

Green-winged orchid.
Merry's meadow.



CONTENTS

Diary Dates	2
Weather	3
Amphibians & Reptiles	3
Bats	4-5
Birds	5-7
Botany	7-8
Butterflies	8-9
Fungi	9-10
Orthoptera	10
Insects & Invertebrates	10-12
Plant galls	12
Mammals	13-14
Field Trips	14-16
RNHS contacts	16

Welcome

It was a wonderful spring for flowers! The cowslips were more abundant and long lasting than I think I have ever seen them, and then we were treated to a magnificent display of hawthorn blossom, which, thanks to the dry weather is still showing now – turning pink as it ages, but still adorning the hedges and scrubby areas like a blushing bride! May saw a stupendous display of Green-winged orchids in Merry's meadow. (See above and Botany report inside). Birdsong too has been lovely; all the summer visitors now here, including a few swifts, but not enough, so don't forget to put up swift boxes if you have a suitable site.

As well as the planned events (all of which had good weather and were well supported), do keep on coming out. The business of the society has been running in the background, thanks to your willing and hard working committee, and others. Peter Scott has been working tirelessly against the odds to change our bank accounts to help us use more flexibly and modern systems, and Martin Grimes has been working with HMRC and the charity commission to help us continue to claim gift aid on memberships. We are grateful to everyone who helps in any way, but I need to remind you all that both Peter and Martin are temporary holders of the purse strings, and **we really need a permanent Treasurer to step forward!**

The summer has suddenly hit us with some hot weather, and now we really need some rain. Lets hope that it doesn't coincide with our visit to Stonesby quarry on 2nd July or the great family day at Ketton on August 5th. (see details later in FF). **We look forward to meeting with some of you and your children or grandchildren at Ketton when we hope to enthuse future generations with the wonder of the natural world.** In the meantime, keep on looking out for wildlife, and **let us know what you see!** It doesn't take a huge amount of effort to drop an email or text message to the recorders, who will be delighted to receive them.

Linda Biddle RNHS Chair

DIARY DATES



RNHS Outdoor meetings

It is **IMPORTANT TO BOOK YOUR PLACE** with **Jeff Wilcox-Smith**. Details: Mob: 07946733931 or wilcoxsmith@btinternet.com. If the weather is bad on the day, give him a ring beforehand as it may need to be cancelled. For all the meetings below, please make sure you wear appropriate footwear and clothing to suit the day. Jeff may also be able to help with queries if you are unsure of directions.

Sunday 2nd July, 2.30pm. Stonesby quarry led by Jenny Harris. Anyone with an interest in Botany will find this little grassland quarry a real delight, with pyramidal orchid and autumn gentian amongst other notable plants found here. Of course you can't have flowering plants without seeing the bees and butterflies! **Meet:** Entrance is to the east of Waltham-on-the-wolds along Bescaby lane. Postcode LE14 4AB. Grid ref: SK810 253.

Saturday 5th August. 10.30am and 2.30pm. Ketton Quarry family day. The height of the school holidays, heat and sun (hopefully) and a party of wild Bugs, Butterflies and Wildflowers, showing off their glittering array of

colourful finery! This will be a great day to abandon those Nintendo Wii's and get down there with your butterfly nets and bug boxes. **Park and meet:** in the Scout car park, Pitt Lane, Ketton. PE9 3SZ Grid ref: SK979 053.

Friday 8th September, 7.30pm. Ketton bat walk with Jenny Harris, bat care co-ordinator with Leicestershire and Rutland Bat group. Bats make up about a quarter of our mammal species in the UK, but how many of us have been lucky enough to see one, let alone name it? Join Jenny for a good chance to encounter these charming little creatures. **Meet:** At Aldgate, (Map ref:SK983 042) and park either side of the road without blocking gateways. Postcode PE9 3TD.

RNHS Indoor Evening meetings.

Evening meetings with resume on Tuesday 4th October at 7.30pm at the Volunteer training centre (VTC) Oakham.

Rutland Natural History Society 2024 Photographic Competition

As usual, we plan to hold a photographic competition again this year, but as yet, it is undecided whether to produce cards from a selection of your photographs, or whether to publish another (7th) RNHS Wildlife calendar. However, the rules will be the same as previous years, so, whilst 2024 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.

These photographs will hopefully form part of our Members/Recorders evening on the 5th December 2023. When all the photographs have been received a selection process will take place to choose the best ones for either the calendar or cards. This process is of course subjective and hopefully the photographs will cover a wide range of topics so we can have a good balance of species represented. So 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 possibly get 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 so as to support quality printing. 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. BUT and there is always a BUT.

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

WEATHER

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

87 Empingham Road, Stamford PE9 2SU.

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

April 2023

Atmospheric pressure and wind. In both parameters this was a very variable month with no obvious patterns. The 11th-13th was a short period of very windy conditions associated with the lowest pressure of the month, 994.5 mb on the 12th. This included Storm NOA (Meteo France) and had gusts in excess of 40 mph as well as heavy showers. The highest pressure was 1032 mb on the 3rd.

Temperature. This was a cool April, the mean temperature, 9.40 C, places it at 8th in the decade 2014-2023 with the coldest being 2021 at 7.28 C. There were 2 air frosts on the 1st-2nd and 2nd-3rd, the lowest being the latter at -2.9 C. The end of the month showed signs of it warming up and the highest daytime maximum was 20.3 C on the 29th.

Rain. The total recorded here was 71.8 mm (2.83 inches) which is 173% of my long-term mean of 33 years. More than half of this (56.4%) fell in the period 9th-14th inclusive and included 20.5 mm (0.8 inches) on the 14th.

May 2023

Atmospheric pressure and wind. Essentially a high pressure month, the lowest was 1012 mb on the 9th and the highest was 1033.5 mb on the 26th. During the first 11 days, wind directions were variable but for the remainder of the month were between NW and NE. Wind speeds were generally low early in the day, but often brisker later. There were no named storms.

Temperature. The mean temperature for this month was 13.53 C, placing it 5th in the decade 2014-2023. The lowest night-time minimum was 2.0 C on the 1st-2nd and the highest daytime maximum was 23.5 C on the 24th. These maxima, as one would expect, were higher towards the end of the month but the period referred to above of winds NW-NE must have had an effect.

Rain. A total of 36.9 mm (1.45 inches) represents 76% of my long-term mean of 33 years. This was not evenly distributed over the month, there were 19 days when there was no precipitation and 95% of the total fell in the first half of the month.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

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

E-mail: chasgall@hotmail.com

APRIL & MAY 2023

The most exciting record in these two months was a pregnant-looking **Viviparous Lizard** that was photographed by Tim Caldicott at Gorse Close on Lax Hill. This was near the site where GTM Environmental Ltd had transferred as much of the population as they were able to capture from the site of the new Wing Water Treatment Works in 2007. Subsequent searches had failed to find any evidence of surviving lizards. The finding of a lizard here after 15 years is evidence that lizards are better at hide-and-seek than humans.

There were no records of **Common Frogs** in this period and only two of **Common Toads**. Peter Scott found a toad under a board at Clipsham, which was the first record this century from Clipsham. Linda Clark sent a photograph of a dead toad in her garden which appeared to have two different sorts of insect eggs laid on the skin.



