had been tried in previous years. The catch was very rewarding – 411 moths of 28 species. A **December Moth** was new for the site, although this is a common moth in gardens at this time of year. Other species included **Figure of Eight**, **Feathered**

Thorn and the **Sprawler**, but the highlight was a micro moth *Diurnia lipsiella*. We are informed that this has only been recorded five times previously in VC55. Most of these were in the Charnwood area, where one was seen very recently. The Luffenham record is only the second for Rutland, the first being in a wood in the north of our County.

My thanks for the above information go to T Caldicott, R Follows and A Russell.

ORTHOPTERA

September/October 2015

RECORDER Phil Rudkin

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A very welcome 'Indian Summer' gave the Rutland Orthoptera the energy to keep active, and sightings were excellent. As in the last four years, the RNHS team have explored yet further new sites, and have added them to our records, giving ever more coverage of the distribution of the county grasshoppers and crickets. Stridulating has also been much in evidence, and the bat detectors well worked.

New sites visited with positive results were:

Belton-in Rutland	(parts not covered previously): 9th September; Clive Jones, David Needham and Phil Rudkin.
Wing Tunnel Top and Tinwell	23rd and 24th September: Phil Rudkin.
Digby Farm, North Luffenham	27th September: Phil Rudkin.
Pickworth Road	Footpath, in the pasture field, at the Southern edge of Newell Wood (on the border with Lincolnshire), 30th September: Phil Rudkin, David Needham.

So far this season, locating **Slender** and **Common Groundhoppers** has been pleasing and important. The period under review revealed more of these tiny hoppers in new areas of Rutland.

Additionally, the **Short-winged Conehead** finally made the short journey from the Egleton reserve to the Lyndon Reserve, Rutland Water. It is remarkable that a perfect habitat for this cricket (on the edge of a cut hayfield, a small wet patch of Soft and Hard Rush), along the farm track, could be found by these creatures.

The Rutland Water surveys were duly carried out, with expected good results. The last stridulating was heard on 20th October at Quarry Farm, and on the edge of Little Casterton village.

Crickets



Dark Bush Cricket,
Peter Scott

Dark Bush Cricket *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*

Ten plus, observed in bramble patches, along the southern edge of Newell Wood. Including 3 female nymphs caught and identified. This is a new site, situated on a public footpath in pasture field off the Pickworth Road, on the southern edge of Newell Wood. 1.30 pm, 30th Sept, SK999145.

During the RNHS Fungus Foray in Clipsham Park Woods, 10th October, this cricket was abundant in every area of bramble and scrub, also smaller numbers along the Yew Tree Avenue.

Roesel's Bush Cricket *Metrioptera roeselii*

On the second RW Egleton Reserve survey, 6th September, north-east of the Bird Watching Centre to the new hides: all areas held very large numbers of stridulating males. One macropterous male observed.

The following are new sites (9th September): 11.15 am, two stridulating males, in bed of Soft Rushes at the side of the bridleway, SK818014. Midday, six males heard in nettle/thistle bed, SK822015. Over the stile, and up the hill path: 4 males and 3 macropterous females observed, followed by a 20 yards stretch of a conservation 6 metre margin, with over 80 stridulating males heard, SK821015.

The RW Lyndon Reserve survey, 27 September (west of the Interpretive Centre),

found the expected high numbers in the scrub outside Deep Water Hide and Wader Scrape Hide. Plus 4 males heard in grasses, along the farm track.

On the way home from Lyndon, I stopped off at Digby Farm, strolled around the edge of the Ellis Xmas Tree Plantation and found a large colony, located in grasses between the trees. New site: SK940032.

During the Stamford U3A Bird Group's visit to Egleton reserve, morning of 28th September, the bat detector was pushed through the hatches of Redshank and Grebe Hides – large numbers of stridulating males were heard.

Pickworth Road, bridleway in pasture field, at the southern edge of Newell Wood, six stridulating males in hedgerow verges at 1.0 pm, plus 4 in rough grass corner nearb. New site: SK998146.

