



Sedge Warbler. Photo P. Scott

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WELCOME

We were all shocked and saddened to learn of the deaths of our Vice President Dr Clive Jones and his wife, Elaine. Clive had been Chair of the RNHS for 7 years from 1995 until 2002, supported and often joined at our events by Elaine. They were well known and were held in high esteem by all of us who knew them. We have written to their family with condolences on behalf of members, and the family are holding a celebration of Clive and Elaine's lives at their home in Uppingham, at which the RNHS will be well represented. A tribute to them both is included later in Fieldfare.

The spring has been a busy time for the society, beginning with an excellent talk on Butterflies of the UK, and a visit to an organic farm near Castle Bytham, followed by the dawn chorus and nightingales at Pickworth Wood. At the end of May, a special event was a stand at Oakham market explaining about Rutland Verges and the way they're managed for nature, at which we were joined by Lucy Stephenson and Stuart Kidd of Rutland County Council. Thanks to those of you who came along and supported us! It was a successful occasion, thanks to the efforts of your committee, and the stand looked really attractive and informative. It was great to be in contact with the general public, and also to work together with Lucy and Stuart, and we hope that we shall be able to remain in contact with them.

The spring is nearly over and summer soon to be upon us with seasonal orchids, butterflies and birds appearing in their turn to delight us with their colour and sounds.

Enjoy the rest of the summer season, and don't forget to book for the Wildflower walk at Langar Naturescape wildflower farm in July. Do come along as well to the Oakham canal on July 23rd when we are doing various walks and explorations for different wildlife at our Bioblitz.

Linda Biddle RNHS Chair

DIARY DATES



RNHS Indoor evening meetings

Indoor meetings will resume again in October but **will no longer be held at VAR**. We are currently looking for a suitable location for the start of the Autumn season. Look out for more information as it becomes available on the website and in Fieldfare.

RNHS Outdoor meetings

All the following events are correct at time of publication but may still be changed at short notice, so it is important to book your place with Jeff Wilcox-Smith. Details: Mob: 07946733931 or wilcoxsmith@btinternet.com. Make sure you are wearing appropriate clothing for the weather and if the weather is bad on the day, give Jeff a ring beforehand in case it needs to be cancelled.

Thursday 7th July. 5 – 7pm.

Naturescape Wildflower Farm.

An early evening walk at Langar, Vale of Belvoir. Led by Jenny Harris (RNHS bat recorder). Meet in the car park. NG13 9HP. Map ref: SK731 342. The toilets will be open, but the Café and shop will be closed.

Saturday 23rd July.

BIOBLITZ at Oakham canal.

This is an all-day event. Leaders will be the recorders of RNHS. Meet in the lay-by by Langham Road or Ashwell Road. BEWARE! There is deep water here. Please wear stout shoes. Map ref: SK856 110.

Saturday 6th August. 11am.

Ketton Quarry.

Led by RNHS recorders Jayne Walker and Dave Needham. If you haven't yet visited this Rutland gem, now is the right time to see an abundance and diversity of butterflies and flowers in this wonderfully special place. Meet in the car park at Pit Lane. Map ref: SK978 053

Other society meetings

LRWT Events. You need to book your place for these events. Go to the events page of the LRWT website. www.lrwt.org.uk

Sunday 3rd July. 2.00pm – 4.00pm.

Walk at Bloody Oaks Quarry Nature reserve.

Join the Rutland local group for a guided walk to enjoy wildflowers and butterflies in this tiny reserve. £2.00p per person. (Cash on the day). Booking essential. See website for details of access.

Thursday 7th July. 10.00am – 1.00pm.

Butterfly walk at Cloud wood.

Enjoy a guided walk through Cloud wood to identify a variety of butterflies on the reserve. Contact Jo Taylor on Mob: 07831 284 304.

Friday 15th July. 9.00pm – 10.30pm.

A wild walk looking for bats and Glow-worms at Ketton Quarry.

Join the experts to discover and identify bats and glow-worms. £6.00p per person.

Thursday 21st July. 10.30am – 12.30pm.

Cossington meadows.

Dragonflies and Damselflies. £6.00p per person.

Wednesday 17th August. 7.30pm – 10.00pm.

Cossington meadows.

Barn owls at sunset. £6.00p per person.



TRIBUTE TO CLIVE AND ELAINE JONES



Photo from left to right – Dave Needham, Dr. Clive Jones and Phil Rudkin

I am sure most members of the RNHS will be aware of the tragic death of Dr. Clive Jones OBE, and his wife Elaine, on the 9th May 2022.

Clive and Elaine were experts in their field; Clive, a Geologist and Elaine an Archaeologist. Both were very involved in their chosen skills which they shared together as stalwart members of the Rutland Local History and Record Society.

However, they also operated individually, with Elaine fronting her group, which included many field walks, searching for artefacts (with Clive often joining her).

Clive was busy carrying out many geological surveys for the Leicester and Rutland Wildlife Trust. He also was a leading member in the Stamford and Rutland Geological Society, working in the Ketton Quarry project with Alan Dawn.

Eventually, Clive and Elaine discovered the Rutland Natural History Society, and joined up with us in late 1985. They were quiet during their first field meetings, but soon settled in with members, and making friends.

