



*Squirrel at Egleton*

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## WELCOME TO 2022 EVERYONE!

**I'm sure we are all hoping for a more relaxed and healthy year and looking forward to all the planned activities in the coming seasons.**

This morning (8th January), an intrepid band braved the unpromising weather to explore Morkery wood just north of the Rutland border. We were lucky. The heavy rain didn't arrive until later in the afternoon, so we didn't get too wet and were able to see flowering hazel catkins, which always remind me that spring is on its way! Members all said they felt much better for having ventured out, and that it wasn't half as miserable as it always seems to look from the inside. We all do need the fresh air and exercise of course, and walking in woodland is excellent for our wellbeing, so do join us as often as you can this year and take every opportunity to get out and experience our lovely local countryside. You will be receiving the annual programme with this edition of Fieldfare, so you will be able to put all the dates into your diary and be prepared for a great year of wildlife watching!

The threats to our local environment just seem to keep on coming. In addition to the Quarry farm development at Great Casterton, the Burley Wood proposals and the huge solar farm being planned between Essendine and Pickworth, there are also several smaller but still impactful housing developments in the offing, one near Barrow, and another outside the Oakham ring road on the Burley Road. We shall do our best to make the society's concerns known to the planners, and to use our records of flora and fauna to back up our comments, so do please send in any wildlife sightings whenever you're out and about. They may be very important!

I hope you enjoy reading this latest edition of Fieldfare. As always it is ably compiled and edited by Carolyn Baxter and set by Sophie Widdowson. The society is proud of our newsletter Fieldfare, and any contributions you may wish to send us, including photographs, will be welcomed.

I wish you all the very best for 2022, and good spotting!

*Linda Biddle, RNHS Chair*

# MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS REMINDER



**For those who have yet to pay their subscriptions for 2022, November's Fieldfare came with a membership form with details of how to pay. If you have lost or misplaced the form, here is a reminder.**

Send a cheque payable to RNHS to Tricia Marston, Membership Secretary, 42 Church Street, Braunston, Oakham. LE15 8QT.

Pay directly into the RNHS bank account with a bank transfer. Account number is 13123968, sort code 77-15-19. Account name is Rutland Natural History Society.

Please include your name in the reference field and send an email to [rnhsmembers@gmail.com](mailto:rnhsmembers@gmail.com) to let Tricia know you have done it.

Standing order. You can set this up so payment will be made automatically each year.

Unfortunately, if we don't receive your payment, your membership will expire, and this will be your last Fieldfare.

Thank you to those members who have already paid.

**Tricia Marston.** Membership.

## DIARY DATES



### RNHS Indoor Evening meetings.

Evening meetings, as in the past are usually held at Rutland Community Hub (VAR), Lands' end Way, Oakham but as we know, times are still uncertain due to possible covid restrictions. The advice is to contact Jeff-Wilcox-Smith or Linda Clark (details on back cover contacts page) for further confirmation and/or to book your place at VAR as spaces may still be limited. If the indoor meetings must revert to online zoom, you will be emailed an invitation to join by Peter Scott, the website Editor. Please also note that for reasons of safety for everyone, members will be asked for contact details and next of kin when booking in for events.

#### Tuesday 1st February. 7.30pm.

**John Tinning. Recent ramblings of a wildlife photographer.**

John is the secretary of the Zoological Photographic club. Lots of superb photos of wildlife both locally and around the world.

#### Tuesday 1st March. 7.30pm.

**RNHS presentation evening and AGM.**

#### Tuesday 5th April. 7.30pm.

**Peter Eeles. Butterflies of the UK.**

Peter is a passionate conservationist and has created the acclaimed UK butterfly website "Garden Butterfly Survey".

### RNHS Outdoor meetings

As with other meetings, it is **IMPORTANT TO BOOK YOUR PLACE** with either Jeff Wilcox-Smith or Linda Clark, (Details back cover contacts) and if the weather is bad on the day, give them a ring beforehand as it may have to be cancelled. For all

the meetings below, please make sure you wear appropriate footwear and warm clothing with waterproofs if needed.

#### Sunday 13th February. 10.00am.

**Visit to Eyebrook reservoir.**

The Eyebrook is a haven for wintering wildfowl. It will be led by one of our own members. Meet in the car park below Stoke Dry village. SP852 963.

#### Saturday 26th March. 10.00am.

**Visit to Rutland Water Visitor Centre at Lyndon.**

MR SK894056 A walk of discovery with Abi Mustard of the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust. Perhaps the first ospreys may have arrived!

#### Thursday 7th April.

**A walk for birders on an organic farm at Little Bytham.**

Led by Jackie Murray. NUMBERS ARE LIMITED for this walk so please contact Jeff as soon as you can as booking is essential. More details will be given when you book your place.



Robin at Egleton. Photo C. Baxter

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## WEATHER

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**RECORDER Roy Lemmon**

87 Empingham Road, Stamford PE9 2SU.

Telephone 01780 762051 E-mail: roy.lemmon@yahoo.co.uk

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### October 2021

**Atmospheric pressure and wind.** Pressures were low in the first 6 days but even lower in the last week, and this latter period was notable for some very gusty winds and a quite severe squall on the 31st. In the interim period, 7th to the 24th, pressures were high and wind speeds generally low. Wind directions were predominantly S–SW for the whole month.