During the Clipsham Fungus Foray, October 10, a total of 8 stridulating males were heard, and females observed.

Finally, the last stridulating on 20th October was at Quarry Farm and the nearby edge of Little Casterton village (new site, TF018096).

Long-winged Conehead *Conocephalus discolor*

The second Egleton Reserve survey), 2.10 pm, found two small colonies in rough herbage corner near Dunlin Hide; and 10 stridulating males, in rough uncut field, 4.05 pm.

Ellis's Xmas tree plantation, 27 September: large colony of stridulating males in grasses between trees, 4.45 pm, new site, SK940032.

The Lyndon Reserve survey (west of the Interpretive Centre) found a large colony located in grasses, at first field gate – very large numbers of stridulating males in a conservation enclosure of thistles/brambles.

More large numbers heard in thick rough grassland, just outside of the reserve, next to the car park.

Further up the hill, to the junction with the Lyndon/Manton road, large colony in rough vegetation.

Last stridulating heard in rough grasses at 2.0 pm, 20 October, in the first field, Quarry Farm, Stamford; and at 2.30 pm (17 °C) two big colonies of stridulating males in the wildflower meadow of the second field.

Short-winged Conehead *Conocephalus dorsalis*

The second Egleton Reserve survey found two colonies in uncut hay field, and two larger colonies in rough (half uncut) hay field, just past Badger Hide.

The Lyndon Reserve survey found a small colony (circa 4 stridulating males), in a damp bed of Soft and Hard Rush, at 3.15 pm – the first for this species on this Reserve. They have made the short journey from their stronghold on the Egleton Reserve. On the farm track, west of the Interpretive Centre, new site, SK887053.

Speckled Bush Cricket *Leptophyes punctatissima*

The second Egleton Reserve survey found the expected large numbers stridulating in the Bird Watching Centre car park, and continuing along past the Badger Hide. Also many heard in the hedgerows of the main car park.

Belton-in-Rutland, September 9, 11.15 am: 12 stridulating males in Ash tree, at bottom of the hill from the Church, SK818015. Six stridulating males in Blackthorn, and 6 in Hawthorn, SK821015. Through the stile and up the bridleway path, two stridulating males in Hawthorn, SK822015. 3.15 pm, outside the village, along bridleway, 15+ stridulating males in hedgerow, SK820011. All are new sites!

Further new sites were at Wing Bridge, 23 September, 5.15 pm, 4 stridulating males in Ash tree and 4 heard in shrubs, SK887025. 3.40 pm, 20+ stridulating males in Ash and Oak trees, Tinwell Village Hall car park, TF005063. Eight stridulating males, in hedgerow and 20+ heard in tree-lined avenue, The Rookery, Tinwell, SK997071.

The Lyndon Reserve survey, 11.0 am – this reserve is the stronghold of this flightless cricket! Numbers were excellent and maintained in all the usual shrubs and trees, west of the Interpretive Centre.

The following are new sites: Pickworth Road, 1.0 pm, a total 20+ stridulating males in three separate Ash trees, along public footpath, SK998146. At 1.30 pm, amazing numbers of stridulating males in a 150-yard stretch at the southern edge of Newell Wood, SK999145.

During the Clipsham Fungus Foray, 10 October, 2.30 pm, large numbers were found in all the usual habitats.

The last stridulating was heard October 20, 1.30 pm, 17 °C, in Hawthorn hedge at the entrance to Quarry Farm, first field. At 2.0 pm, more stridulating in Hawthorn hedgerow, in the second field. And at 3.0 pm, a new site of 16+ stridulating males was found in an Ash tree on the edge of Little Casterton Village, TF018096.

Groundhoppers

Slender Groundhopper *Tetrix subulata*

During the Lyndon reserve survey, at 1.0 pm, one was caught by Clive Jones, photograph taken by Phil Rudkin. It was in the grass of the footpath near Tufted Duck Hide. This was the first sighting for the Lyndon reserve, SK887054.