As time went on, Clive spent hours in the field with David Needham, Alistair Lawrence and myself, carrying out surveys of the wildlife in the woods and fields of Rutland. He played a big part in covering the areas for the mapping of the 'Grasshoppers and Crickets of Rutland',

always carrying his favourite insect net with him, and was the best at scooping up the species for identification, before releasing them.

1986 was the RNHS 21st Anniversary. We had many celebration activities during the year, and the biggest one was in securing the Radio 4 programme, 'The Living World' on the evening of 22 September. A group of members were chosen by the producer to ask questions to the experts Phil Drabble, Chris Mead and Bob Stebbings and it was Clive who was chosen, confidently putting his question to the BBC team.

The mammoth sized book 'The Heritage of Rutland Water', was published in 2007 and one of the leading articles was a 10-page intellectual article: 'The Geology of the Middle Gwash Valley'. The author was Dr. Clive Jones.

Many years later Clive wrote an article, for my book, 'The Orthoptera of Rutland', 2021, titled: 'The Geology of Rutland and its Landscapes'. This proved very popular; and included a full page coloured map.

Finally, at the AGM, in March 1995, I retired after 10 years as Chairman of the RNHS and Clive took over, to go on to a successful 7 years as Chairman of the RNHS, while Elaine continued the exhausting field work, with her team.

Phil Rudkin

WEATHER

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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April 2022

Atmospheric pressure and wind. There was a period of low pressure, 4th–9th inclusive, which contained the lowest pressure for the month, 954 mb on the 7th and not surprisingly, some very windy conditions. At 09.00 on the 7th I registered gusts of up to 25 mph. The rest of the month was largely of high pressures, the highest 1033 mb on the 29th with winds from the NE for the last 10 days.

Temperature. The overall mean, 10.45 °C, places this month third highest in the decade 2013–2022. There were three air frosts, on the 1st, 2nd and 9th, with that on the 2nd being the lowest at –1.8 °C.

Precipitation. A total of 16.8 mm (0.66 inches) was measured here, being 41.5% of long-term mean of 32 years.. Looking back at April, rain records shows the month to be very variable. In 2011 we had 2.3 mm and last year 8.5 mm, but 2012 saw 150.2 mm, very close to 6 inches of rain!

Winter. I was recently asked by a member what sort of winter we have had. Meteorologically this means January, February and March. Having done the calculations of actual and expected temperature and precipitation, I find rainfall to

be 89.3% of expected and temperature 112.5%, so slightly drier and warmer than the mean.

May 2022

Atmospheric pressure and wind. Pressure was high for the first half of the month, except for 10th and 11th, and the highest pressure for the month was in this period, 1031.5 mb on the 8th. The second half was variable in pressure as well as wind direction and the lowest pressure was 1004 mb on both the 23rd and 24th. Wind speeds were low at 09.00 on both the 26th and 27th but on both days were considerably higher in the latter part of the day.

Temperature. The overall mean, 14.92 °C, was third highest in the decade 2013–22, but the mean minimum, 8.75 °C, was second in the same period, behind May 2017 at 8.34 °C. There were no frosts and overnight minima ranged from 4.4 °C on 7th–8th to 13.2 °C on 21st–22nd.

Precipitation. The total for the month was 40.6 mm (1.6 inches) which is 83% of my long-term mean of 32 years. Daily rainfall was generally nil or very small amounts and 60% of the total fell on just 3 days.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

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Although the weather has not been particularly favourable for reptile and amphibian watching during these two months, all eight species that occur naturally in Rutland have been recorded. The mini-bioblitz at Wing Water Treatment Works unfortunately did not produce any evidence of the persistence of lizards following the extension of the site, although maybe a further examination will be more productive.

There were further records of Common Frogs spawning in Ridlington and Exton up until 3 April, and froglets were seen in May in Wing. Common Toads spawned in a garden pond in Ridlington on 21 April. This is the first time that there has been evidence of toads spawning in this parish. Toads were also seen at Rutland Water Nature Reserve and in Wing in May.

Tim Sexton reported that he had found Smooth Newts in twelve ponds at Rutland Water Nature Reserve and Great Crested Newts in seven ponds. There was evidence of Great Crested Newts in a pond in Barleythorpe where their eggs were found.

Viviparous Lizards were seen at Ketton Quarry on three occasions between 17 April and 11 May, and a Slow Worm was found under a refuge at Rushpit Wood.

Grass Snakes were found at two sites at Rutland Water and

at Leighfield fishponds, and a dead one was found on Manor Lane in Barleythorpe. Between 17 April and 13 May, Adders were seen on three occasions at Ketton with mating activity noted on one occasion.

My thanks to the following who sent records:- T Appleton, T Caldicott, L Clark, A Hill, R Lemmon, T Mitcham, J Morrell, D Needham, P Scott, T Sexton, W O Smith and J Walker.



Common frog. Pond in garden

BATS

RECORDER Jenny Harris

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The only record of bat activity in April was on the 16th, when a Common Pipistrelle was found in a garden at Burley-on-the-Hill. Unfortunately, it had extensive damage to its left wing, and seemed to be paralysed, unable to use its back legs. It was taken for euthanasia. The Common Pipistrelle found at Rutland Council offices on 29.3 was released on 14.4, having reached a weight of 4.9g and flying well in my lounge. In the Council office gardens only one other bat was heard flying nearby. On 30.4 a female Common Pipistrelle dropped onto the ground in a Wing garden. It had no apparent injury but was very thin, only weighing 3.73g. It has gained weight but still steadfastly refuses to fly.