**Temperature.** The overall mean, 12.25 °C, places October 2021 fourth in the decade 2012–2021, after 2017, 2014 and 2013. The overnight minimum varied considerably, between 3.2 °C (13th–14th) and 13.5 °C (26th–27th) and the highest maximum was 21.3 °C on the 7th.

**Precipitation.** A total of 49.1 mm (1.93 inches) represents 78.5% of my long-term mean and 43% of this fell between the 1st and 5th inclusive.

### November 2021

**Atmospheric pressure and wind.** Pressure was low initially, with the month's lowest at 991 mb on the 1st; but had become high, 1026 mb, by the 5th. It then remained that way until Storm Arwen on the 26th and 27th, which predictably gave us high winds and rain. This was the first named storm of the new season and caused the Met. Office to issue a rare red warning for wind in E Scotland and NE England. Winds were predominantly W–N for the month and stormy for the last 5 days.

**Temperature.** The mean temperature, 7.55 °C, put November 2021 fifth in the decade 2012–2021. There were 3 air frosts, on the 27th, 28th and 29th, and the lowest of these was –1.7 °C on the 27th. The next day had the lowest daytime maximum of the month at 3.5 °C, and as it was also windy, the wind chill must have been considerable. The highest daytime maximum was 15.2 °C on the 9th.

**Precipitation.** The total here was 19.0 mm (0.75 inches) which all fell as rain and equates to 34% of my long-term

mean of 31 years. It is also the lowest November rainfall I have recorded in those years, the next lowest was November 2020. Storm Arwen gave us 67% of the month's total.

### December 2021

**Atmospheric pressure and wind.** Pressures were low during the first 11 days of the month with the month's lowest of 985 mb on the 8th. They were then high until the 22nd and after that low again until the end of the month. 'The highest pressures I recorded were 1041 mb on both the 17th and 18th and looking at my records it is only since December 2016 that pressures have exceeded 1040 mb, the highest being 1047 mb in January 2020. Winds were SW–NW up to the 16th, often strong and gusty including Storm Barra on the 7th and 8th, when I recorded gusts up to 23 mph at 09.00 on the 8th. They were reported at 40 mph later that day. There was a short spell of north easterlies on 17th–21st and this included visibility of 50 m at 09.00 on the 17th, and to the end of the month they were SW–W and often gusty.

I have no records of sunshine but nationally this month is said to be the duller since December 1956.

**Temperature.** Statistically a warm December with a mean temperature of 6.21 °C. Third in the decade 2012–2021 after 2015, an exceptional month at 9.46 °C, and 2018 at 6.62 °C. There were two air frosts, –2.8 °C on the 20th–21st, and –1.4 °C on the subsequent night. The highest daytime maxima were on the last two days of the month, both 15.0 °C.

**Precipitation.** A total of 59.6 mm (2.35 inches) which is 111% of my long-term mean. It all fell as rain.

### Total annual precipitation, 2021

The total for the year here was 577.6 mm (22.74 inches) which equates to 94.8% of my LTM of 31 years.

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## AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

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**RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore**

Waterdown, Brooke Road, Braunston, Rutland LE15 8UJ.

E-mail: chasgall@hotmail.com

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### October, November, December 2021

Not unexpectedly there have only been a couple of records in this quarter. However, the finding of a Smooth Newt on the floor of a utility room in Barrow on 8th Nov was particularly interesting as it was the first record of this species from Barrow. From my experience of newt species in my former home

this is not an unusually late date for an indoor record as they were present in all winter months in my cellar. A Grass Snake on 27th Oct in Wing was also interesting as it was the latest sighting of a live Grass Snake since a November one in 2007.

*My thanks to D & J Ball and R Bateman and L Clark for these records.*



During the three end-of-year months very little bat activity was recorded by me or by RNHS members. However, sightings (including video evidence) in other areas of the country including Leicestershire and Nottinghamshire showed that bats were venturing out to forage. Five grounded bats were recorded in Rutland, especially on warmer, sunny days in October and early November. Sunny days may disrupt bats' attempts to hibernate by warming their roost sites during the day, which may cause them to wake up, but if the temperature remains mild after dark this may give bats the opportunity to feed up before hibernation proper begins.

Four of the grounded bats were found indoors, perhaps juveniles searching for somewhere to hibernate then unable to find their way out. The soprano pipistrelle found in a garden in Whissendine was initially taken to the Leicester Wildlife Hospital in Kibworth; there was no sign of injury but as it was not particularly thin it may have been grounded by a cat. As it did not build up much additional weight in care it is being over-wintered for release in spring. The brown long-eared bat in Edith Weston and the common pipistrelle in Barleythorpe were both underweight, so were fed in care until they reached an appropriate release weight for the time of year. In contrast the common pipistrelle found indoors in Langham was very plump but having found its way into a utility room sink it was trapped, unable to get a grip on the smooth surface.

There are no details for the bat found inside Empingham Primary School, as it was flying in the main hall and flew out of an open doorway while I was on the phone to the person who found it. Re-roofing was planned at the school and, as a result of finding the bat, a full ecological survey was carried out leading to the discovery of two roosting sites in the roof. The ecologist was able to provide advice so that these roosts would not be damaged by the work.