Common Groundhopper *Tetrix undulata*

One caught by David Needham and Phil Rudkin on bare ground along public footpath, on the southern edge of Newell Wood, at 2.0 pm. New site, SK999145.

Grasshoppers

Field Grasshopper *Chorthippus brunneus*

Large colony of c.20 observed, in patches of bare ground along the public footpath, on the southern edge of Newell Wood. New site, SK999145.

Meadow Grasshopper *Chorthippus parallelus*

The second Egleton reserve survey produced masses of stridulating males, also a few nymphs caught and identified. And more, located in rough grass corner, next to Dunlin Hide.

The following are all new sites: Belton-in-Rutland, 9 September, 11.30 am. Four stridulating males in bed of Soft Rush by bridleway, SK818014. At 1.0 pm, at the stile, in pasture field, 3 adults and one nymph observed. SK821015. Ten stridulating males in 6-metre conservation margin, SK821015.

A final new site, at 2.15 pm, of 15+ stridulating males, and a few observed (several of a smaller stature than usual) in grasses of the public footpath, on the southern edge of Newell Wood, SK999145.

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*

The Egleton Reserve survey produced good numbers of stridulating males, plus 5 courtship pairs in the usual habitats.

Belton-in-Rutland, 9 September, two females caught and identified in pasture field along the bridleway, new site, SK821015.

Lyndon Reserve survey, only five stridulating males were heard in grasses outside Deep Water Hide.

Finally, the last sighting was one nymph, caught and identified, in pasture field along the public footpath, on the southern edge of Newell Wood. New Site, SK999145.

Many thanks to our (lower number than usual) reporters, for their hard work: M Grimes, C Jones, R Lemmon, D Needham, P Rudkin, A Tomlinson.



Field Grasshopper, Peter Scott

OTHER INSECTS AND INVERTEBRATES

RECORDER Gill Chiverton

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September/October 2015

Odonata Dragonflies

Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator* – on October 8, one insect patrolling over the edge of the lagoon at Heron Bay, Manton.

Hemiptera True bugs

Green Shieldbug *Palomena prasina* – observed during Clipsham Fungus Foray, 10 October, one adult insect.

See photograph page 19.

Squashbug/Dock Bug *Coreus marginatus* – one insect recorded in September at RW Lyndon Reserve.

Beetles *Coleoptera*

7-spot Ladybird *Coccinella 7-punctata* – one insect recorded at Bloody Oaks Quarry in September.

2-spot Ladybird *Adalia bipunctata* – one insect with an interesting colour variation of a black background with red spot fusions.

Ants, bees, wasps and relatives *Hymenoptera*

Horntail/Giant Woodwasp *Urocerus gigas* – a record in September of one of these wonderful-looking insects came from Barrowden.

See photograph page 19.

Ichneumon wasp *Amblyteles armatorius* – one specimen found in early September in a conservatory in Uppingham. On a warm day at the end of September another specimen was recorded at RW Lyndon.

Hornet *Vespa crabro* – in September a hornet was noted flying over a woodland pond at Tunneley Wood, and then alighting on surface weed to drink.

Thanks to: L Biddle, R Lemmon, C Jones, P Rudkin, G Chiverton, T Mitcham and R Fraser

GLOW-WORMS

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Looking forward to next year, more records please!

PLANT GALLS

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September 2015

This was a quieter month for plant gall reports, but it opened on the 1st from Eyebrook with news of two galls on Spruce, which is generally, at least locally, seldom reported as a host species. They were both caused by Aphids, which considering their small size induce quite large galls in this case. It was good to receive these new-to-us reports.

Prior's Coppice on the 10th yielded 33 reports as befits an excellent habitat later in the year. The presence of the fungus Choke on a grass so late in the season was something of a surprise. The previous record I have for it this year was at Horn Mill in June, the usual time for it.

Lagoons 1 and 2 at Rutland Water on the 17th gave a total of 13 galls, the most prominent being a midge gall on Redleg, which although common here is seldom found elsewhere in the area. The final report for this month was from Barnsdale Wood on the 18th when 5 galls were found.