There were no other reports of bat activity until 8 May when Steve and Donnie Smalley saw two bats foraging in their garden. The echolocation calls at 55kHz identified them as Soprano Pipistrelles. The Common Pipistrelle found in the dry cleaners in Oakham Market Place on 25.3 was released in Oakham churchyard on 9.5. With unlimited access to mealworms, it maintained its weight at 4.5g but did not put on any more weight. There were several other bats flying around in the churchyard when it was released there and it flew off strongly. A small bat was seen flying round in a house on Church Street, Empingham on 25.5 but when the finder discovered it on a windowsill on 26.5 it had died. There are several known pipistrelle roosts in the village.

A count of the Soprano Pipistrelle roost at All Saints Church, Braunston-in-Rutland, on 28.5 recorded 192 bats. The National Bat Monitoring counts will take place as usual in June.

On 6th and 7th May members of Derbyshire and Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Groups carried out harp trapping and bat box checks as part of the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project (NNPP). Tom Bennett from Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group is the licence-holder for



Harp trap May 2017. Photo L. Biddle

the project, the results of which has been reported in Fieldfare and the RNHS Annual Report since 2014. I hope to have results from the trapping and box checks in time for the next issue of Fieldfare. The presence of Nathusius' Pipistrelle was first discovered in woodlands and other habitats surrounding Rutland Water in 2006, but in spite of 65 Nathusius' Pipistrelles being ringed during the NNPP, there is still much to do to prove that the species is breeding locally and to find a maternity roost.

My thanks to Linda Clark for records and bat care, Donnie and Steve Smalley, Jenny Harris.

BIRDS

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April 2022

Highlights. Rutland Water had a Ring-necked Duck (18th, 19th), a Red-throated Diver (14th), two Cranes, (10th) and three (21st), two Mediterranean Gulls (12th) and two Sandwich Terns (12th). Two Ring Ouzels were at Luffenham Airfield (29th) and a Redstart sang in Tunneley Wood from (16th). At Eyebrook Reservoir the Slavonian Grebe remained all month and there were three Little Terns (17th).

Rutland Water. The wildfowl count (19th) produced 15 Shelducks, 16 Shoveler, 159 Gadwall, 23 Pochard, 789 Tufted Ducks, 170 Great Crested Grebes and six Little Egrets. A Great Northern Diver remained all month. Other wildfowl

were a Whooper Swan (9th), two Garganey (15th, 23rd), two Scaup (9th) with one (23rd) and a Smew (2nd). Up to three Marsh Harriers were reported. Waders included 14 Avocets (24th), 19 Oystercatchers (19th), 20 Golden Plovers (12th), four Grey Plovers (23rd), four Little Ringed Plovers (19th) and nine Whimbrel (21st). Also noted were seven Curlews (12th), one or two Bar-tailed Godwits (22nd-29th), 28 Black-tailed Godwits (12th), two Turnstones (29th) two Ruff (12th), a Green Sandpiper (2nd), a Wood Sandpiper (23rd, 28th) and five Greenshanks (12th). Little Gulls were noted (11th-30th) with 15 (24th). One or two Arctic Terns were present (14th-29th) with a Black Tern (12th). A Cuckoo was present from (20th) with the first Swift (27th). A Hobby was at Lyndon (28th) with

a Peregrine over Egleton (29th). Ravens were regular at the dam. Grasshopper Warblers were at the VTC from mid-month and near Gibbet Gorse. With Wheatears at the dam (8th, 18th, 26th). Eight Bramblings were still at Lyndon (2nd).

Eyebrook Reservoir. The wildfowl count (17th) found 52 Mute Swans, 35 Gadwall, 60 Teal, a Red-crested Pochard, two Goldeneye and 28 Great Crested Grebes. Two Garganey were present (15th) and a Common Scoter (2nd). There were two Oystercatchers (26th), five Whimbrels north (23rd), a Bar-tailed Godwit (28th) and two Common Sandpipers (29th). A Whinchat and a Stonechat were seen (28th) and there were two Wheatears (18th).

Other Sites. Fort Henry Ponds had a Garganey, eight Shoveler, 29 Gadwall and 36 Tufted Ducks all (16th). The first Cuckoo was at Clipsham Park Wood (18th). Barn Owls were at five sites and Little Owls at two. Ravens bred at three sites. A Grasshopper Warbler sang at Belmesthorpe (15th). 330 Fieldfares were at Bisbrooke (3rd) and a Redwing at Leighfield Fishponds (29th). A Nightingale sang at a regular site (22nd). Just over the border in Lincolnshire, a female Goosander with eight ducklings was photographed at Hudd's Mill, Stamford (28th).

May 2022

Highlights. At Rutland Water the Great Northern Diver remained to (9th) and a Glossy Ibis flew over (28th). There was a White-rumped Sandpiper (21st-22nd), a Temminck's Stint (6th, 9th, 10th), a Sandwich Tern (2nd) and Little Terns (4th, 5th). A Spoonbill was at Eyebrook Reservoir (9th – 11th) and the Slavonian Grebe remained to (8th).

