



Dogwood at Pilton

CONTENTS

Diary Dates	2
Weather	3
Amphibians & Reptiles	3
Bats	4-5
Birds	5-7
Botany	8
Butterflies	8-9
Fungi	10
Moths	10-11
Orthoptera	11-12
Mammals	12
Insects	13-15
Plant galls	15
Field Trips	16-19
RNHS Contacts	20

WELCOME

After a lovely long and busy summer, we are now into the autumn, and our indoor meetings have resumed, a chance to meet up with old friends and new, and learn about our natural world in an entertaining way! The recent presentation on spiders by Alan Cann, VC55 Spider recorder, was a wonderful beginning to the season, and it was great to see many of you all there.

The autumn is a period for reflection on what has happened during the year, and where we are going as a group. While many of you will I hope, be happy with the way things are in our society, your committee is increasingly concerned that our membership needs some rejuvenation. Some of us have been committee members and recorders for a very long time, and feel ready to take things a little easier, and are looking to hand over to others. We want to widen our membership to include more young and active people, so that hopefully more members will be willing to become involved in our activities.

We have therefore arranged a discussion meeting to try to plan a strategy for the future of the society, which will meet before you receive this newsletter, and I will report on our plan in the next edition of Fieldfare.

In the meantime, do come along and join us for the special talk on Birds and Climate Change in November, a very relevant topic, and the visit to Attenborough Nature Reserve later in the month. Don't forget the Members' evening at the beginning of December, and make sure you order your calendar!

Linda Biddle (RNHS Chair)

DIARY DATES



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.

Saturday 12th November. 10.00am Attenborough Nature Reserve. Barton Lane, Chilwell, Notts, NG9 6DY.

Best known for its birds, this is an important site for winter wildfowl but also provides exceptional habitat for a wide range of wildlife. There are many trails around the reserve so wear suitable footwear and clothing. Meet in the car park where there is a CHARGE OF £3.00 for the day. Café open for refreshments.

LRWT Rutland Local Group

Events 2022.

All indoor events held at Volunteer Training Centre Hambleton Road, Oakham and begin at 7.30pm. We ask for a voluntary donation of £2 per person.

Monday 17th October 2022.

Luke Nelson RNWR will talk about bird ringing at Rutland Water.

Monday 21st November 2022.

David Cohen former Chair of Lincs Wildlife Trust will talk about Willow Tree Fen in Lincolnshire and the return of the cranes.

Monday 12th December 2022

Farming with the environment. Prof Chris Stoate describes how thirty years of research at the Allerton Project's research and demonstration farm have identified both the challenges and the necessity to produce our food in a way that is compatible with wildlife conservation.

RNHS Indoor evening meetings.

First Tuesday of every month, from October through to March. Please book your place early with Jeff Wilcox-Smith as places will be limited. Our new venue will be at the LRWT Volunteer Training Centre (VTC). LE15 8AD. Car park Ref: SK883 083.

Note: The first meeting in November will be a "hybrid" in person at VTC along with zoom for those who prefer to be at home. A link will be sent to members nearer the time.

Tuesday 1st November 7.30pm – 9.30pm. Birds and Climate change. Professor James Pearce-Higgins. James is Director of Science for the BTO and specifically leads BTO's climate change research involving documenting the impacts of climate change on UK biodiversity. He is author of "Birds and Climate change".

Tuesday 6th December. 7.30pm – 9.30pm. Members and recorders evening. A look back at all the notable things we have been up to over the past year plus a preview of the photographs that will be published in the 2023 calendar.

Events 2023

Monday 16th January 2023.

On track to the Pantanal. Anthony and Linda Biddle describe their recent safari in Brazil in search of the elusive jaguar.

Monday 20th February 2023.

Beetles are at the top of the charts at Rutland Water! Species and Recording Officer Tim Sexton will describe the latest survey results.

Monday 20th March 2023.

Rutland Members Group AGM followed by Birding in spring and summer. Bruce White will describe his birding experiences and what to look out for this season.