The unfortunate toad in Linda Clark's garden

Smooth Newts were recorded from Oakham, Wing and Lyndon Visitor Centre.



Smooth newt. Dave's back garden. Photo Dave Needham.

Viviparous Lizards were seen at Ketton Quarry as well as Gorse Close as aforementioned.

There was only one **Grass Snake** record from Linda Clark's garden in Wing on 27 May. **Adders** were recorded at Ketton Quarry on three occasions by Dave Needham – one on 3 April, four at two sites on 18 April and three on 1 May.

My thanks to the following who sent records:- T Caldicott, L Clark, A Hill, D Needham, P Scott.

April and May 2023

For much of this period, despite the often warm and sunny days, nights have continued to be relatively chilly; people have commented that there are not many insects about. The only record of bat activity for the period April and May has been of a single bat, noticed on two occasions, passing over my front garden at dusk. It did not appear to be foraging over the garden even though I didn't mow the grass in May, but seemed just to be commuting.

Grounded bats

There were no grounded bats in Rutland in April. The only grounded bat in our area was found in Oakham. A lady phoned at 8.20am on 27 May to say that as she opened a garden umbrella on her patio a small, lively bat fell on her. This male Soprano Pipistrelle, although lively, has not taken well to being hand-fed, and its weight had dropped from 4.2g to 4.0g by 31 May. As the nights are still cold, I continue to coax it to eat until the weather improves. Although not in Rutland, a converted stable block in Harringworth (only just over the border) has a maternity colony of Soprano Pipistrelles, where almost every year, adult females and later, juveniles find their way into a first-floor office, then under a door and down the stairs, where they are trapped in the hallway, unable to find their way back. On 31 May five adult females were found, dehydrated, in the hall. One died but the other four, taken into care, were rehydrated, given a small feed of mealworms and released the same evening. Bats were already emerging from the roost, and the released bats flew off in the same direction.

Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project (NNPP)

On 27th and 28th May, Tom Bennett, a member of Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Group (LRBG) and Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group (DBCG), carried out bat box checking and harp trapping at Rutland Water under licence for the NNPP. Surveys for this Project have been carried out since 2014, with the number of Nathusius' pipistrelles caught and fitted with individually numbered rings now standing at 70 male bats. He was assisted by Courtney and Claire from Derbyshire and by myself and Linda Clark from LRBG. Two sites were surveyed; Barnsdale Wood, where only bat boxes were checked, and Lax Hill where, in addition to checking bat boxes, Tom also carried out harp trapping.

Barnsdale Wood, 27 May 2023, bat box checking.

All except one of the boxes are of wooden construction, with one Schwegler 'woodcrete' box of the 1FF style, which has two internal compartments and is open at the bottom. All 47 boxes listed were checked and the plan was not to handle any of the bats as there was a risk of females being pregnant, except for any Nathusius' pipistrelles found. These would be examined and ringed if they did not already have a ring.

The results were as follows:

- 3 boxes were empty.
- 23 boxes contained droppings, sometimes quite large quantities.
- 7 boxes contained a single Soprano pipistrelle.
- 1 box contained a single Nathusius pipistrelle.
- 2 boxes contained other animal life, i.e. 1 slug
1 spider.
- 11 boxes were damaged (most had fallen off, but some had damaged roofs).

Tom replaced some of the broken boxes after checking was finished and put up two 'woodcrete' boxes.

Nathusius' Pipistrelle

The Nathusius' Pipistrelle in Box 43 at Barnsdale Wood was an adult male, a re-trap with the ring number J16345. He was ringed in 2021 at Barnsdale but had not been trapped since, although two further box checks had been carried out there.

Lax Hill Wood, 28 May 2023, bat box checking.

In Lax Hill there are 30 boxes still in place of a variety of box styles which, like those in Barnsdale Wood, were erected by Joelle Wooley during her time managing the Education Department at the Anglian Water Visitor Centre. There are 11 Schwegler 'Woodcrete' boxes of the 2F and 2FN style, including a 1FF open-base type; there are 19 wooden boxes. Most of the wooden boxes are numbered; all but 2 of the 'woodcrete' boxes are not numbered, because the surface is too rough. The results were as follows:

- 8 boxes had active nests with eggs or chicks (2 Schwegler, 5 wooden).
- 13 boxes had old nests or bird droppings.
- 7 boxes were completely empty.
- 1 box was not accessible for checking as it was too high (no sound of chicks).
- 1 box had a Soprano Pipistrelle in it (roosting above an old nest).

Although not all the boxes with obvious chicks were inspected, it seemed clear that the nests were mostly those of blue tits or great tits. One nest had eggs that were white with reddish brown spots; one nest had ten blue tit chicks, another had six very pink baby birds in it. Where chicks were very vocal, the boxes were not opened as the contents were obvious, occasionally with adult tits alarm calling nearby.

Boxes around Volunteer Training Centre

A group of boxes, both wood and 'woodcrete' Schwegler type, were checked on the morning of 28 May (number not known). Two Soprano Pipistrelles were found, and in one of the woodcrete boxes a dead Noctule bat was found in the entrance, cause of death unknown.

Trapping in Hambleton Wood

Tom Bennett and his small group carried out harp trapping overnight on 27 – 28 May; the number of traps used is not known. It was a cool night.

Results: 10 Soprano Pipistrelles
1 Common Pipistrelle
1 Daubenton's bat

Other bat box checking:

In the Wildlife Trust's east Leicestershire and Rutland woodland bat box schemes, the boxes were mostly put up by Nathalie Cossa, who checks them and replaces broken ones. Replacement boxes are either of the Kent bat box style with two internal compartments or of a style designed by Dorset Bat Group member Colin Morris with around five forward-facing slots. (See Bat Conservation Trust website for details of these two and other styles).

Prior's Coppice Wood, 26 April 2023

Nathalie Cossa, formerly a Conservation Officer with LRWT, checked bat boxes in Prior's Coppice, helped by two members of the Bat Group. Thirty boxes were checked, of which 15 boxes contained bats. All these bats were Soprano Pipistrelles.

Launde Big Wood, 1st May 2023

Although not in Rutland, the Launde Woods are close

enough to our borders for RNHS members to be interested. Also checked by Nathalie Cossa, the Big Wood scheme has 50 boxes. Eighteen bats were found, with 13 Soprano Pipistrelles, two Brown Long-eared (BLE) bats (in separate boxes), two pipistrelle species, one bat not identified to species. One box had a BLE and a Soprano Pipistrelle in separate slots of the same Kent box.

Launde Park Wood 17 May 2023

At this site, 39 boxes were checked in a mixture of Kent, Colin Morris and Schwegler boxes, led by Nathalie Cossa, assisted by five trainees: four members of LRBG and Sophia Attwood-Clark of LRWT. I also attended to refresh my memory of the methods involved. Twenty bats were found: 19 Sopranos and one Common Pipistrelle in 17 of the boxes. All were single bats, except in one box where two were roosting closely side by side.

My thanks to Nathalie Cossa for allowing me to join her bat box checking group at Launde Park Wood and for providing records from the other woods. Thanks also to Tom Bennett for the work he has been doing at Rutland Water and for opening the survey to Linda Clark and myself. Thanks to Tim Sexton for ensuring that these RW surveys can continue and providing Tom, who comes over from Hinckley, the opportunity to sleep-over at VTC.