Rutland Water. On the count (17th) were 18 Shelducks, three Mandarin Ducks, 207 Gadwall, three Pintail, two Garganey, eight Shoveler, 30 Pochard, 187 Tufted Ducks, nine Little

Egrets, 14 Water Rails and 134 Coot. There was a Scaup (3rd, 7th) and three Common Scoters (22nd). A Great White Egret was at Egleton (20th). Two Marsh Harriers were present throughout. Peak wader counts included 17 Oystercatchers (17th), 24 Avocets (17th), Grey Plover (5th), 40 Ringed Plovers (14th), eight Little Ringed Plovers (17th), five Whimbrel (2nd) and two Bar-tailed Godwits (3rd). Also noted were a Little Stint (28th), two Turnstones (14th), ten Sanderling (13th), 40 Dunlin (14th), two Common Sandpipers (17th) and a Wood Sandpiper (9th). Three Mediterranean Gulls were regular with a Yellow-legged Gull (17th, 27th). Up to four Arctic Terns were noted (2nd – 14th). Cuckoos were frequent at Egleton and there were up to four Hobbies (20th) over the lagoons. Two Nightingales sang (14th) and there were Wheatears at the dam (9th, 20th).

Eyebrook Reservoir. There was a Whimbrel (7th), a Common Sandpiper (14th) and a Greenshank (4th).

Other Sites. Pairs of Barnacle Geese and Mandarin Duck were at Banthorpe Gravel Pit (12th). Fort Henry Ponds had two Mandarin Ducks, three Shoveler and 27 Gadwall (13th). A pair of Shelducks were at Leighfield Fishponds (7th). 19 Red Kites hunted over a silage field near Uppingham (19th). Curlew were at a regular breeding site, mobbing Red Kite. Barn Owls were at three nest boxes and Little Owls bred at Barrowden and Normanton. Marsh Tits were at Leighfield (5th, 21st). The Redstart was in Tunneley Wood to (14th) and there were three Grey Wagtails by Rygate Lake in Exton Park (13th). Spotted Flycatchers were at Exton Park (14th), Ridlington, Preston and Leighfield Fishponds.

My thanks to the following for their records: - T.Appleton, D.& J.Ball, A.J.& L.Biddle, T.Caldicott, L.Clarke, Dr.C.H. Gallimore, M.& G.Griffin, M.Grimes, P.Langston, LROS, S.Lister, R.Lemmon, M.Markham, D.Masters, T.Mitcham, D.Needham, J.W.Nourish, P.Rudkin, M.Rumbelow, T.Sexton



Canada goose. Eyebrook

April and May 2022 Wildfowl Counts

	Rutland Water 19.04.	Rutland Water 17.05.	EBR 17.04	FHP and Exton Park Lake 16.04.	FHP and Exton Park Lake 13.05.	Banthorpe Gravel Pit 15.04.	Banthorpe Gravel Pit 12.05.
Canada Goose	69	93	9			1	2
Barnacle Goose							2
Greylag Goose	194	300	9	10	13	44	55
Mute Swan	184	215	52	5	6	3	1
Egyptian Goose	16	19					
Shelduck	15	18	1	2	2		
Mandarin Duck		3			2		2
Garganey		2		1			
Shoveler	16	8		8	3		
Gadwall	159	207	35	29	27		
Wigeon	8	2					
Mallard	279	322	59	71	52	4	5
Pintail		3					
Teal	120		60	3			
Red-crested Pochard			1				
Pochard	23	30					
Tufted Duck	789	187	9	36	20		
Goldeneye			2				
Great Northern Diver	1						
Little Grebe	4			2			
Great Crested Grebe	170	134	28	2			
Slavonian Grebe			1				
Grey Heron	16	1				1	
Little Egret	6	9					
Cormorant	160	195	5	1		1	
Water Rail		14					
Moorhen	18	21		9	9	3	1
Coot	161	134		24	23	1	
Kingfisher		1					
TOTAL	2408	1918	271	203	157	58	68

BOTANY

RECORDER John Rodgers

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May brings a very welcome reappearance of flowers all around us and of course records begin to accumulate. Bluebells, Red Campion and Greater Stitchwort in Barnsdale Woods making red white and blue, though a bit too early for the Jubilee. The Townhall Clock, still standing in the same place as before and the bright gold of Opposite-leaved Saxifrage at the entrance to Priors Coppice, are all as last year. We look forward to that reassurance that the world continues despite what we see happening around us. Long may it remain.

Elsewhere Orchids were beginning to appear; Common Spotted and Common Twayblade in Ketton Quarry, Heath Spotted at Merry's Meadows, though no-one reported Green-winged Orchids there. I hope this was an oversight. It isn't easy to decide what to report. The Society guidance is to record everything, which can be tedious at times. Perhaps the best rule of thumb is to record everything when you are out on a deliberate walk to explore as it were, and only otherwise send in a record of something more unusual, a casual finding.

Amongst other records have been Honesty in several places, at Barrowden Lane Ketton and Hambleton, amongst other sites. I'm never quite sure if this is a garden escapee or a wild flower. Goldilocks Buttercup at Empingham, Yew Tree Avenue and Barrowden Road Ketton, and Snake's-head Fritillary at Great Casterton were other less common plants recorded. Two plant records awaiting expert confirmation were Medium-flowered Wintergreen (*Barbarea intermedia*) in Exton and Many-leaved Sedge (*Carex divulsa* spp *leersii*) at Woodhead Castle. More on this next time.