2023 calendar

The calendar competition is now over for another year, and we have had a record number of excellent entries covering a wide range of wildlife seen in the County. If you would like to purchase one (or more) for yourselves, for Christmas presents or any other reason, please reserve your copies by contacting Linda Biddle or Peter Scott in good time so that we know how many to print. The more we order – the less the cost! Contact numbers and emails are on the back page.

WEATHER

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August 2022

Atmospheric pressure and wind. Overall a month of medium to high pressures, the lowest 1004 mb on the 15th and the highest 1031 mb on the 9th. Winds up to the 24th were very variable in direction but from then until the end of the month were N—E. Wind speeds were generally low and, on the 8th, 16th, and 27th were nil at 09.00.

Temperature. A warm August, the mean, 20.19 °C was the highest in the decade 2013—2022 with August 2020 being second highest at 19.0 °C. There were some warm nights, the highest minimum being 19.1 °C on 1st—2nd, and the highest daytime maximum was 35.0 °C on the 14th.

Precipitation. The total here was 42.2 mm which is 69% of my long-term mean of 32 years. A look at the precipitation figures for 2022 so far, i.e. January to August inclusive, shows that we have had 69.6% of the expected rainfall to date. This month there were 24 days without rain, but on the 16th and 17th 56% of the month's total was recorded.

September 2022

Atmospheric pressure and wind. Pressures were generally depressed apart from the 16th to 22nd inclusive. It was in that period that the highest for the month was recorded, 1027 mb on the 21st. The lowest occurred a week later at 1001 mb. Winds were very variable in direction and generally at low velocity. The Autumn equinox was on the 23rd after which the nights are increasingly longer than the days.

Temperature. With an overall mean of 15.53 °C this was the third warmest September in the decade 2013—2022, just ahead of that of 2014 at 15.57 °C. The highest daytime maxima were in the first half of the month, the highest I recorded was 25.8 °C on the 5th. There were several chilly nights, the lowest I recorded was 4.0 °C on both the 26th—27th and the 28th—29th.

Precipitation. A total recorded of 33.5 mm (1.32 inches) which is 69% of my long-term mean for September going back 32 years. There was a rainy episode, the 4th to the 8th inclusive, when 43% of the total fell. The highest daily amount was on the 30th when some 10.9 mm fell and there were 18 days on which no precipitation was detected. In each of the last 6 months, rainfall has been less than the expected, i.e. the long-term mean.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

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August/ September 2022

There were a modest number of records, but all four amphibians were recorded. The sighting of a **Great Crested Newt** in Braunston was the first record in that parish since 1989. There were only two records of **Common Frog** in these two months. One appeared at the edge of the recorder's new pond in Braunston on August 21 and a dead road casualty was found on the road outside Wing on Sept 23 after rain. **Common Toads** were seen in both months in Braunston, a dead one was found on the road in Pilton and four dead ones were found on the road in Wing on Sept 23 with the deceased frog. Also on Sept 23 one was found in a fruit cage in Barrow. A **Smooth Newt** found its way onto Tim Appleton's doorstep at Rutland Water on Aug 10 and efts were found in Field 16 at the nature reserve. A male Great Crested Newt was seen in the recorder's pond on Aug 12, but not subsequently.

Grass Snakes were the only reptiles recorded, but there were quite a few sightings. On Aug 7 two different individuals were seen in Wing gardens and Linda Clark photographed one in her garden on Aug 21. There were records on Aug 24 in Barrow, and on Sep 3 in Oakham Canal. Another was seen and photographed from the bridge at Eye Brook Reservoir on Sep 5 and one was found under a shelter in Exton with its sloughed skin nearby. Finally a small dead one was found on a drive in Wing on Sep 6 although it had clearly been dead for some time as it was barely recognisable as a snake.

My thanks to all the following who provided records:- T Appleton, D & J Ball, T Caldicott, L Clark, J Dejardin, T Mitcham, T Moffat and P Rogers.



Grass snake in Linda Clark's garden. Photo Linda Clark

BATS

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August/September.