October 2015

As befits the running down of the season there were just two reports this month, one of 22 galls from Eyebrook Plantation on the 8th and the other of 11 galls from the Clipsham Fungal Foray on the 10th.

The former, amongst many run-of-the mill galls, had the anther rust on Water Chickweed. As its name implies, this fungus infects the plant's anthers and causes them both to swell, hence the gall, and to become purplish-black which makes detection easier. This is not a common gall and appears to need moist conditions to appear and spread. Also at Eyebrook Plantation there were 8 galls on Oak, all caused by gall wasps and all but one having English names, which is unusual for the majority of galls.

The Clipsham results were 'the usual suspects' though nonetheless valuable as they contribute to the picture across the County. 3 were rusts, 3 mites, 3 midges and 2 gall wasps – one on Dogrose and one on Oak.

Thanks to P Bennett, M. Grimes and R Lemmon for their records.

MAMMALS

RECORDER Linda Biddle

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September/October 2015

This lovely autumn has been perfect for the Fallow Deer in Pickworth Wood, and it's good to report that this year we did hear the rut, the roaring groaning sound and occasional crashing of antlers, which carries so far when there is little wind. We have very few reports of deer, after many years of regular reports, but there are still fair numbers around. A group of 9 were watched as they fed on a grassy area south of Little Sutie Wood (a corner of Pickworth), all adults and including one white buck, and deer were seen on five other occasions at Pickworth, droppings observed at Newell Wood.



Otter, David Cotter

An **Otter** was caught on camera as it passed through the culvert from Egleton village into the nature reserve. Signs of Otter activity have been obvious at RW and on the Oakham Canal during September and October. The mink raft in Manton Bay showed so many prints it looked as if there had been an otter party going on, and at the other end of the reserve the resident otter continues its crusade against the rafts by scratching out the clay whenever it visits them. Sadly on October 2nd an otter was found drowned in a crayfish trap in Leicestershire. This was caused by a trap being set without an otter guard; the otter, having put its head into the trap, was unable to escape. While it is illegal to trap native crayfish, signal crayfish can be trapped with landowners' permission. A proper trap which conforms to regulation entrance size and with escape holes for water voles and shrews is safe for wildlife, but unfortunately there are cheaper traps available, which are a wildlife hazard, the size of the opening being large enough for an otter to get its head inside. **We ask that you be vigilant while walking or working near ANY body of water, and that if you see a trap without an otter guard fitted then remove it, if safe to do so, and report to the Environment Agency.**

At Langham the camera trap in Marian Markham's garden has again given evidence of **Badger** visits, on almost every evening in September and October, usually 'popping in' twice a night. At Pickworth at the junction of the main rides, badgers had scuffled up the whole of an area about 10 yards square, looking for worms in the dry early part of September. More recently just on the edge of Pickworth Wood we discovered a large patch of ground with clumps of badger hair, and a badger's tail, with bone attached, causing us to suspect the possibility of badger baiting. There was no other sign, and if it was badger baiting we would have expected the culprits to have attempted to hide the evidence. However, please keep a watchful eye, and notify the police if you should see anything suspicious.

A **Fox** also makes regular appearances on camera in Marian Markham's garden, usually just one visit, sometimes two or three, but on 8th October it appeared 4 times, at 8.30 pm, midnight, 1 am and again at 5.00 am, staying until 6.00 am. The other regulars are **Muntjac** and **Grey Squirrels**, the latter during daylight hours, and they have also been reported from Well Street Langham, and Pickworth. Muntjac have also been seen at Pickworth, Wing and Tunnelly Wood.



Bank Vole, David Cotter

No Weasels have been reported this month, but **Stoats** have been seen at RW by Bittern Hide, in Wing, looking for voles in Dr Gallimore's border, and one running along the Wing to Morcott road. A **Brown Hare** was seen at RW near Kingfisher Hide.

The cold spell in September caused a **Hedgehog** in Oakham to prepare for early hibernation, carrying bundles of leaves across the garden; and at Barrowden the hedgehogs disappeared from their regular haunts around the same time. Only one hedgehog report was received from the trail cam in Langham in late October, so most hedgehogs have probably already snuggled down for the winter, though the weather at present is unseasonably warm.