The Society were asked via the Wing Neighbourhood Plan group, to do a survey of the grounds of Wing Treatment Works. A number of recorders, including colleagues from Leicester, were welcomed by Steve Coles the Anglian Water ecologist. Amongst the plants recorded were Weld, Field Madder, Parsley Piert, Hairy Tare and Early Forget-me-not. There will be a return visit later in the summer to look for later flowering plants

Many thanks for records received from: Duncan and Jane Ball, Carolyn Baxter, Linda Clark, Martin Grimes, Jenny Harris, Helen Ikin, Roy Lemmon, Marion Markham, Dave Needham and Steve Woodward.



Grass vetch on Hambleton peninsula

BUTTERFLIES

RECORDER Martin Quinlan

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Unfortunately the April/May report has been delayed until the next Fieldfare due out in August.

FUNGI

RECORDER Linda Clark

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I have received a few records for April and May with only 7 macro fungi species being seen. The weather has been unseasonably cold and dry, not ideal conditions for Fungi.

Roy Lemmon keeps me updated with micro fungi records, including rusts and powdery mildews. 22 species have been recorded, the most common was *Calloria neglecta* which is found on dead nettle stems.

A couple of slime moulds have been recorded, False Puffball *Reticularia lycoperdon* in Wardley Woods and *Albugo candida* in Woodhead Castle.

Of fungi, single specimens were seen of Common Inkcap *Coprinopsis atramentaria* in Uppingham Arboretum and Pleated Inkcap *Parasola plicatilis* in Wardley Woods. King Alfred's Cakes, *Daldinia concentrica* reported from Priors



Chicken of the woods. Photo L. Clark

Coppice and in my garden at the very top of a dead standing Birch. Hazel Woodwort *Hypoxylon fuscum* was found in Ketton Quarry car park. There was a huge Dryad's Saddle *Polyporus squamosus* in the field adjacent to the car park at Eggleton Reserve. The development of this specimen was wonderful to follow from a relatively small fresh fungus to the decrepitude of old age! The most exciting find was by Tim Sexton and was spotted along the summer track at Eggleton Reserve. These fungi are so well camouflaged it is amazing that they are ever seen at all - Semi Free Morels *Morchella semilibera*. (See photo). Identification is not all that simple but luckily there were both fresh and older, eaten, specimens to examine. On the 30th May I couldn't miss spotting from afar what I initially thought was a bracket fungus, the specimen was so large, but, on closer examination decided that it was 'Chicken of the Woods' *Laetiporus sulphureus*. Despite its reputation as being a common species I have never seen

it before now. It was magnificent and was dripping with moisture as is reported in the guide books. (See photo). This is an edible fungus hence the name, though I'm not that brave yet and just content to observe it in all its glory.

My thanks to Roy Lemmon and Carolyn Baxter who sent in records.



Semi-free morel. Photo L. Clark

MAMMALS

RECORDER Linda Biddle

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No report until the next Fieldfare.



Baby rabbit at Wing

MOTHS

RECORDER Paul Bennett

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This has been a spring where cool days and nights have predominated which are not ideal conditions for moths to venture out. Spring day-flying moths have been seen in small numbers although the occasional warmer day would have helped to boost totals. Burnet Companion were recorded on 3 sites including Ketton Quarry with Mother Shipton also seen there and at Bloody Oaks. Chimney Sweepers were at RW Lyndon and Egleton Meadows and were doubtless around at Merry's Meadows in larger numbers although bird nesting there has made access difficult this year. 2 records of the micro moths Nettle-tap and Twenty-plume Moth were welcome. The highlight day record was of a Light Orange Underwing at Manton Junction on 8th April. It was found on the ground close to mature Aspens, which is possibly its own larval foodplant, as other poplar species tend to produce catkins outside this moth's peak flight period of early to mid April. On the society's visit to the Water Treatment Works at Wing, three larvae of the Merveille du Jour were found on a mature oak tree and taken away by the observer, hopefully to be reared to adult stage by around October. A larval report of a Scarlet Tiger in Manton was also received. Lyndon has only been trapped on three occasions during



Light orange Underwing. Photo T. Caldecott

the period, due mainly to unsuitable weather. 10 species were recorded on 13th April including Purple Thorn and Early Thorn. The most productive night was on 9th May with 26 species including three species of Prominent moths - Iron, Pebble and Swallow - and a freshly emerged Waved Umber, while 27th May yielded just 13 species of regular spring moths. As has been mentioned before in my reports, it would be beneficial if we were to get a warmer spring to more accurately assess how well our species are faring at this time of year. Garden trap records were received from Exton and Oakham both in the hope that the summer period will be more productive for them. Unfortunately, I have to conclude the report with the news that our county and VC55 moth recorder, and former butterfly recorder, Adrian Russell passed away at the end of April. Adrian was not only passionate and knowledgeable about lepidoptera, but was always generous with his feedback and for the time he was prepared to spend with other recorders as well as being an excellent county recorder. He will be sadly missed.

Thank you to the following for their records: - C Baxter, P Bennett, T Caldicott, L Clark, R Edwards, M Grimes, D Masters, P Scott, J Walker.



Buff tip moth. Photo M. Grimes

ORTHOPTERA

RECORDER Phil Rudkin

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As is usual at this time of the season (April/May), only nymphs of crickets have been observed and the tiny adult groundhoppers. Just one Grasshopper nymph seen.