In October a small bat was roosting inside a closed parasol for several days in Manton but when checked by the finder on 16 October it had gone, so there are no details as to species. This is not an unusual occurrence.

There were no records in Rutland during December, but I hope you won't mind me mentioning a very unusual incident that has unfolded in Coalville. A carer there, received a bat call on the 24th December, telling him that a small bat had been found in a shipping container that had arrived at a logistics firm. The container had come by sea from Greece, taking three weeks in transit; it had not been opened on the way. The bat was identified as a Nathusius' Pipistrelle, a species that is rare in this country but occurs in Greece and must have entered the container there. The carer is now waiting for DEFRA to advise on quarantine requirements and what to do with the bat after that period (probably six months) is over.

## Grounded bats October to December 2021

Date	Species	Location	Age, sex, weight, etc.	Cause/outcome
09 Oct.	Soprano pipistrelle	Whissendine SK823143 approx.	Ad., M, f/a 30mm, 5.0g	Grounded, over-wintering
10 Oct.	Brown Long-eared bat	St. George's Barracks, Edith Weston, SK936053 approx.	Juv., M, f/a 38mm, 6.2g	Inside hangar, underweight, released 16.10.21
13 Oct.	Small bat	Empingham Primary School, SK955067	No details	Trapped inside, released by finder
23 Oct.	Common Pipistrelle	Barleythorpe. SK848098	Juv. M, weight 3.8g	Indoors, very thin, released 13 Nov.
07 Nov.	Common pipistrelle	Langham, Burley Rd., SK846110	Ad., F, weight 6.2g	Trapped in sink, released 8.11.21

Key: **Ad.** – adult; **Juv.** – juvenile; **M, F** – Male, Female; **f/a** forearm length in millimetres.

Weight quoted is the weight of the bat (if known) when it was admitted to care. Where any details are missing it is because these were not taken when the bat was admitted, usually because examining the bat would have caused too much stress.

## October 2021

**Highlights.** 23 Pink-footed Geese flew over Whissendine (11th). Rutland Water had ten Whooper Swans (20th) and six (21st), with a Cattle Egret (19th) and 41 Great White Egrets (28th). Two Garganey were in north arm (20th) with one at Fort Henry Ponds (9th-31st).

**Rutland Water.** An impressive count (10th) produced 1128 Gadwall, 3478 Wigeon, 190 Pintail, 2128 Teal, 2708 Tufted Ducks, three Goosander and 878 Great Crested Grebes. There were also 65 Little Egrets, 1057 Cormorants and 3105 Coot. On other dates a Ruddy Shelduck (25th-31st), Red-crested Pochard (31st), two Scaup (23rd) and two Common Scoter (9th) were present. Three Marsh Harriers were seen regularly at Egleton. 1600 Golden Plover (30th), three each of Ringed Plover, Curlew (eight on 15th) and Black-tailed Godwit were noted (10th) with a Jack Snipe seen at Egleton (12th-14th). Two Knot (16th) and six Green Sandpipers (31st) were reported. A late Hobby flying near Barnsdale (26th) and a Peregrine was seen (9th). Two Stonechats were at Egleton (9th) with singles along south arm (29th, 31st). A Yellow Wagtail was at the dam (8th) with Rock Pipits passing through (8th-23rd) and five on (15th). Four Bramblings flew over (15th).

**Other Sites.** Peak wildfowl numbers at Fort Henry Ponds (21st) were 35 Shoveler, 70 Gadwall and 81 Teal. There was a Pintail (3rd) and a Water Rail (21st). Three Green Sandpipers were noted (3rd-21st). Barn Owls were seen at Fort Henry and Manton with a Little Owl at Wing Hill (9th). A late Whinchat was at Luffenham Airfield (6th) along with two Stonechats. A Stonechat was in Exton Park (8th) with a pair (17th). A Wheatear was spotted near Manton (1st). Migration counts included 45 Golden Plovers at Martinthorpe (7th), 3360 Starlings over Wing (25th), 1604 Redwings over Wing Hill (13th), 165 Meadow Pipits over Martinthorpe (3rd), 32 Bramblings over Wing (13th) and 55 Siskins seen there (24th).



Lapwing. Photo Richard Adams

## November 2021

**Highlights.** Rutland Water had a Red-throated Diver (28th), a Great Northern Diver (from 13th), a Leach's Petrel (27th), a Slavonian Grebe (from 13th) and a Water Pipit (2nd). A female Ring-necked Duck was at Eyebrook Reservoir (from 13th). A Garganey remained at Fort Henry Ponds (to 28th).

**Rutland Water.** The count (7th) produced 4661 Wigeon, 1285 Gadwall, 1936 Teal, 288 Pintail, 358 Shoveler, 1828 Tufted Ducks and 56 Goldeneye. There were also 29 Great White Egrets, 135 Little Grebes and 2061 Coot. On other dates there were four Whooper Swans (23rd), 36 Red-crested Pochard (20th), six Scaup (6th), six Common Scoters (22nd) and a Smew (24th). Two Marsh Harriers were present all month. Waders included 385 Lapwings (7th), c.400 Golden Plover (6th), two Black-tailed Godwits (6th-7th, 20th), 26 Dunlin (7th), nine Green Sandpipers (20th), ten Redshanks (7th) and a Spotted Redshank (21st). There was a late Swallow (6th) and two Stonechats at Egleton and at Lyndon, with a Rock Pipit (2nd). 20 Bramblings were noted at Lyndon (14th).