Casual records

There have been few casual records for these two months, but Donny Smalley reported seeing one or two bats flying in her Oakham garden on 6.8 and 13.8, and one foraging over the Kilburn Road allotments in Oakham on 22.8. Gardens and allotments often have many more insects available to bats (and other wildlife) than the wider countryside, because of the more wildlife-friendly methods of cultivation.

Grounded bats Outgoing.

Date	Details
24 August	Ketton, soprano pipistrelle from Pied Bull Close (admitted for care 21.7) released when its wing membranes healed (see Fieldfare August 2022).
3 August	Barleythorpe, common pipistrelle, (came in for care 29.7) released where found. See Fieldfare August 2022.
13 September	Egleton Church, four juvenile soprano pipistrelles, one female and three males, were released after being in care since early July (see Fieldfare August 2022). They were put back in the roost at around 3.30pm, in the hope that they would recognise the smell of the other bats in the colony and be able to return to the roost entrance once they knew where it was. Unfortunately, one of the males, that had been flight training separately from the others that had been flying together in Linda Clark's kitchen, decided not to enter the roost, and flew several times round the churchyard. It was investigated by two swallows, then flew away over the village. The other three bats entered the roost.
13 September	JH carried out an emergence survey of the south bat entrance of Egleton Church the same evening that the youngsters had been returned. A total of 86 bats were counted, several of which appeared to be juveniles by their flight pattern, but it was not possible to identify 'ours'. It is hoped that they will all meet up around the Egleton Reserve and return to the roost together for shelter and safety.

My thanks to Linda Clark for help rearing, and flight preparation of the Egleton juveniles and to her and Luke Nelson for scaling the ladder to put them back in the roost.

Grounded bats Incoming.

Date	Details
2 August	Whissendine, Cow Lane: Common Pipistrelle, female, juvenile. Forearm 27mm, weight 2.0g; away from any roost and unlikely to be flying. Emaciated, died.
8 August	Edith Weston. Brown Long-eared bat. Broken radius above right elbow, taken for euthanasia by Uppingham vet.
22 August	Lyndon village, Surface Generation (heating firm). Unidentified bat seen flying round inside building when staff came to work. As we discussed what to do, the bat flew out of the open door.
11 September	Uppingham, Queen's Road. Pipistrelle sp., male, with large hole in left wing membrane and a damaged wrist, possible cat strike. It was taken immediately for euthanasia by Oakham vet without taking other details.

I recently learnt from an RSPCA officer that they are instructed to put to sleep any bat with damaged wing membranes, even if they are otherwise healthy and no bones are broken. I was able to tell her that torn wing membranes can heal and that it was best to seek advice from a bat carer before euthanasia for this reason. On 16.8 a male pipistrelle from Weldon, near Corby, came in with a hole in both wings approximately 10mm square and other 'pin prick' holes (probable cat strike). By 29.8 these larger holes had completely healed, although several tiny ones had not. On 14.9, after practice and flight assessment in my lounge, Ann Tomlinson and I released the bat in the garden where it had encountered the cat, and it flew off very strongly.

Below. Possibly a whiskered bat. Photo G. Gray



Bat box check, Barnsdale Wood, 3 September 2022

As part of a joint action under licence for the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project, approximately 45 bat boxes were checked by members of Derbyshire Bat Group and Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Group, organised by Tim Sexton and Joelle Woolley (Anglian Water) on Saturday 3 September. This was followed by harp trapping at the Manton end of Lyndon Nature Reserve, between Wader Scrape and Shallow Water hides that evening. It was a dry, warm day, and the bats in the boxes were alert and active, so they were usually not taken out to be checked individually. Twenty-one of the boxes contained bats and one contained a thick layer of droppings, so may have been a maternity roost. Two of the boxes contained single Nathusius' pipistrelles (see details below), a further six of the boxes contained more than one bat, while three of the boxes contained a group of bats in double figures. Box 1 contained 13 bats; Box 38 held 11 bats; an un-numbered 'woodcrete' hibernation box hosted at least 15 bats. Other boxes held six, seven, eight or nine bats. At this time of year, it is often assumed that these are 'mating' roosts, with at least one male plus a 'harem' of females. In fact, in one of the boxes containing three bats we found that two of them were mating. So much for bats being nocturnal!