Mole hills, around 65, were present along about 75 m of a wide verge at Belton-in-Rutland, and the wetter weather in late October encouraged new hills to be thrown up in the Burley Fishponds area of RWNr. The **Water Voles** are still active, at RWNr and Oakham Canal, droppings found on almost every raft put out in October. **Short-tailed voles** have been found under reptile shelters at Exton Park, and Hambleton, and a dead one found in Walk Farm plantation. 4 reports of **Bank Voles** under reptile shelters at RW in October were also received. **Common Shrews** also shelter under the reptile covers, near Grebe Hide at Lagoon 2, and a dead one was found on the footpath nearby in September.

Thank you for records received: A Biddle, D Carrier, C Gallimore, D Masters, T Mitcham, M Markham, D Needham, P J Rudkin, L Worrall

BATS

RECORDER Jenny Harris

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

RIVERS

RECORDER David Roome

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Unwelcome visitors to our waterways and stillwaters



Signal crayfish

In the late 1970s **Signal Crayfish**, which can grow up to 6 inches long and are native to North America, were introduced to the UK for the purpose of commercial farming for the restaurant trade. This proved to be financially unviable and many were released or escaped and found the habitat of the south of England, where most of the initial introductions took place, very much to their liking. Up to now they have spread all over England and Wales with a limited spread into Scotland. As with Grey Squirrels effecting the native Red's with disease, they brought with them a disease which has eradicated many of our indigenous **White-Clawed Crayfish**. They eat fish spawn and aquatic invertebrates, and undermine river banks by burrowing up to 3 feet where they can lay more than 250 eggs at a time and can live for up to 12 years! Despite intensive trapping regimes, the numbers are still increasing. Another drastic solution is to cover riverbanks with a steel mesh to stop burrowing. Both methods are extremely labour intensive and expensive. The river Gwash upstream of Rutland Water has an infestation and it is common to see people around the Brooke/Braunstone stretches coming away with bucketfuls of Signal Crayfish caught by various means.



White-clawed crayfish

Many members visit North Norfolk where an eradication program has been taking place on the river Glaven, its tributaries and adjacent stillwaters. To give an example of how bad the problem is, an initial trapping in 2011/12 using 20 Fyke nets provided by the Environment Agency resulted in 350 crayfish being caught each day on a small pond near Holt. This made inroads, but smaller crayfish were getting through the netting. A change to an adapted lobster pot used over 336 days of trapping resulted in 12,259 crayfish removed!



Otter habitat, field outing at Exton, September 27, Penny Robinson



Ichneumon wasp
Amblyteles armatorius
(left)

Squashbug/Dock Bug
Coreus marginatus
(right)

See report page 16
photographs: Clive Jones



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OUTDOOR MEETINGS

10 January , 10.30 am	Hambleton Peninsula
21 February , 10.00 am	Egleton Reserve, wildfowl
26 March , 7.30 pm	Egleton Centre, astronomy
16 April , 10.00 am	Tortoiseshell Wood, Lincs
7 May , 3.00 am	Burley Wood, dawn chorus
19 May , 6:30 pm	Castor Hanglands
3 June , 6.00 pm	Dawn's Paddock
14–20 June	Bourgogne, France trip
19 June (tbc)	Cribb's Meadow
9 July (tbc)	Oakham Canal
6 August , 11.00 am	Ketton Quarr, butterflies
4 September , 10.00 am	Priors Coppice, plant galls, with BPGS
16 October , 10.30 am	Titchwell, Norfolk
6 November , 10.00 am	Belton Park, Fallow deer

INDOOR MEETINGS, 7.30 pm start

5 January	Wildlife of Costa Rica
2 February	Meadowland
1 March	AGM & Rutland Wildlife Photographer's evening
5 April	Mammals
4 October	Animal behaviour
1 November	Lichens
6 December	Recorders' evening & members' exhibits



photo, David Cotter