**Eyebrook Reservoir.** There were six Whooper Swans (5th) with four (6th), seven Scaup (24th) and two Smew (26th-28th). There was a Green Sandpiper (20th) and a Stonechat (5th).

**Other Sites.** 120 Pink-footed Geese flew over Manton (3rd) with 130 the following day. Six Whooper Swans flew over there (3rd). On (8th) there were 24 Shoveler, 72 Gadwall and 67 Teal at Fort Henry Ponds. A Pintail was present (to 28th). At Great Casterton there were six Grey Partridges (16th) and 250 Linnets (29th). A Marsh Harrier was at Greetham/Exton Park (21st). Woodcock were at five sites, with three noted near Uppingham (20th). A Green Sandpiper was at Fort Henry Ponds (to 23rd) with four over Manton (11th). Barn Owls were seen at Greetham and Exton and Little Owls at Luffenham Airfield, Stoke Dry and Wing Hill. A Chiffchaff was spotted at Manton (3rd, 8th) and a large movement of winter thrushes there on (5th) saw 4667 Redwings and 7259 Fieldfares pass through. 96 Siskins flew over there (10th).

## December 2021

**Highlights.** Rutland Water had three Pink-footed Geese (12th, 21st), three White-fronted Geese, two Bewick's Swans (25th-27th) and 36 Whooper Swans (21st). A Black-throated Diver was present (2nd-7th) with Great Northern Divers (up to three from 2nd). A Female Ring-necked Duck was at Eyebrook Reservoir (2nd-31st). A Waxwing was also noted in Stamford (21st).

**Rutland Water.** The count (21st) produced 3934 Wigeon, 713 Gadwall, 1121 Teal, 113 Pintail, 973 Tufted Ducks, eight Scaup, 235 Goldeneye, a Smew and 38 Goosander. Three Great Northern Divers were present along with 12 Great White Egrets and a Slavonian Grebe (present all month). Waders included 850 Golden Plovers, 1964 Lapwings, 56 Dunlin, two Black-tailed Godwits, six Green Sandpipers and 16 Redshanks. There were three Grey Plovers (22nd) and a Mediterranean Gull was also seen (21st). Two Marsh Harriers were a regular sight, and a Peregrine was seen (16th). A

very early Great Spotted Woodpecker drummed in north arm (11th). Two Chiffchaffs were seen at Eggleton (10th).

**Eyebrook Reservoir.** There were ten Whooper Swans and three Red-crested Pochards (20th). Three Avocets were present (30th-31st), 26 Dunlin and three Green Sandpipers (12th). There was also a Stonechat (21st).

**Other Sites.** On (18th) Fort Henry Ponds had 78 Gadwall, 132 Wigeon, 37 Teal, and 42 Tufted Ducks. Woodcock were seen in Tunneley Wood (12th, 27th) and a Green Sandpiper was at Fort Henry to (12th). Barn Owls were noted at Fort Henry and Exton. Marsh Tits were in Tunneley Wood and near Uppingham (5th). Blackcaps were seen in two Oakham gardens and a roost of c.1000 Starlings was reported at Oakham (14th). A pair of Stonechats remained in Exton Park to (12th). Near Great Casterton there were 20 Bramblings (20th) and 200 Linnets (14th).

*My thanks to the following for their records: T.Appleton, D.Ball, A.&L.Biddle, T.Caldicott, T.Collins, A. Comber, I.Day, T.Land, P.Langston, LROS, D.Masters, I.Misselbrook, T.Mitcham, B.Moore, J.W.Nourish, C.I.Park, T.Sexton, T.Williams*



Oystercatcher. Photo Richard Adams

## October, November & December 2021 Wildfowl Counts

	FHP and Exton Park 08.10.	FHP and Exton Park 08.11.	FHP and Exton Park 18.12.	Banthorpe GP 06.10.	Banthorpe GP 05.11.	Banthorpe GP 15.12.
<b>Greylag Goose</b>		76	186	38	6	62
<b>Mute Swan</b>	6	6	5	3	3	3
<b>Mandarin Duck</b>	1	2				
<b>Shoveler</b>	31	24	6			
<b>Gadwall</b>	58	72	78			
<b>Wigeon</b>	11	22	132			
<b>Mallard</b>	138	90	149	68	49	99
<b>Pintail</b>		1				
<b>Teal</b>	62	67	37	5	13	19
<b>Tufted Duck</b>		10	42		1	2
<b>Goldeneye</b>			1			
<b>Goosander</b>			1			
<b>Little Grebe</b>	3	4	8			
<b>Grey Heron</b>	5			2		1
<b>Little Egret</b>				2	2	
<b>Cormorant</b>	3	2	1			1
<b>Moorhen</b>	40	47	39	1	2	
<b>Coot</b>	25	34	39		1	
<b>Kingfisher</b>			1	1		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>383</b>	<b>457</b>	<b>725</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>187</b>