All but the two Nathusius' pipistrelles were sopranos, with a total of 88 bats found in the boxes, plus a dead one in an open-based box. In box 31, the single occupant was a male adult soprano pipistrelle with a broken fourth finger; the bone was protruding but the wing membrane had healed and grown round it. At 4.4g his weight was rather low for this time of year, but as he appeared not to be a juvenile of the current year, it was assumed that he had survived at least one winter hibernation.

One box on the edge of the reservoir fell off its nail as the box was opened, and while it was being repaired the eight bats inside it were 'processed'. All were adult females; their weights in order of handling were: 6.3g, 5.8g, 6.0g, 4.9g (this one may have been a juvenile born this year, but it is hard to tell at this stage of the season), 5.8g, 6.2g, 6.6g and 6.9g. This latter bat had bred in the 2022 season, judging by the state of her nipples.

Nathusius' pipistrelle

Box 2. A single male that had been ringed in 2016. Ring number J4900; he had been ringed at Hambleton Wood and caught on a subsequent occasion at Barnsdale Wood. His weight was 7.4g.

Box 26. A single male that was ringed, with ring number J16347 (no other details taken). He weighed 8.5g.

Pipistrelle sp.

During the box check, a tree cavity that had previously contained bats was examined with an endoscope and a single pipistrelle

was found in the top of a long crack in the narrow trunk. It was not possible to be sure what species of pipistrelle it was, nor any other details.

Harp trapping at Lyndon N.R.

Trapping took place in the evening of 3.9 at the western end of the nature reserve which had not been surveyed before. I didn't attend the trapping and only have a few edited highlights of what was found until I get details from the licence-holder carrying out the survey. However, I know that soprano and common pipistrelles were found, together with two Nathusius' pipistrelles that had not been previously ringed. These were added to the list of over 50 Nathusius' pipistrelles that have been ringed at sites around Rutland Water. At least one Daubenton's and two whiskered bats were caught. Only the Nathusius' pipistrelles were ringed.

Bat box check and harp trapping at Lax Hill, RW

A check of the bat boxes and an evening harp trapping survey were carried out at Lax Hill on Saturday 17 September. I am awaiting details of the results, but I understand from Tim Sexton that an extraordinary 20+ whiskered bats were caught in the harp traps. Although whiskered bats have been caught in harp traps at most of the sites where we have carried out these surveys, they usually occur in very small numbers. This result suggests a maternity roost nearby, possibly in one of the trees in the wood.

Bat walk at Lyndon NR

A bat walk was carried out on Saturday 10 September, as usual covering the section of the trail east of the visitor centre, finishing in Tern Hide. It was a lovely warm, clear evening attended by 12 people from the Bat Group and the Wildlife Trust. It was quite soon after sunset that we began to hear and see bats, and the soprano pipistrelles put on a grand show at Gibbet Gorse and accompanied us all the way back to Teal Hide. Here, although the edge of the reservoir was around 15m back from the hide, the sopranos were foraging in the dark over the stony shore, coming in very close to the open viewing slots. Because of the wide draw-down zone, Daubenton's bats were rather far out from the hide, but Neil Hughes was still able to pick them out with his powerful torch, so we were able to see, but not hear them, in the distance.

My thanks to Donny Smalley for her records, to Linda Clark, Luke Nelson and George Smith for help with bat care, releases of grounded bats and records, and to Ann Tomlinson for transport to release various grounded bats in far-flung Grantham and Weldon. Thanks also to Tom Bennett who came over from Hinckley with two assistants and to Joelle Woolley and Tim Sexton for organising the bat box and harp trapping surveys, and to Linda C. and George Smith for their part in these surveys.

BIRDS

Recorder Terry Mitcham

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August 2022.

Highlights. Rutland Water had a Cattle Egret (10th-19th), five Little Terns (25th) and a Great Skua (18th). At Luffenham Airfield a Nightingale was ringed (7th) and there was a Black Redstart (26th). Eyebrook Reservoir had a White-rumped Sandpiper (4th-10th) and a Pectoral Sandpiper (from 25th).