BIRDS

Recorder Terry Mitcham

30 Sutherland Way, Stamford PE9 2TB. Telephone: 01780 751268

E-mail: joterpat@btinternet.com

April 2023.

Highlights. Rutland Water had a Firecrest (15th), Arctic Skua (21st) and a Little Tern (23rd). Kittiwakes were at Rutland Water (7th, 14th) and there was a Bearded Tit at Egleton (4th).

Rutland Water. The count (25th) produced ten Shelduck, three Mandarin Ducks, 89 Gadwall, 34 Teal, one Pintail, eight Shoveler, 13 Pochard, 618 Tufted Ducks, seven Goldeneye and 15 Little Egrets. One or two Garganey were present from (5th) with three (20th). There were three Scaup (17th) and two Common Scoter (10th). The Slavonian Grebe remained all month, moulting in to breeding plumage.

Some wader counts included 28 Oystercatchers (25th), six Avocets (21st), nine Whimbrel (27th), three Bar-tailed Godwits (20th), 11 Black-tailed Godwits (17th), 28 Dunlin (28th), three Common Sandpipers (28th) and a Greenshank (23rd). There were six Little Gulls (21st), 15 Common Terns (28th) and 28 Arctic Terns (17th). A Cuckoo was heard 20th and there was a Peregrine (21st, 22nd). A Wheatear was at Egleton (23rd) and Bramblings stayed to (22nd).

Eyebrook Reservoir. There was a male Garganey (17th) and a Common Scoter (16th). An Osprey was present (23rd) when there were four Common Terns. A Whinchat was seen (22nd) and there were four Stonechats (8th) with two on (23rd) along with four Yellow Wagtails.

Other Sites. There were two Barnacle Geese and an Oystercatcher at Banthorpe GP (20th). Fort Henry Ponds had a pair of Mandarin Ducks (1st), with eight Shoveler and 41 Gadwall (8th) and a Garganey (8th, 11th). A Little Owl was at Belmesthorpe (5th) and Peregrines were at two sites. A Grasshopper Warbler was seen near Ridlington (20th). There were Nightingales at two sites from (20th) and two Wheatears at Great Casterton (25th).

Mute swans flying over Egleton.



May 2023.

Highlights. Rutland Water had a Spoonbill (6th), a Temminck's Stint (30th-31st), four Little Stints and eight Kittiwakes (29th). There was a Sandwich Tern (1st) and Little Terns (6th, 8th).

Rutland Water. The count (23rd) produced two Mandarin Ducks, 141 Gadwall, 17 Pochard, 175 Tufted Ducks, seven Little Egrets, two Great White Egrets, 159 Great Crested Grebes and 99 Coot. Up to four Garganey (1st-30th) were seen and the Slavonian Grebe remained to (5th). Two Black-necked Grebes were seen (29th). Marsh Harriers were regular at both reserves. Some wader counts included 18 Oystercatchers, 13 Avocets (23rd), single Grey Plovers on five dates, 11 Whimbrel (3rd), 14 Turnstones (15th), a Knot (28th), Ruff (6th, 18th), three Sanderling (27th) and Wood Sandpipers on four dates. A Mediterranean Gull was seen (13th), Arctic Terns (13th-19th) and nine Black Terns (27th).

Eyebrook Reservoir. There was a Garganey (29th) and a Black-necked Grebe (14th). Two Ospreys were seen

(21st) and 20 Common Terns were counted (21st). A pair of Stonechats was present all month and a Yellow Wagtail was seen (13th, 21st).

Other Sites. Shoveler bred at Fort Henry Ponds and Little Grebes at Greetham GC. Curlew were found at Merry Meadow and Cottesmore Airfield. Barn Owls were at a nest box at one site. Tawny Owls bred at Beaumont Chase Farm and Little Owls were at Edith Weston. Peregrines were at two Rutland breeding sites and in Stamford and Ravens were at five breeding sites. Cetti's Warblers sang at Tinwell and Geeston. Two Nightingales were at Quarry Farm to at least (22nd) and the Redstart remained at Tunneley Wood all month. Yellow Wagtails were noted only in Exton Park with a Grey Wagtail at Tinwell Pumping Station.

My thanks to the following for their records: -

T.P. Appleton, R.F. Baker, A.J.&L. Biddle, M.&G. Griffin, J. Harris, P. Langston, LROS, S. Lister, T. Mitcham, B. Moore, J. Morrell, J.W. Nourish, C.I. Park, RWNr, T. Sexton, P. Taylor, L. Worrall

Wildfowl count for April and May2023

	RW 25.04.23	RW 23.05.23	EBR 23.04.23	EBR 21.05.23
Canada goose	106	108	6	24
Greylag goose	173	176	4	33
Mute swan	152	232	70	53
Egyptian goose	15	21		
Shelduck	10	9		
Mandarin duck	3	2		
Garganey	1			
Shoveler	8	5	2	
Gadwall	89	141	24	13
Wigeon	2	1	3	
Mallard	223	267	28	77
Pintail	1			
Teal	34	3	44	
Pochard	25	17		
Tufted duck	618	175	83	1
Scaup	1			
Goldeneye	7			
Little Grebe	1			
Great Crested Grebe	154	159	33	22
Slavonian Grebe	1			
Grey Heron	10	7	4	1
Great White Egret	1	2		
Little Egret	15	7	2	
Cormorant	200	198	4	14
Moorhen	19	10	1	
Coot	79	99		2
Kingfisher		1		
TOTAL	1948	1640	308	240

Wildfowl counts for April and May 2023 cont.

	FHP & Exton park 22.04.23	FHP & Exton park 21.05.23	Banthorpe GP 20.04.23	Banthorpe GP 22.05.23
Canada goose			2	
Barnacle goose			2	
Greylag goose	20	27	21	22
Mute swan	7	7	2	2
Egyptian goose	2	1		
Shelduck		1		
Mandarin duck	1			
Shoveler	5	4		
Gadwall	28	13		
Mallard	42	34		
Teal	6			
Tufted duck	35	23	3	
Grey heron		1		1
Little Egret			1	
Moorhen	9	8		2
Coot	32	26	6	4
Total	86	145	37	31

BOTANY

RECORDER John Rodgers

8 Summerfield, Oakham LE15 6PZ. Telephone: 01572 757278
E-mail: rnhsbotanyrecord@gmail.com

April/May 23

Lots of May blossom, lots of Cow Parsley; it must be spring! Only one record of Bluebells has been received although Barnsdale Woods are carpeted as usual, and in places you can see the red, white and blue of Red Campion, Greater stitchwort and Bluebell. Elsewhere in Barnsdale the Moschatel is in flower.

The spectacle of the moment is in Merry's Meadows. Jenny Harris, accompanied by a group of volunteers did a count there of spikes of Green-winged Orchids, as in other years (see front cover). They found an amazing total of 19,164, of which, 18,300 were found in the first field, Cow Pasture Close, another 386 in Donkey Paddocks, to the right at the end of the path and 460 in Long Field to the left at the end of the path. This is very many more than have been seen in previous years. In Cow Pastures the orchids are on the ridges of the old ridge and furrow system, whilst there are many Cuckoo Flowers in the furrows.