	<b>RW 10.10.</b>	<b>RW 07.11.</b>	<b>RW 21.12.</b>	<b>EBR 10.10.</b>	<b>EBR 07.11.</b>
<b>Canada Goose</b>	280	163	841	601	2
<b>Greylag Goose</b>	572	317	769	959	48
<b>Pink-footed Goose</b>			3		
<b>White-fronted Goose</b>			3		
<b>Mute Swan</b>	386	432	453	134	119
<b>Whooper Swan</b>			36		
<b>Egyptian Goose</b>	58	50	43		
<b>Shelduck</b>	6	3	14	1	2
<b>Ruddy Shelduck</b>		1			
<b>Shoveler</b>	644	358	119	18	3
<b>Gadwall</b>	1128	1285	713	78	22
<b>Wigeon</b>	3478	4661	3934	98	245
<b>Mallard</b>	1232	989	787	308	142
<b>Pintail</b>	190	288	113	38	
<b>Teal</b>	2128	1936	1121	168	167
<b>Red-crested Pochard</b>		6	2		
<b>Pochard</b>	36	17	69	118	75
<b>Tufted Duck</b>	2708	1828	973	322	697
<b>Scaup</b>		1	8		1
<b>Goldeneye</b>		56	235	2	9
<b>Smew</b>			1		
<b>Goosander</b>	3	11	38		
<b>Great Northern Diver</b>			3		
<b>Little Grebe</b>	132	135	125	1	3
<b>Great Crested Grebe</b>	878	293	563	70	36
<b>Slavonian Grebe</b>			1		
<b>Spoonbill</b>				1	
<b>Grey Heron</b>	32	23	21	5	4
<b>Great White Egret</b>	39	29	12		
<b>Little Egret</b>	65	38	3	2	1
<b>Cormorant</b>	1057	334	316	25	36
<b>Water Rail</b>	5	2	6		
<b>Moorhen</b>	124	93	108	1	2
<b>Kingfisher</b>			3		
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>18286</b>	<b>1540</b>	<b>13212</b>	<b>3376</b>	<b>1614</b>



	Holywell Lake	Holywell Lake 08.11.	Holywell Lake 20.12.
Canada Goose	33	43	12
Greylag Goose		54	
Mute Swan	2		2
Shoveler			3
Gadwall	8	16	22
Wigeon		4	24
Mallard	28	59	103
Teal	6	9	4
Tufted Duck	16	38	26
Little Grebe	22	15	10
Grey Heron		1	
Little Egret	4	1	
Moorhen	21	26	22
Kingfisher		1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	141	167	230

## BOTANY

**RECORDER John Rodgers**

8 Summerfield, Oakham LE15 6PZ. Telephone: 01572 757278

E-mail: [rnhsbotanyrecord@gmail.com](mailto:rnhsbotanyrecord@gmail.com)

Autumn and early winter aren't flowering times for most plants so unsurprisingly no records have come in since October until the new year. As last year, a number of members took part in the New Year Plant Hunt organised by the Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland (BSBI). We were encouraged to see how many species of flowering plant were in flower on the

four days at the beginning of January. Last year, nationally, about 2000 people took part, finding 714 species. The four most common species in flower were Daisy, Groundsel, Dandelion and Annual Meadow Grass. Our contribution was of 9 observers finding 30 species in flower. This year the same people found 39 species in Rutland and in Lincolnshire, around Stamford; all the lists containing the four species already mentioned.

I've spent some of the time where I might have been out looking for flowers, looking instead at botany pages on the internet. Both BSBI and Plantlife have a number of different topics on their websites containing Youtube videos. There is a mixture of videos of plant identification and others, showing aspects of their work- such as Plantlife's campaigns on Grasslands and on sand dunes or BSBI's attempts to involve younger people in botany. There is a varied selection; I've recently watched a talk on the botany of the Azores (BSBI), and another called "Paleoecology- plants and the past" (Plantlife). Do have a search and see what you can find, and don't forget the sites on Twitter- #wildflowerhour, #morethanweeds or quite topical #newyearplanthunt. There are lots of interesting finds shown.



*Winter heliotrope at Lyndon visitor centre.  
Seen by Jenny Harris, our bat recorder.*



Another interesting programme to watch, is of course Sir David Attenborough's "The Green Planet" on Sunday evenings. The first episode, which I've just seen, was mainly about plant competition and defence in tropical rain forests. It was very interesting with some fascinating photography and contained an important message for us all, especially the Animal Kingdom - without plants, there would be no food

to eat and no oxygen to breathe. It will be a great series, explaining much about plant behaviour.

Happy Botanising in 2022

Records received from D and J Ball, C Baxter, L Clarke, M Grimes, J Harris R Lemmon and J Walker

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## BUTTERFLIES

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**RECORDER Martin Quinlan**

4 Bayley Close, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9TG  
Telephone: 01572 820337

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No reports this time.

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## FUNGI

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**RECORDER Linda Clark**

14 Top Street, Wing LE15 8SE

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### October November December 2021.