Tim Sexton has sightings from Rutland Water, Egleton reserve. Tim Caldicott reports from Gibbet Gorse, along the Lyndon Reserve. Carolyn Baxter observed nymphs on a Barrowden verge, and along the Hambleton Peninsular.

Bush Crickets

Dark Bush Cricket, *Pholidoptera griseoptera*

Fifty plus, early instar nymphs, located in the woods of the Summer Trail. Rutland Water, Egleton Reserve, (near Grebe hide). SK882075, 2 May 2022.

One, nymph, on grass verge, Barrowden, SP946006. 13 May 2022, new site, See photograph.



Dark bush cricket nymph, Barrowden verge

Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Roeseliana roeselii*

One, first star nymph, in grasses, Barnsdale Wood. SK902089. 2 May 2022. Regular site.

Groundhoppers

Slender Groundhopper, *Tetrix subulata*

Four nymphs, located in Gibbet Gorse meadows, 20, 21, 30 April 2022 SK900056. (One each visit). New site.



Hambleton peninsula. Grasshopper. poss meadow

Grasshoppers

Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus parallelus*

Two, late instar nymphs, in grass verge, Hambleton Peninsular, SK887083, 22 May 2022. Regular site. See photograph.

Many thanks to: Carolyn Baxter, Tim Caldicott, Tim Sexton: for their reports.

INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

RECORDER Jayne Walker

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The spring weather has again thrown everything at us, but what has been noticeable so far, is the lack of rain. Despite this, members have been busy spotting insects and we have received a great number of records in the last couple of months. The records have also been boosted by the BioBlitz that took place at Wing Water Treatment Works on the 28th April and recent aquatic invertebrate surveys undertaken at Rutland Water. Below is a *précis* of the records that have been received.



Male and female common blue damselflies

A single record of a mayfly, *Ephemera vulgate* was received for May, from Leighfield Fishponds (SK 8314 0374).

No dragonfly or damselfly records were received up to the end of April, however eight species were recorded in May. The earliest record was of an Azure Damselfly, *Coenagrion puella* recorded at Leighfield Fishponds (SK 8314 0374) on the 7th May and again towards the end of May.

Other species included Broad-Bodied Chaser, *Libellula depressa* at Wing Hill, a Four Spotted Chaser at Ketton Quarry (SK 980 060), just to mention a few. A Hairy Dragonfly *Brachytron pratense* was seen hawking among the reedbeds at Lagoon 3, Rutland Water whilst undertaking an aquatic invertebrate survey.

There have been some great photographs of spiders being sent in to support records, including one taken by Linda Clark of a Labyrinth Spider *Agelena labyrinthica*, found in Wing. (See photo).

Fourteen species of bugs have been recorded this month, with records being submitted from Wing Hill, Wing Water Treatment Works, Leighfield and Rutland Water. The Four-spotted Oak Bug *Dryophilocoris flavoquadrimaculatus*, Striped Oak Bug *Rhabdomiris striatellus* and Fine Streaked Bugkin *Miris striatus* are species that have not been reported in the last couple of years and all can be found on Oak. The mirid bug D.

flavoquadrinotatus, has striking black and yellow markings and *R. striatellus*, also having striking markings. Look out for all three of these bugs on Oak. The Green Tiger Beetle *Cicindela campestris* were recorded in April at Ketton Quarry (SK 980 060).

As already mentioned, aquatic invertebrate surveys are being undertaken at Rutland Water, with records of *Notonectidae* sp. and *Corixidae* Sp. being found. Reed beetles were recorded in abundance by the Species and Recording Officer for Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT) Tim Sexton at Lagoon 3, Rutland Water. These, according to Naturespot are 'fairly frequent and widespread in Britain', however, there have only been occasional records in VC55, with a total of 12 up to March 2015. We can now report that these are present in the reeds at Rutland Water!

The BioBlitz at Wing Water Treatment Works recorded 16 species, (including a follow up visit in May). During the May visit, *Cordylepherus viridis* was seen; this is noted by Naturespot as 'scarce or under recorded in VC55, with 'only four records for this species up to March 2015'.

Beetle names are brilliant I think and we have had a Rustic Sailor Beetle *Cantharis rustica* in Barrowden, Common Sun Beetle *Amara genea*, and Strawberry Seed Beetle *Harpalus rufipes* to name a few.

Rustic Sailor Beetle, Matthew Rumbelow.

There have been numerous hover fly and sawfly sightings this last couple of months, with *Volucella* sp. being well represented. As well as these, a record of a Long-palped Crane fly *Ctenophora pectinicornis*, was recorded in Exton. This was identified due to the wing venation and tibial spurs. According to Naturespot the status of this insect is 'unknown' in VC55.

Long-palped Crane fly, Jayne Walker

There have been good numbers of bees and wasps recorded, with a notable species being recorded by Tim Sexton at Rutland Water. The Yellow-Shouldered Nomad Bee *Nomada ferruginata*, which is noted as 'rare in England and in VC55'.

It is parasitic on solitary bees and is normally found in areas where willow (*Salix* sp) predominates. Other records include Mourning Bee *Melecta albifrons* at Wing Hill and Two-coloured Mason Bee *Osmia bicolor* at Ketton Quarry. I would have liked to have included more interesting species in my report but space will not allow.