At the end of March Steve Woodward discovered a plant in Essendine on the corner of an open area. He and Geoffrey Hall thought Wild Clary, *Salvia verbenaca* was an uncommon plant for vc55 so we asked the County Council not to mow where the leaves were growing. When I went to see the plant on the 24th of May the grass had not been cut and it was in flower. A local resident who is also anxious to protect the plant, put a notice alongside it also

asking for the grass not to be cut (See photo below). The County Council now has a policy of not cutting verges and grass spaces unless necessary and the results can be seen all around the county, with plant life flourishing. We should all be grateful that they have adopted this enlightened policy.



**Wild Clary.
Photo
John
Rodgers**

Other records include Early Purple and Common Spotted Orchids at Clipsham Yew Tree Avenue and so far, one Pyramidal Orchid at Bloody Oaks Quarry. Star of Bethlehem is growing on a verge at Barrowden. It usually can be found on Loves Lane Empingham, but there are no records from there as yet. Adder's Tongue Fern was seen at Hebe's Wood at the end of May. A "gentian" at Bloody Oaks Quarry turned out to be a rather chewed up Clustered Bell Flower, attacked by rabbits, not an uncommon occurrence. Such flowers have often been mistaken for rarer plants in the past.

It pays to keep an eye on pavements and gutters in the towns and villages. Amongst the Groundsel, Chickweed, Ivy-leaved Toadflax, Shepherds Purse and Smooth Sow-thistle I found a plant I didn't recognise. Geoffrey Hall identified it as a Cornsalad and after it had produced fruit which resembled coffee beans, he thought it was Keel-



**Star -of-
bethlehem.
Barrowden
RVNR verge.
Photo C.
Baxter**

fruited Cornsalad, *Valerianella carinata*, again a scarce plant.

Thanks to all who sent in records.

BUTTERFLIES

RECORDER Martin Quinlan

4 Bayley Close, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9TG

Telephone: 01572 820337

April and May 2023

April and May offered poor conditions for observing butterflies for a lot of the time. However, it did improve throughout May.

The first **DINGY SKIPPER** was seen at Ketton Quarry (KQ) on 3rd May with the only other records also from KQ. There were 3 on 11th May, one on 17th and a maximum of 6 on 21st.

GRIZZLED SKIPPER records were also only from KQ with the first on 10th May, 2 on 11th, one on 17th and a maximum of 3 on 21st.

ORANGE-TIP is always a welcome sight in Spring and there were a few records in April after the first in Oakham (O) on 8th. Further April sightings were a male in Uppingham (Upp) on 17th, 2 at KQ also on 17th, 4 at KQ on 18th, 2 at KQ on 22nd and 2 in Upp on 24th. May saw an increase with numerous sightings in Barrow (B), O, Upp, KQ and Langham (L).

BRIMSTONE may well be the original "butter-fly" of Spring in bygone times. The first bright yellow males are another uplifting sight after Winter. The first records were on a warm 3rd April with 8 at KQ and 2 in Upp. Only 3 other April records followed with males seen in O on 8th, Pickworth (P) on 9th and Upp on 12th. May records were more numerous and widespread with records from O, Ketton (K), Upp, Rutland Water (RW), KQ, L, Merry's Meadows (MM) and Barleythorpe (Bar).

LARGE WHITE was first seen at KQ on 22nd April and then in O on 3rd May, Upp on 16th May and KQ on 17th



**Brimstone
Ketton
quarry.
Photo Peter
Scott**

May. **SMALL WHITE** was not recorded in April, then the first was seen at KQ on 1st May with 2 at RW on 3rd and 3 at MM on 18th. **GREEN-VEINED WHITE** was only seen in April at B on 7th and at P on 9th and 26th.

April records of **SPECKLED WOOD** started with one at KQ on 18th, 2 there on 22nd and one at P on 26th. There was a maximum of 3 at RW on 3rd May with singles at Lyndon (Lyn) and KQ on the same day. Finally, one was at L on 26th.

SMALL HEATH appeared in May at KQ on 11th with 2 present followed by one there on 17th and another two on 21st.

The only **RED ADMIRAL** reported was at Manton (M) on 15th May. Also, the only **PAINTED LADY** was in Leighfield (LF) on 18th May.

The maximum number of **PEACOCK** was also the first record with 10 at KQ on 3rd April. Further April records were singles at P on 4th and 9th, O on 8th, Upp on 9th and RW on 25th. Two were at KQ on 22nd April. The only records in May were on 3rd with 5 at KQ and one at Wing (W).

The first record of **SMALL TORTOISESHELL** was at P on 4th April with just 2 further April records at O on 8th and RW on 25th. No May records.

The **COMMA** was seen in April at KQ on 3rd with 3 present and then again at KQ on 22nd April and 1st May.

SMALL COPPER was only seen on 3 dates in May at MM on 18th, K on 21st and RW on 24th.

KQ produced the only **GREEN HAIRSTREAK** sightings with 4 on 18th April, 3 on 3rd May and the last a single on 21st May.

It appears to have been a good Spring for **HOLLY BLUE**. After the first record of a single in Upp on 13th April there were 4 at KQ on 18th, 3 there on 22nd and then singles on many dates in O between 18th and 30th April and one in B on 30th April. It was then widely recorded throughout the whole of May from O, M, Upp, KQ, K, L, RW, Lyn,

Holly blue.
Ketton
quarry.
Photo Peter
Scott



Hambleton (Ham) and Eyebrook (Eye).

Three **BROWN ARGUS** were seen at KQ on 11th May and the only **COMMON BLUE** was also reported from KQ on 17th.

A total of 19 species were seen in these two months.

I would like to thank the following for sending in records: A. Lawrence, D. Needham, D. Masters, L. Biddle, D & J Ball, M. Markham, P. Scott, M. Dixon, N. Webb, C. Baxter and T. Caldicott.

Note from Editor: Many thanks to Alistair Lawrence for pointing out that the photo on page 9 of April issue is a Peacock butterfly and not a Small Tortoiseshell.

FUNGI

RECORDER C Baxter

37 Stockerston Cres. Uppingham. LE15 9UA

Mob: 07729298125

April – May 23.

April started off with some spectacular photos sent in of **Semi-free morels** (*Mitrophora semilibera*) found at RWNR Egleton reserve around Mallard hide, Snipe hide, around Lax hill and Cherry wood, all sent in by Linda Clark via Jeff Davies and Tony Clark and Linda and Anthony Biddle found 6 at Walk farm path in Pickworth. Records for these came in for the whole of April plus a **Common morel** (*Morchella esculenta*) found at Egleton. Naturespot lists Semi-free morels as occasional in Leicestershire and Rutland so thank you for your photo's and sightings.