As from 11th October until 31st December a total of 61 species have been positively identified. October saw an explosion of inkcap, *Coprinopsis species*. Shaggy Inkcaps popped up in many locations. Pleated, Fairy, Glistening and Common were also reported. One record of Hare's Foot inkcap was reported from Ian Day but this was just across the county line in Leicestershire. Waxcaps, *Hygrocybe species*, were highlighted by Plantlife in October who hope to record any new sites found where these fungi occur. Waxcaps are found on unimproved grassland and so highlight species rich areas. Reports of Blackening, (*H. conica*) found on Hereward Way in Empingham, Snowy, (*H. virginea*) reported from a field used for sheep pasture and also from Rutland Water NR. Meadow, (*H. pratensis*), and Parrot, (*H. psittacina*) found on an 'unimproved' garden lawn, Butter, (*H. ceracea*) was reported

from Hambleton Peninsula and Persistent (*H. persistent*) appeared in Brooke Churchyard (to be confirmed). All fungi are fascinating but of particular interest were a couple of specimens. First showing in mid-October was a Clavariaceae species, probably Meadow Coral *Clavulinopsis corniculata* or Ivory Coral, *Ramariopsis kunzi*, (see photo), a small coral look alike fungus that appeared on the same grassy area as the Meadow and Parrot waxcaps. The other species which has an amazing appearance and strategy for dispersing its spores is the Bird's Nest fungus, family *Nidulariaceae*. Tim Sexton, Monitoring and Survey Officer at Rutland Water NR, spotted this tiny fungus by the Anglian birdwatching centre. These fungi have spore packets, the eggs, that split and liberate the spores when heavy rain hits them. There are several species in this family including Field, Fluted and Common. The species Tim found was identified as the Field Bird's Nest *Cyathus olla* (see photo). And finally to finish and just to



Meadow Coral TBC. Photo L Clark



Field Birds Nest. Photo T Sexton



Found in old sheep pasture. Dog sick slime mould.  
Photo C. Baxter

fascinate the children is a Slime mould - even those words are bound to attract interest. *Mucilage crustace*, is a creamy white mass that spreads over quite large areas of grass and vegetation. The mass that is seen is the plasmodium stage of the organism. This stage of the Slime Mould's life cycle enables the organism, the mass of protoplasm, to move in order to find food. Slime moulds are now placed in the Kingdom Protozoa. If the children have by this stage lost their concentration, tell them it's common name - 'Dog's sick/ vomit'!

Many thanks to Carolyn Baxter, Marion Markham, Jacky Morrell, Roy Lemmon, Ian Day, Roy Edwards and Tim Sexton.

## MAMMALS

**RECORDER Linda Biddle**

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**A Happy year of mammal spotting to you all!** For the final report of 2021 there were fewer records than normal, which is disappointing – I'm sure there were plenty of mammals out there! Perhaps some of you have yet to send in your reports for the final months of 2021. If so, please don't think they will be ignored – they will be included in the report for 2021 and could be mentioned in the next edition of *Fieldfare*.

There were definitely fewer Brown hares than usual – we only saw one ourselves, and as usual we were out every day. The one we saw was in a field adjacent to the main drive at Exton Park, and one other was reported by Steven Smalley, a huge one, sadly a road casualty on the road between Cottesmore and Market Overton. Similarly, there were only 2 rabbits reported – perhaps because they are considered too common to note. One was in Barrow, and the other at Wing.

We were lucky enough to be in the forest of Dean during October half term and went to bed each evening to the eerie sound of Fallow deer rutting - the groaning bellows sounding unearthly, and when out before bed with dogs, the sight of many red eyes looking at us could have been scary - but it was only fallow deer grazing unconcerned in grassy openings in the forest. The other animal which is obviously very common in the area is wild boar, though the only sign seen was major earth diggings among the trees.

Back in Rutland a magnificent fallow buck with huge antlers approached us across a field near Pickworth Drift, presumably either exhausted after the rut, or cast out by a competitor in the Pickworth woods. He continued towards us, then stopped, regarding us proudly for a few moments before continuing across the field and disappeared into a nearby plantation. Rutting was heard on one occasion in October in Pickworth woods but was not on the same scale or with the volume of that in the Forest of Dean.

Muntjac deer are reported from RWNr, at Lyndon, as well as slots seen everywhere at the Hambleton Road end of the

reserve, and also from the Willows at Barrow. At Banthorpe gravel Pits four roe deer were flushed from a wild bird food crop in early November. Single roe deer have also been seen at Wing and at Lyndon.

There have been a number of Badger road casualties; one between Manton and Lyndon, another between Cross roads farm and the A1 at Tickencote. Grey squirrels were seen commonly at RWNr, Exton, Barrow, Wing and Pickworth, and there were lots of signs of badgers, especially after the spell of dry weather broke. Hedgehogs were very elusive, one only recorded, in Wing, where food was taken most nights in November. This means that it was the latest report for 2021, and we wait to see who has the first record of 2022. Could it be in your garden?

Of small mammals, the resident Barrow bank vole at the Willows appeared on the patio regularly up to the end of November, and a common shrew was found dead on the Walk Farm track in early October.



Rat at Egleton



The majority of records this quarter were of otters seen frequently by observers at Rutland water, including two seen by Dr Gallimore, grooming each other on the bund near to Fishpond's cottage, then crossing over and later returning to hunt for mussels. Every Mink raft in the surveys carried out had evidence of otter presence, either prints in the clay, spraint left as a calling card, or as a sign of disdain; the clay dug out and left around the raft. Amazing to think that for many years we had no otters in Rutland!