I would like to thank the following members who have submitted records for these months: Tim Caldicott, Tim Sexton, Dave Needham, Roy Lemmon, Linda Clarke, Carolyn Baxter, Matthew Rumbelow and Luke Nelson LRWT.



Long-palped cranesfly. Photo J Walker

PLANT GALLS

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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April 2022

There were reports from 10 sites this month, but number of galls per site were low and there was some repetition of species found. Leaves are now appearing in trees and this has given rise to a few reports as the mites get to work on them.

Pickworth village, together with the Great Wood, on the 6th gave a total of 7 galls including a wasp that galls the stems of Bramble. An email with photograph was received on the 14th of another gall on Bramble, this time with the rust which appears on the stems at this time of year, as opposed to the other two which occupy the leaves.

Prior's Coppice on the 15th had the galling rust on Bluebell which is not as common as one might suppose, given the ubiquity of the host.

George Henry Wood on the 18th had the mite-induced big bud gall on Hazel, and Yew Tree Avenue Clipsham on the same date produced the rust gall on Betony, the only site where this is found in the county, as far as I know.

To illustrate the point made earlier about mite galls, Bloody Oaks Quarry on the 26th had the leaf curl on Spindle, and the Society's visit to Wing Water Treatment Works on the 28th had a gall on Sycamore and one on Alder, both caused by mites.

Thanks to Martin Grimes and Roy Lemmon for their records and to Steve Coles for his hospitality at the Water Treatment Works.

May 2022

This month's results neatly demonstrate the progress of the gall season with a steady increase in numbers from 7 at Clipsham (YTA and CPW) on the 4th, to 28 at the LRWT paddock in Ketton on the 26th. The yews at the former are now being clipped again but a mite gall was found on them.

Woodhead Castle on the 12th amongst others, produced 6 mite galls and an aphid gall on Hawthorn. Cherry Wood, which is close to the Volunteer Training Centre at Rutland Water had a total of 15 species including 3 rusts, 7 mites and also a few of the insect galls which are now emerging.

The LRWT paddock has a considerable range of trees including some exotics such as Southern Beech, which, not being native here, are seldom galled. However, the natives made up for it with 13 mite galls and Mistletoe, a galler, on no less than 3 separate hosts. There was also one midge gall on Elder which was a first for the County.

Thanks to Martin Grimes, Roy Lemmon and John Rodgers.

RNHS NOTICES

Rutland Natural History Society 2023 Calendar



Hopefully we will be publishing a calendar again this year which will be our SIXTH RNHS wildlife calendar. The previous five have been brilliant and we are looking to carry on in a similar manner for 2023.

Whilst 2023 seems a long way off we need to be planning early to ensure you are all out there snapping away at the local wildlife. We are hoping to have a wide selection of photographs to choose from and they will hopefully form part of our Members/Recorders evening on the 6th December 2022.

When all the photographs have been received, a selection process will take place to choose the best ones for the calendar. This process is of course subjective and hopefully the photographs will cover a wide range of topics so we can have a good balance within the calendar. Maybe you can find an unusual subject to photograph.

As with any "competition" there have to be rules so: -

- 1) **DEADLINE August 31st.** This will enable us to select the photos we wish to use and get the calendars printed in good time for Xmas presents.
- 2) Maximum three entries per participant, with a short description and /or caption for each including date and place. Recent photos preferred to reflect recent sightings.
- 3) High resolution photos to support quality printing in the calendar. Please send these as attachments to email to me at: peter.scott27@btopenworld.com
- 4) Please only send your entries as landscape as we cannot use portrait for the calendar.
- 5) Content can be general views of Rutland, or wildlife photos taken in Rutland or local sites.

If you would like to discuss any of this further, please feel free to send an email or call me on my mobile 07535 508932.

It is hoped that many members will have a go and remember - the wider the subject matter we cover the better. Please remember to be sympathetic to the subject matter and do not disturb nest sites, roost sites etc and be careful not to tread on those small creatures and plants that we want to protect.

Thank you. Peter Scott.

Butterflies of the UK - Indoor meeting 5th April 2022

The last evening meeting of the season on 5th April was well attended both by members at the VTC and via Zoom.

Peter Eeles, our speaker for the evening lives in West Berkshire and had travelled up that day to speak to our society. We later learnt that he had only just retired and this was the first talk he had done since finishing work. At the end of the presentation Peter was planning on making the return journey back to Berkshire - dedication and passion for his subject indeed!

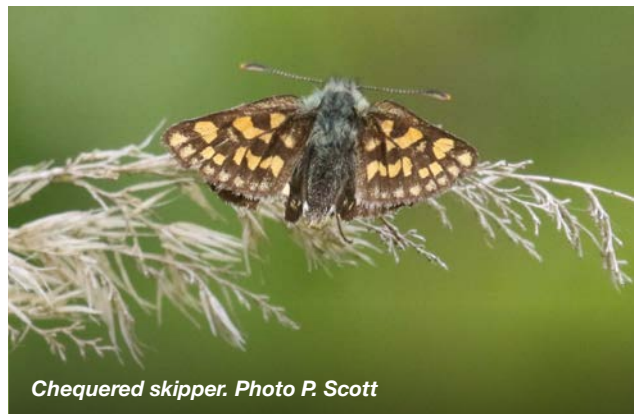
Peter has had his book 'Life Cycles of Butterflies of Britain and Ireland' published and this formed the basis of his talk.