Semi-free
morel near
RWNR
Mallard
hide. Photo
Jeff Davies

April also saw the start of the "Basidiomycetes", the gilled fungi being spotted, with most commonly seen, the **Fairy-ring-champignon** (*Marasmius oreades*). John Rogers sent in a photo of a perfect semi-circle of specimens in his garden lawn, a common place to find them. (See opposite). They were also found in grass at Seaton meadow and in a field overlooking the Eyebrook reservoir. You only need to walk in a grassy field, and they can be spotted everywhere. Another grassland mushroom, a pretty, dark chocolate brown colour, the **Turf mottlegill** (*Panaeolus fimicola*) was found in my back lawn in early April, although the Brown mottlegill – much lighter in colour, is best known for springing up annoyingly on people's freshly mown lawns. A little huddle of **Glistening Inkcaps** (*Coprinellus micaceus*) were found hiding in the bottom of a hollow tree stump at Barnsdale woods in early April and then a bit later in Cherry wood. They are smallish ochreous incaps, with lines radiating inwards from the edge of the caps and with

a definite sparkle to the tops of the caps. Jacky Morel sent in a photo of what looked like **St. Georges mushroom**, (*Calocybe gambosa*) found at Barnsdale gardens in early May but has not been positively identified from the photo alone. Under a Leylandii hedge and spilling onto the grass verge along a lane at Barleythorpe towards the end of May was an enormous clump of **Sulphur tuft** (*Hypholoma fasciculare*), mostly old and losing their identification features, but some fresh ones were found, to be able to identify them. This is often the tricky problem with fungi. Too young and they could be any number of species and too immature for a spore print. Too old and they gloop in your hands and are not worth trying to identify. A mid-life specimen will hold its shape and deliver a good spore print for identification.



Fairy ring
Champ-
ignon.
Photo
John
Rodgers

Bracket fungi can sometimes look quite spectacular growing out from the side of a tree, and in early May, right up until the end of the month, RWNR Cherry wood produced some of the best. **Dryad's saddle** (*Polyporus squamosus*) looks just like the name implies - if you still believe in tree nymphs galloping through the forests on horses! Once you have found one of these handsome fungi, you will always remember it and probably be able to find it there again for a few more years. Who named **Chicken of the woods** (*Laetiporus sulphureus*) "Chicken of the woods?" I once ate a plateful for breakfast, kindly served up by a mushroom forager and it was horrible. I politely ate it, but it DID NOT taste like chicken! Apart from the taste, this is another large striking bracket, bright yellow and undulating when young, and was found by Tim Sexton,

again in Cherry wood in early May. **An Artist's bracket** (*Ganoderma applanatum*) was found in Cherry wood at the end of the month by Linda Clark. It looked to me a bit like an artist's beret but to confirm its common name, Linda sent in a photo of what looked like Einsteins theory of relativity scribbled on the white underside of it. Three species of slime mould have been found. RWNR Cherry wood gave up an interesting one – **Deer vomit** (*Fusicolla merismoides*), which was found by Linda Clark on a piece of cut Alder wood. This species is apparently “caused by a pathogen in the tree sap which oozes out of wounds in the Spring”. That probably means that the slime mould is attracted to the bacterial pathogen which it eats,

but I stand corrected if wrong. **False puffball** (*Reticularia lycoperdon*) was found twice – once at Oakham canal, inside hollowed out tree roots.(see opposite). There were two specimens here, close to each other. An old one spilling over with dark brown smoky spores, and the other, a fresh white specimen, very like the fungus puffball which gives it its name. The other specimen was found at Cherry wood on fallen Ash. Lastly, another suspiciously named slime mould was found again at Cherry wood - **Wolf's milk** (*Lycogala epidendrum*). It is found quite commonly, but it takes quite a lot of imagination to see why these little orange/red blobs were so named.

There will be an extended Moth report in August Fieldfare but keep your sightings coming in.

ORTHOPTERA

RECORDER Phil Rudkin

10 Brooke Avenue, Stamford, PE9 2RU. Telephone: 01780 762998

E-mail: phil.rudkin@talktalk.net

April – May 2023

As to be expected, only nymphs of the Orthoptera are in this report; action starts in mid-June!

Bush Crickets.

Dark Bush Cricket, *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*

Early Instar Nymphs were found in three locations; on the Egleton reserve, Rutland Water at Cherry Wood (near the moth trap), the Anglian Bird Watching Centre, front flower garden, and the Summer Trail, near Grebe Hide. All 15th May 2023.

Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima*

One Early Instar Nymph, in the famous Wing Village Allotments 20th May 2023

Groundhoppers

Slender Groundhopper, *Tetrix subulata*

One early Instar Nymph, in the Wing Allotments. 20th May 2023. One early instar Nymph, in the Gwash valley, at Martinthorpe. 19th May 2023.

Thank you to Tim Sexton for his Rutland Water finds, and Tim Caldicott for his Wing Village Allotments, and Martinthorpe Gwash Valley reports. Thank you also to Tim Sexton for sending in photo's and sightings.

Slender Ground-hopper. Photo Phil Rudkin



INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

RECORDER Jayne Walker

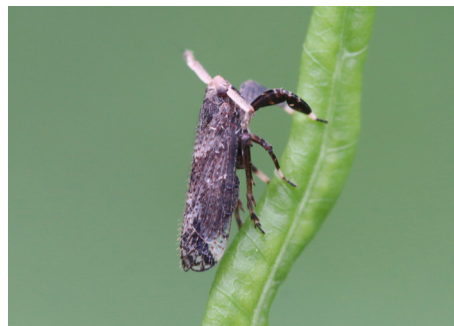
11 Vicars Close, off Empingham Road, Exton LE15 8 AW. Telephone 01572 868624. E-mail Jayne8586@hotmail.com

April - May 2023

As write this, the weather is finally brightening up and the sun is shining, although, we still don't seem to have got rid of the cold wind. Hopefully the warmer weather will get the insects buzzing about.

There have been 57 records over the last two months, with some being reported on the RNHS WhatsApp group.

One notable record was the **Plant Hopper (Asiraca clavicornis)** discovered by Tim Sexton, LRWT on the Rutland Water Reserve which is **a first for VC55** and perhaps the Midlands. One of the identifying features is the antennae, which look very strange. (See photo opposite).



Plant hopper. Asiraca clavicornis.

Photo Tim Sexton

Insect species list for April and May 2023

Mayflies			
MAY	<i>Ephemera danica</i>	Exton	Vicars close
	<i>Ephemera danica</i>	Martinsthorpe	
<u>Dragonflies & Damselflies</u>			
MAY			
Hairy dragonfly	<i>Brachytron pratense</i>	Leighfield fishponds	
Broad-bodied chaser	<i>Libellula depressa</i>	Wing allotments x 5 and Stamford	
Large red damselfly	<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i>	Exton and Stamford	
<u>Spiders</u>			
APRIL			
Jumping spider	<i>Salticus scenicus</i>	Exton	
MAY			
Cucumber green orb spider	<i>Araniella cucurbitina sensu lato</i>	Stoke dry	
Wolf spider	<i>Pardosa amentata</i>	Wing allotment	
Orb spider	<i>Tetragnatha montana</i>	Wing allotment	
Nursery web spider	<i>Pisaura mirabilis</i>	Wing allotment	
<u>Bugs</u>			
MAY			
Red & black froghopper	<i>Cercopis vulnerata</i>	Stoke Dry	
Blue shieldbug	<i>Zicrona caerulea</i>	Rutland water	
Scarce fungus weevil	<i>Platyrhinus resinosus</i>		
Plant hopper	<i>Asiraca clavicornis</i>		
Hairy shieldbug	<i>Dolycoris baccarum</i>		
<u>Beetles</u>			
APRIL			
7-spot ladybird	<i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i>	Exton & Ketton quarry	
Green tiger beetle	<i>Cicindela campestris</i>	Ketton quarry x 2	
Pine ladybird	<i>Exochomus quadri-pustulatus</i>	Oakham	Barmstedt drive