Water Voles are also doing well in the area; our RWNR surveys giving positive results in many parts of the reserve,

and happily at the north end of Oakham canal where signs have been absent for over a year, droppings have been found on the rafts at our most recent count, confirming their presence again.

A huge thankyou to those of you who have sent in your reports during 2021. I look forward to hearing from you at the end of each month in 2022 – the next edition of fieldfare is due at the end of April, so records by end of March will be welcome.

*J+D Ball, A Biddle, Tim Caldicott, Linda and David Clark, C Gallimore, Terry Mitcham, .S Smalley*

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## MOTHS

**RECORDER Paul Bennett**

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Happy New Year! Moth reporters get a bit of a holiday at this time of year, so this summary is quite short. Monitoring is usually scaled down by autumn although the occasional mild evening did offer an opportunity to leave out overnight traps, although numbers of moths were lower than might have been expected. Bloody Oaks reserve was trapped on 8th October with 24 moths in total, although Grey Pine Carpet accounted for exactly half of these. 2 nights later both traps were left out at Lyndon Centre and these produced a combined total of 33 moths of 10 species including 6 Yellow-line Quaker and

an aggregated total of 7 November Moth (2 species). The final trap of the year on 12th November had just 6 moths of 6 species including a December Moth. For the phenologist there is nothing particularly significant in these moths appearing a month earlier than their name suggests!

Also recorded in October were Box-tree Moths at a site in Empingham (See photo). This is a species that used to be classed as an occasional immigrant mainly in southern coastal areas and therefore was omitted from many moth guides, but



Box tree moth. Photo A Dejardin





Pale tussock moth. P. Scott

it has recently expanded in number and range. Although it is seen in this area only in small numbers it is becoming more common including on 3 occasions in my Stamford garden. Large infestations of its larvae can appear on box hedging, defoliating and potentially killing it. In its absence, privet may be an alternative so any sightings should be disposed of as people see fit.

Hummingbird Hawk-moths were on the wing extremely late this autumn with records from Manton in October and the meadow at Lyndon on 13th November. The one larval record was of the attractive Pale Tussock in North Luffenham in early November.

Thank you to the following for their records:- P Bennett, T Caldicott, A Dejardin, P Scott, J Walker.

## ORTHOPTERA

**RECORDER Phil Rudkin**

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May I wish all our RNHS members a very Happy New Year and hope we can carry on our recording of the Fauna and Flora of Rutland, despite Covid.

There is very little to report this time, therefore it was pleasing to receive two very late sightings from our regular reporters. One surprisingly late stridulating was heard from the Egleton reserve, Rutland Water, by Tim Sexton. And not surprisingly, there was a visual sighting from the famous WING Village allotments by Tim Caldicott, both in October.



Male Rosel's bush cricket. Photo P Rudkin

### Crickets

#### **Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Roeseliana roeselii*.**

One stridulating male, located in grasses, near Redshank Hide, Egleton reserve, Rutland Water, on 10 October 2021

(SK880073). A very late stridulation indeed! This beautiful cricket usually shuts down earlier. Climate change is causing some interesting alterations in our wildlife everywhere!



Slender Groundhopper. Photo P Rudkin

### Groundhoppers

#### **Slender Groundhopper, *Tetrix subulate*.**

One observed in the Wing Village Allotments on 4 October 2021 (SK 889028). This tiny hopper can be found at any time of the year, as they can over-winter as a nymph or an adult.

Thank you for these late sightings: Tim Caldicott, Tim Sexton.

# INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

**RECORDER Jayne Walker**

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Winter is now well and truly upon us, although you wouldn't have thought so before the end of the year. As a result of shorter days and longer nights, insect activity has reduced and hence fewer records to share with you all in Fieldfare, which are tabulated below.

<b>October</b>	
Hawthorn Shieldbug	Acanthosoma haemorrhoidale
Grey Mining Bee	Andrena cineraria
Tree Bumblebee	Bombus hypnorum
Common Carder Bee	Bombus pascuorum
Buff-tailed Bumblebee	Bombus terrestris
<b>November</b>	
Birch Shieldbug	Elasmotethus interstinctus
Harlequin ladybird	Harmonia axyridis
Honey Bee	Apis mellifera
<b>December</b>	
House Fly	Musca domestica
Harlequin Ladybird	Harmonia axyridis
7-spot Ladybird	Coccinella septempunctata
Common Wasp	Vespula vulgaris



As you can see from the table above, two shieldbug species were recorded in October. These are found in various habitats, including woodland, gardens, hedgerows and parks and are well distributed throughout Britain and Ireland. The season of activity extends to November for both species.

Bees continued to be seen flying about in October and

November, with several species being recorded in the area, with an active Honeybee observed at the end of November.

In addition, two Common Wasps were recorded sunning themselves on a log pile in December. I guess these must have responded to the warmer weather experienced towards the end of the year, which tricked them into thinking Spring was on the way!

During the warm days in December, it was noticeable that many House Flies warmed themselves by basking in the sun on sheltered walls early in the morning, before going off to feed.

Ladybird activity was notable in November and December, with Harlequin Ladybirds being recorded at two different locations within Rutland, and as the temperatures climbed, ladybirds were found on evergreen foliage in the sunnier spots in December.

I am very grateful for all the information and records that everyone has sent in this year and I'm looking forward to receiving more in the coming year. Any December records that are received after the submission date of the report will be included in the spring addition of Fieldfare. Stay safe everyone.