In the early 20th century, a man named Frederick William Frohawk had taken about twenty years to write a book documenting the life cycles of British butterflies. All the illustrations in his book were line drawings. Peter had taken up this idea and he too, documented the life cycles of each of the British and Irish butterflies - 59 species in total. The book includes writing about the eggs, larval instars, through to the adults of each of the species and including accompanying photos. Naturally the slides shown on the night were amazing. Peter spoke fluently about the life histories of several of these butterflies adding interesting facts in his talk.

Peter is a very entertaining and informative speaker who held everyone's attention and it was a fantastic talk to end the indoor meeting season. My only regret was that it wasn't recorded.

Peter Eeles book 'Butterflies of Britain and Ireland' ISBN 9781874357889 can be found on NHBS (Natural History Book Society).

Linda Clark



Chequered skipper. Photo P. Scott

FIELD TRIPS

A walk for birders at Little Bytham - 7th April 2022

Six people met our leader, Jackie Murry, at Little Bytham Village Hall on a cold and very blustery Thursday morning. The weather wasn't ideal for a walk around farm fields in search of farmland birds, nonetheless everyone was cheerful, and we set off full of hope and expectation.

Grange Farm has been managed organically and in an environmentally friendly way for over thirty years and everything one reads or hears about farm management for wildlife, appears to have been carried out here and as we saw later, was reaping benefits.

Walking down a small hill between some houses, we could already hear House sparrows chattering away in the hedges, and at the bottom of the lane we crossed a small stream, 'The West Glen' which ultimately feeds into the River Welland. Jackie regularly sees Kingfisher here, where previously they have nested under the little bridge. A turn right and we were then walking alongside the stream where despite the wind, Chiff chaff were making their presence known. The farm was crossed with Permissive paths and other public rights of way which we followed, only going "off piste" at the end of the walk.

Fields are planted for Haylage on a rotational system and to maintain soil health, are grazed by cattle. The 'Ashima Dairy Without Slaughter' operation has recently taken up residence on the farm to the mutual benefit of both the farm and the

dairy. Dotted around the field corners the owners have planted little copses and thick well manged hedgerows, which are cut on a rotational system, both copses and hedgerows providing excellent habitat for invertebrates, birds and mammals.

Here, Jacky pointed out where she regularly sees certain species of birds. There were Bramblings and Reed Buntings in the copses and tens of Yellowhammers in the hedges. Every morning the birds are given 12 kilos of seed which is distributed along an established route and as we watched we saw Ben, one of the farmers throwing out the feed where very quickly Bramblings, Reed Buntings and Chaffinches appeared



Little Bytham organic farm

for the feast. Several areas of trackside and unused patches of ground have been and are being reseeded with suitable mixtures which will flower and set seed, providing flower rich habitat, an important food source for insects, bees, butterflies, and birds.

The stars of the day were the Yellowhammers. Once one was spotted, others appeared as if by magic, flying from the ground to perch on a hedge, their bright yellow heads standing out gloriously in the sun which seemed to appear at that moment in their honour.

It was so windy on the hill that although Jacky knew there were Linnets in the field, they were so well camouflaged against the brown earth with the herbage just beginning to peep through that it was difficult to keep one's binoculars

steady to get good views. We also saw Fallow deer on two occasions but sadly, no hares which Jacky assured us were seen on a regular basis.

We returned to the village hall by way of the farmyard where the beautiful Ashima cattle are kept and despite the windy conditions, we saw a total of 24 species of birds.

Visiting this farm, learning about the land management, seeing numerous Bramblings and Yellowhammers, gave us all a flavour of the biodiversity that these kinds of farms can provide for. A big thank you to Jacky for leading this visit and bringing this farm to the attention of our Society. It is a place well worth visiting, especially later in the year when the butterflies should be abundant. You will be transported back to your childhood days!

Dawn Chorus survey - 7th May 2022

This was to be the third year of carrying out a Dawn Chorus survey at Pickworth Great Wood, which began in 2019. However, we were unable to do one in 2020 due to lock-down and so the second survey was carried out in 2021

This year, on 7th May, the small but hardy group of members of the survey team met at the entrance of the wood at 3.45am and made their way to the centre which had been our base for the last two surveys. Temperature was around 12 degrees C, a little warmer than in previous years although the cloud cover was almost 100% with a few tiny drops of rain which didn't amount to anything much. The time was exactly 4.00 am.

First on the list was the call of the tawny owl and we could distinguish at least two birds. Next, closely following, the distinctive notes of two nightingales at different locations and the ubiquitous woodpigeon constantly cooing.

It was not until 4.24 that we heard the robin and then a blackcap. By 4.27, blackbird and song thrush were in full song but it was not until 4.28am that we heard the cuckoo and chiffchaff.

The main chorus was at its maximum at that time and as it

was getting lighter, the breeze picked up and the birdsong had reached its peak so we set off home.

The full results are shown in the table.

Thanks to Dave Atkinson and Carolyn Baxter who assisted us in this year's survey.



04.00	Tawny owl / Nightingale / woodpigeon
04.20	Carrion crow
04.24	Robin
04.25	Blackcap
04.26	Pheasant
04.27	Blackbird
04.28	Song thrush
04.36	Bluetit
04.39	Willow warbler
04.41	Wren
04.48	Cuckoo
04.49	Great tit
04.56	chiffchaff



Tolethorpe SSSI roadside verge.

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