10-spot ladybird	<i>Adalia 10-punctata</i>	Manton	St Mary's road
MAY			
Green tiger beetle	<i>Cicindela campestris</i>	Ketton quarry	
Cardinal beetle	<i>Pyrochroa coccinea</i>	Ketton quarry	
Kidney-spot ladybird	<i>Chilocorus reni-pustulatus</i>	Wing allotment	
24-spot ladybird	<i>Sub-coccinella 24-punctata</i>	Rutland water	
16-spot ladybird	<i>Tytthaspis 16-punctata</i>	Leighfield	
Rufous-Shouldered Longhorn beetle	<i>Anaglyptus mysticus</i>	Rutland water	
Variable longhorn beetle	<i>Stenocorus meridianus</i>	Leighfield	
Varied carpet beetle	<i>Anthrenus verbasci</i>	Oakham	
22-spot ladybird	<i>Psyllobora 22-punctata</i>	Wing	
<u>Diptera</u>			
APRIL			
Dark-edged bee fly	<i>Bombylius major</i>	Exton	
MAY			
Dark-edged bee fly	<i>Bombylius major</i>	Oakham	
Hoverfly	<i>Volucella bombylans</i>	Stoke dry	
Crane fly	<i>Tipula vernalis</i>	Exton	
<u>Hymen-optera</u>			
APRIL			
Large Red-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus lapidarius</i>	Exton	
Honey bee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>	Exton	
Red-tailed Mason bee	<i>Osmia bicornis</i>	Exton & Ketton quarry	
Common carder bee	<i>Bombus pascourum</i>	Exton & Ketton quarry	
White-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus lacorum agg</i>	Exton	
Two-coloured Mason bee	<i>Osmia bicolor</i>	Ketton quarry	

Buff-tailed bumblebee	<i>Bombus terrestris</i>	Ketton quarry	
Tawny Mining bee	<i>Andrena fulva</i>	Oakham	
Ashy Mining bee	<i>Andrena cineraria</i>	Exton	
Hairy-footed flower bee	<i>Anthopora plumipes</i>	Exton & Oakham	
	<i>Ichneuman stramentor</i>	Exton	
Tawny Mining bee	<i>Andrena fulva</i>	Exton & Oakham	
Ashy Mining bee	<i>Andrena cineraria</i>	Exton park	
Goodens nomad bee	<i>Nomada goodeniana</i>	Exton	

I would like to thank the following for sending in records:
T. Caldicott, C. Baxter, L. Biddle, D. Needham, J. Rodgers,
D. Masters and L. Clark.

MAY			
Red-tailed Mason bee	<i>Osmia bicolor</i>	Ketton quarry	
Red-tailed cuckoo bee	<i>Bombus rupestris</i>	Martinsthorpe	

Below. Broad-bodied chaser in garden pond. Photo Linda Biddle.



Below is a Highlighted list of invertebrate species found at RWNr by Tim Sexton.

Longhorn beetles - *Rhagium mordax*, *Clytus arietis*, *Stenocorus meridianus*, *Grammoptera ruficornis*, *Pseudovadonia livida*

Click Beetle – *Ctenicera pectinicornis* (four on Lyndon Meadows)

Weevil – *Platystomos albinus* (a nationally scarce weevil associated with bracket fungi on Alder and Beech)

Butterflies – Green Hairstreak – (two on Lax Hill around recently coppiced area of Dogwood)

Hemiptera - *Aphrophora salicina* (**Willow Spittlebug** – on goat willow in Cherry Wood), *Aphrophora salicina* (Summer Trail – near Grebe Hide).

Diptera - *Odontomyia tigrina* (**Black Colonel – a Soldier Fly**) Cherry Wood Ponds

Hymenoptera - *Rhyssa persuasoria* (**Sabre Wasp**) – an uncommon species of ichneumon wasp (one of the largest species in Europe) associated with deadwood, where it parasitizes longhorn beetle larvae. Found in the log store near Cherry Wood.

PLANT GALLS

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

87 Empingham Road, Stamford PE9 2SU.

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

April – May 2023.

The new (3rd) edition of British Plants Galls was published on April 6 and, if nothing else, goes to show how much has come to light about this subject in the twelve years since the 2nd edition. Some of it, for example, galls on algae (!), will only appeal to a very few people who can identify algae; but in general, it represents a Great Leap Forward. Galls locally are beginning to be found and, as usual at this time of year, are caused by fungi. Verge 5 at Essendine had the rust on Groundsel and 'white blister' on Shepherd's Purse on the 17th, and Yew Tree Avenue on the following day had rusts on Dog's Mercury and Betony and a gall on Box which is caused by a psyllid.

The rust on Betony is considered to be rare and is the only record I know of in the County.

Thanks to Paul Bennett, Martin Grimes and Roy Lemmon



**A Gall on Sloe.
Photo L. Biddle**

April and May 2023

In May we began an exciting new project to try to map the presence of small mammal species at RWNr, under the guidance of Tim Sexton. This is following an earlier investigation into the use of tubes to find signs of the presence of water shrews, which proved time consuming and limited in information. Volunteers at VTC produced boxes in which to mount trail cameras and magnifying lenses, and they were then placed in an area of the reserve and left for two weeks, rebaiting after the first week. After the 2 week period, the boxes were re-sited, and the exercise repeated. We hope that we shall eventually have a simple outline of which species are present and whereabouts in the reserve. The first area gave us lots of photos of **brown rats**, with the occasional **wood mouse**, but at the second siting into the reedbeds there were numerous **voles** and **common shrews**, and one or two pictures of **water shrews**, much to our pleasure and satisfaction.

This year, **otters** have been very active and easily seen at RWNr; April and May were no exception. At the beginning of April two were observed feeding on Lagoon 2, and two weeks later, one briefly swam by an observer. At Waderscrape, one appeared at the end of one of the channels in early May. Evidence for their presence was repeatedly found on mink rafts in the regular surveys, spraint and prints on almost every raft in both April and May. An inquisitive otter visited two of the trail camera boxes several minutes apart one night in May.

A **water vole** was seen swimming in one of the channels in front of Waderscrape hide at the end of May but sadly the story of water voles generally is far less positive. In the surveys done on rafts in March, virtually no signs were found, and only one raft has shown droppings during April. We hope their number will recover as the season progresses. They must be still there!!

In Marian Markham's garden, **badgers** appeared on the camera on 5 occasions in April, every night at 1.00am, but not in May. The only other badgers were sadly road casualties at Ridlington, Brooke road Braunston, and three separate individuals between Stamford and Shacklewell Hollow in early April.