I would like to thank the following member(s) who have submitted records last autumn: Tim Caldicott



# PLANT GALLS

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## October 2021

A quieter month as the gall season begins to slow down, the high winds in the last few days of the month have precipitated leaf fall, and when the leaves have gone so have most of the galls.

Six reports were received in total, and Aldgate, Ketton on the 6th produced 30 galls including Ergot on Couch grass and the rust on Mahonia, both of which we don't see very often. An ongoing survey at Bloody Oaks Quarry on the 8th came up with 5 galls to add to the annual list, and advantage was taken on the Society's fungus foray to Prior's Coppice on the 9th to add some 10 galls to that site's list. 2 of them were fungi! Burley Fishponds and the wood opposite Tim's cottage yielded 29 galls between them on the 14th and notable were the rust gall on Pear, 1 or 2 records per annum, and a midge gall on Reed Canary grass, a new record for us. Finally, a walk along Hereward Way in Empingham on the 28th gave 23 galls. A lot of this walk is on grass which is poor for galls, but several hedges made up for this.

*Thanks to M. Grimes and R. Lemmon for their reports.*

## November 2021

A quiet month for gall reports and almost certainly the end of the gall season. The leaves on many trees had lasted well into the month but Storm Arwen on the 26th and 27th, with high winds up to 40 mph at times, put paid to them. A visit to the Seek on the 6th produced 11 galls, rather less than expected but possibly explained by the considerable clearance work that has been carried out in the wood, perhaps to remove diseased Ash trees. Barnsdale Lodge Wood, two days later, gave a total of 25 galls; these included a galling rust on Marsh Thistle and a lone gall on White Willow. The latter is one of those galls of which the cause, at present, is unknown; it may be a virus or a bacterium.

Bloody Oaks Quarry on the 19th yielded another 3 galls to add to the year's list; Bloody Oaks Verge, verge 6, later that day gave 12 more. The trees that carried galls at this site may have been planted; the juxtaposition of Beech, Oak and Goat Willow is unusual.

*Thanks to M. Grimes and R. Lemmon for their reports.*

## December 2021

There were no reports this month.

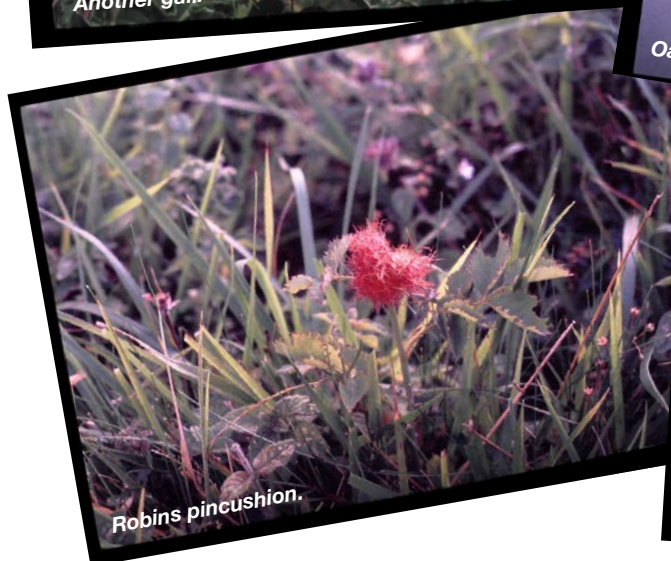
*All photos by R Lemmon*



Another gall.



Oak marble gall wasp on oak.



Robins pincushion.



Silk button gall wasp.



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## FIELD TRIPS

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### Fungi walk in Prior's coppice

With the downpours of the previous two weeks, followed by a spell of dry warm weather, there were high hopes for more than a few King Alfred's cakes clinging to the dead branches of fallen Ash. Ben Devine, fungal expert and well known to us at RNHS, led twelve fungal novices into the woods to explore every nook and cranny amongst the fallen leaf litter, dead twigs and tree trunks at Prior's coppice. His strategy was to let us all run loose in the woods for 15 minutes at a time, and then meet back together to identify and discuss any finds that were made. We all got our "eyes" in very quickly and bombarded Ben with lots of fungal species (31 in all) to identify. Common names of many fungi are as delightful as those we give to our countryside flowers – names like "Candlesnuff, Dead-man's fingers, The deceiver, Jelly brain" – all of which we found and more, on our foray. Some of them had lovely colours too. Lilac bonnet, as the name suggests, had a lovely gentle lilac colour. The Green Elfcup – a cup fungus, stains the wood on which it grows a lovely shade of blue/green, which is valuable in the furniture making industry. One plain brown fungus we found is deadly poisonous – the aptly named "Funeral bell". Roy Lemmon, our Gall and rust recorder, found some rusts on Dogrose, ground Ivy and Sloe and powdery mildew on Field Maple and Goat willow. After three and a half enjoyable hours, we all came away with the feeling that maybe we might be able to tell the difference between an oysterling and a jelly ear!



*Ben and walkers. Priors Coppice*



*Stump puffballs Lycopodon pyriforme. Priors Coppice*



*Green elfcup. Prior's coppice*



*Lilac bonnet. Mycena pura Priors Coppice*





Winter at Egleton

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