Happily, a few more **fox** reports have come in this time; one seen in Hambleton woods, another crossing the playing field at Ridlington mid-morning, and another observed from Waderscrape hide RWNr. In addition, at Langham, the fox visited the garden at Orchard close on 4 occasions in April and 15 in May.

The only **stoat** recorded was seen in full view of visitor centre at Lyndon, as it chased a rabbit around in front of the building, and a single **weasel** report came from VTC -also running around, this time in the yard between the buildings.

Brown hares were commonly seen in many parts of the county, in Exton and Cottesmore, where the largest numbers were recorded and also Burley, Pickworth, Eggleton and Barrow. **Rabbits** are still around at Langham, Exton, Barrow, Pickworth and Ridlington, where a young

rabbit made a brave appearance in Mr Morell's garden, the first seen there-but perhaps not the last!

A **hedgehog** was a regular visitor to Orchard close in Langham throughout April, on some nights with two or three appearances, and at the end of the month it was joined on three occasions by another. Single hedgehogs were recorded during May, though early in the month several appearances were made in one night – possibly separate individuals. There was only one May night when 2 individuals were seen together. At Barmstedt drive Oakham, one or two hogs emerged every night in April (except when heavy rain prevented) and one again in May, until the 23rd when sadly he/she stopped visiting.

Bank voles were seen under reptile shelters at Burley Wood, and occasionally on the patio of the Willows Barrow. A **common shrew** was almost stepped on at Barnsdale gardens in early May by Jacky Morell, and they have appeared quite regularly on the cameras at RWNr reedbeds, together with the occasional water shrew, much to our delight.

A **Long tailed fieldmouse** popped up on the Langham camera on several nights in April and May, two together on 6th and 7th of April, and occasionally one also appeared on the cameras in the reedbed at RWNr, between the voles, shrews and rats.

Walk farm and Pickworth wood were the only sites recording **Fallow deer** during April and May, while three reports of **Roe deer** came from Shacklewell Hollow, Pickworth and Cherry wood RWNr. **Muntjac** appeared frequently in April and May on the camera at Langham, and are also reported from Pickworth wood, Ridlington and Barrow. Together with the **grey squirrels** in ones, twos and occasionally threes, these Langham animals are recurrent visitors to the garden of the Orchard close. Grey squirrels are also regulars at The Willows in Barrow. Thankyou to all our regular contributors, and please keep on sending in your reports.

Duncan and Jane Ball, Anthony Biddle, Laura Brady, Charles Gallimore, Marian Markham, Diana Masters, Terry Mitcham, Jacky and John Morell, Phil Rudkin T. Sexton, D. Smalley and Libby Smith.



Squirrel in
Wardley
woods.
Photo C.
Baxter

FIELD TRIPS

Visit to Launde big wood. Sunday 23rd April 2023

It was an overcast St Georges day that 9 members met Andy Neilson of the LRWT at the start of a walk around Launde Big Wood. The rain kept away, but we encountered plenty of water once we were in the wood. It covers about 42 hectares on clay soil and situated on a slope, so wet rides and a stream or two were to be expected.

We approached the wood along a track from the road, admiring the view of the rolling countryside as we went. Andy told us about the wood. It is larger than its neighbour, Launde Park Wood but is less changed over time. It was clear felled during the last war but has been well managed with careful coppicing during the care of the Wildlife Trust. Many elms were lost to Dutch Elm disease in the 1960s, but some remain, and now the many ash trees are succumbing to Ash dieback. Another problem comes from grazing muntjac which destroy regenerating shoots and saplings. Short of reintroducing Lynx, they can only be controlled by shooting, which does occur from time to time.

Andy led us on a circular tour of the wood where we heard Song thrush, Blackcap, Chiff-chaff and Willow warbler and saw Nuthatch and Raven. Amongst other flowers, we found Wood Anemone, Dog's Mercury, and several big glades of Bluebells. Herb Paris and Toothwort are also present here, though we didn't try to find these. One of Andy's interests is butterflies and he spoke a lot about the various species he has found in the wood. Most exciting is Purple Emperor which has been seen regularly over the last few years. The Launde examples don't seem to



descend to eat dung, as they are said to do at Fermyn woods. They are seen more in the tree tops but patience will be rewarded. The same goes for Purple Hairstreak, also present, as are Silver-washed Fritillary and White-letter Hairstreak. The latter lives around a stand of elms along the furthest edge of the wood.

We had a very interesting time, entirely due to Andy's guidance and explanations. We learnt a lot about woodland management and about the Trust's stewardship. It's a reserve worth visiting, full of interest. Just remember to wear the right footwear!

John Rodgers.

Dawn chorus. 04.00am, 6th May 2023



Despite an unpromising weather forecast and the fact that the booked date coincided with the coronation day of King Charles III a total of 9 members signed up for Dawn Chorus 2023. (L & A Biddle, J+V Mitchell, D+S Smalley (Steve with sun-lounger so he could snooze while listening!) C Baxter, A Tomlinson, Helen Denney) We assembled at 4.00am outside the gate to Hebe's wood, thanks to the kind permission of owners Suzie Manley and Min Burdett, and delighted that the promised rain had not arrived. The temperature was a balmy 10 degrees, much

warmer than the late spring had promised.

We had scarcely settled down when the first bird heard was a wood pigeon, followed by a short snatch of song— at first thought a robin, but later concluded it was a dunnoek, as no other robins were heard during the morning. Shortly after, skylarks were heard in the adjoining field and a crow called loudly. A chirring chuckle was then heard, which no-one could identify at the time, and a mallard flew over, quacking, as only they can. As dawn progressed, the thrushes were overpowering in their joyful but noisy song, so much so that it was difficult to hear and identify the other less powerful songsters. Later, a tawny owl was heard and chiff chaffs began their insistent call, dunnoeks joined in, and later still, the melodious tune of blackcaps and willow warblers along with bluetits. As the light brightened, we observed bats flying up and down the ride above our heads and at one point a fox shot across the ride in which we were all sitting, obviously amazed to see us all. The peak of song was around 4.50am, mainly song thrushes and blackbirds, with dunnoek, blackcaps and chiff chaffs below, and then it began to quieten. At around 5.45 am we set off to walk around the wood, finding it easier to identify individual

sounds without the constant song of thrush!

We were able to see and hear blackcaps, willow warblers, and additionally, to identify the song of a garden warbler, confirmed when we spotted him singing among the freshly emerged green leaves. At the edge of the wood in the boundary hedgerow we heard the growl and short song of a whitethroat and caught a glimpse of his white throat. As we ventured further into the wood there was an area of shorter vegetation and scrub and among this, showing himself for a second or two, was a lesser whitethroat singing his repetitive one note call, which was a very pleasing end to our woodland walk.

Our wander took us out onto the public bridleway and back towards the woodland entrance with Prior's coppice visible across the valley, where we heard a Great spotted woodpecker, drumming. A large lake in the bottom of the valley was also visible, where Tufted duck, Mallard and Coot were swimming. The Coot made a strange sound – not unlike the sound we heard earlier in the morning, perhaps explaining the unidentified sound we had heard on our arrival. We shall never know for sure, but it certainly explains why we were hearing Mallard throughout the morning!

Unusually, we did not hear a single Great-tit or Robin and only a few Blue tits, all of which are normally extremely commonly recorded.

Returning to our bags and chairs, still without getting wet, we packed up and returned home, ready to face the day's momentous events. No-one will ever know how many of us snoozed in front of the TV while attempting to watch the coronation of our "new" king!

Dawn chorus 2023 bird species list

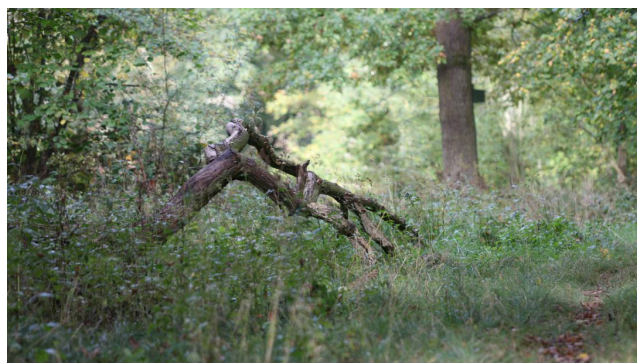
Time AM	Bird species heard		Time AM	Bird species heard	
4.10	Arrived and set up		4.25	Tawny owl	
4.11	Wood-pigeon		4.40	Wren	
4.12	Skylark		4.45	Chiff-chaff	
4.14	Robin?		4.49	Owl again	
4.16	Crow		4.50	Duncock	
4.17	Chuckle ??		4.55	Black cap	bluetit
4.20	Mallard		5.06	Fox crossed ride	
4.21	Song thrush		5.14	Willow warbler	
4.22	Black-bird	Pheasant	5.30	Walked around wood.	

On the woodland walk we heard: Blackcap, Willow warbler, Garden warbler, Whitethroat, Lesser Whitethroat, Chaffinch, Raven, Coot.

Saw: Raven, Red kite, Tufted duck.

Linda and Anthony Biddle

A survey of Hebe's wood in Braunston. 14th May 2023

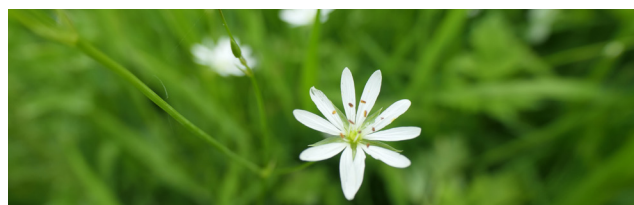


Hebe's wood is a private woodland near Braunston that has been managed by its owners over a number of years to increase biodiversity. Last year, RNHS recorders were invited there to do a mini bioblitz, but the intense heatwave, didn't do it justice, so we were asked back again this year to do a proper survey. Opposite and on back page is the list of our recorded findings.

Species list recorded this year at Hebe's wood.

Birds:	
Robin	<i>Erithacus rubecula</i>
Blackcap	<i>Sylvia atricapilla</i>
Chiff-chaff	<i>Phylloscopus collybita</i>
Garden warbler	<i>Sylvia borin</i>
Willow warbler	<i>Phylloscopus trochilus</i>
Blackbird	<i>Turdus merula</i>
Whitethroat	<i>Sylvia communis</i>
Kestrel	<i>Falco tinnunculus</i>
Bluetit	<i>Cyanistes caeruleus</i>
Butterflies:	
Holly blue	<i>Celastrina argiolus</i>
Brimstone F.	<i>Gonepteryx rhamnii</i>
Orange tip	<i>Anthocharis cardamines</i>
Speckled wood	<i>Parage aegeria</i>
Green longhorn (Moth)	<i>Adela reaumurella</i>
Plants:	
Ground ivy	<i>Glechoma hederacea</i>

Red campion	<i>Silene dioica</i>
Creeping buttercup	<i>Ranunculus repens</i>
Meadow buttercup	<i>Ranunculus acris</i>
Meadow foxtail	<i>Alopecurus arundinaceus</i> <i>cyperalus poaceae</i>
Forget-me-not (wood)	<i>Myosotis sylvatica</i>
Dandelion agg.	<i>Taraxacum officinale</i>
Dock	<i>Rumex obtusifolius</i>
Creeping thistle	<i>Cirsium arvense</i>
Hoary ragwort	<i>Senecio erucifolius</i>
Wild arum	<i>Arum maculatum</i>
Meadow vetchling (yellow)	<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>
Shepherd's purse	<i>Capsella bursa pastoris</i>
Lady's smock	<i>Cardamine pratensis</i>
Common sorrel	<i>Rumex acetosa</i>
Speedwell sp.	<i>Veronica sp.</i>
Thyme-leaved speedwell	<i>Veronica serpyllifolia</i>
Bugle	<i>Ajuga reptans</i>
Marsh thistle	<i>Cirsium palustre</i>
Charlock (wild mustard)	<i>Sinapsis arvensis</i>
Yellow rattle	<i>Rhinanthus minor</i>
Adder's-tongue fern	<i>Ophioglossum vulgatum</i>



Trees:	
Blackthorn	<i>Prunus spinosa</i>
Ash	<i>Fraxinus excelsior</i>
Hawthorn	<i>Crataegus monogyna</i>
Willow	<i>Salix caprea</i>
Hazel	<i>Corylus avellana</i>
Bugs and Beetles:	
Green shield bugs (Mating)	<i>Palomena prasine</i>
Red and Black frog hopper	<i>Ceropsis vulnerata</i>
Meadow frog hopper (Cuckoo spit)	<i>Philaenus spumarius</i>
Cardinal beetle	<i>Pyrochroa serraticornis</i>
Flies:	
Bee-fly	<i>Bombilius major</i>
Amphibians:	
Common frog	<i>Rana temporaria</i>
Fungi:	
Turkeytail	<i>Trametes versicolor</i>
Mammals:	
Muntjac	<i>Mutiacus reevesii</i> Evidence: footprints/ droppings
Rabbit	<i>Oryctolagus cuniculus</i>
Mole	<i>Talpa europaea</i> Evidence: Holes

Also seen recently:

Grass snake
Raven

Natrix natrix
Corvus corax

RNHS CONTACTS

Chairman

21 Waverley Gardens, Stamford PE9 1BH
01780 762108

Linda Biddle

abiddle21@talktalk.net

Secretary

Vacant

Treasurer

Vacant

Membership Secretary

42 Church Street, Braunston, Oakham. LE15 8QT
01572 756870

Tricia Marston

rnhsmembers@gmail.com

Programme Secretary

The Jetty, Wing, Rutland. LE15 8RX
Mob: 07946 733931

Jeffery Wilcox-smith

wilcoxsmith@btinternet.com

Website Editor/Calendar

12 Tees Close, Oakham, LE15 6SP
07535 508932

Peter Scott

peter.scott27@btopenworld.com

Fieldfare Editor

37 Stockerston Crescent, Uppingham, Rutland LE15 9UA
01572 823397

Carolyn Baxter

rnhsfieldfare2@gmail.com

Wildlife Recorders

Contact details can be found at head of reports inside
Fieldfare and on the RNHS website.

Fieldfare: Is published five times a year. It is free to
members, and available online or printed.

Printed at Lonsdale Direct, telephone 01933 228855

RNHS is a Registered Charity: Number 514693