Rutland Water. The count (16th) produced 90 Egyptian Geese, 1505 Gadwall, 241 Teal, 12 Pintail, 2483 Tufted Ducks, a Scaup, 140 Little Egrets, 28 Great White Egrets, 100 Little Grebes and 451 Great Crested Grebes. There were three Garganey (6th). A Marsh Harrier was seen (27th). An Avocet

was regular with peak counts of five Ringed Plover (18th), four Curlew (16th), two Whimbrels (30th), 14 Black-tailed Godwits, two Ruff (18th), a Sanderling (9th), 22 Common Sandpipers (16th), 13 Green Sandpipers (16th), a Wood Sandpiper (16th-18th), Spotted Redshanks (14th, 30th) and five Greenshanks (16th). Little Gulls were noted (14th, 16th) with six Yellow-legged Gulls (16th), 72 Common Terns and an Arctic Tern (16th) and up to three Black Terns (17th-24th). Late Cuckoos were seen (9th, 10th, 18th) and a Hobby (16th) with two (18th). A Stonechat was near Gibbet Gorse (20th) with Redstarts there (28th-31st).

Eyebrook Reservoir. There were five Shelduck (6th) and a Garganey from (26th). Wader counts included 12 Ringed Plovers (25th), four Little Ringed Plovers (27th), 35 Black-tailed Godwits (19th) with 30 (27th), five Ruff (27th), a Sanderling (6th), eight Dunlin (24th), three Green Sandpipers (27th) and five Greenshanks (27th). There were three Little Gulls (15th) and a Yellow-legged Gull (27th) with three Swifts (27th) and a Hobby (4th). Up to three Whinchats were noted (23rd-28th) and a Stonechat (27th).

Other Sites. There were two Mandarin Ducks in Exton Park (1st). A Garganey was at Fort Henry Ponds (from 28th) with an Osprey there (18th). A juv. Marsh Harrier quartered Exton Park (7th, 12th) with one near Morcott (10th). Green Sandpipers were at Fort Henry Ponds (7th, 12th) and Leighfield Fishponds (21st). Hobbies fledged young at a new site with birds also at Leighfield and Leighfield Fishponds. Peregrines were at Oakham and over Exton Park (12th) and Banthorpe GP (23rd). At Luffenham Airfield a Grasshopper Warbler was ringed (15th) and also a Redstart (23rd). A Redstart was at Leighfield (4th). Luffenham Airfield had a Whinchat (22nd) with six Wheatears (22nd) and three (29th). A Tree Pipit was over Leighfield (4th) with birds at Luffenham Airfield (15th, 21st).

September 2022.

Highlights. Rutland Water had a Cattle Egret (22nd-24th), 56 Great White Egrets (24th), a Jack Snipe (27th) and a Red-backed Shrike (11th-16th). 25 Pink-footed Geese flew over Wing (16th) with a Woodlark over there (23rd). Eyebrook Reservoir had a Glossy Ibis (7th - 8th) and Pectoral sandpiper to (3rd).

Rutland Water. Notable wildfowl were three Whooper Swans (29th), a Garganey (22nd) and eight Red-crested Pochard (25th). Some peak wader counts were two Grey Plover (29th), eight Ringed Plover (11th), 11 Little Ringed Plover (6th), seven Curlew (11th), seven Black-tailed Godwits (17th) and three Turnstones (12th-15th). There were three Ruff (15th), seven Curlew Sandpipers (2nd), three Common Sandpipers (11th), six Green Sandpipers (11th), a Wood Sandpiper (10th-23rd), four Spotted Redshanks (15th) and eight Greenshanks (11th). 14 Common Terns were seen (7th) and a Black Tern (6th, 10th) Ospreys were seen to at least (23rd) with Hobbies to (23) – five on (10th). Marsh Harriers were regular at Egleton with one near Gibbet Gorse (13th). Whinchat and Stonechat were at Egleton (23rd) with one or two Redstarts at Gibbet Gorse Meadows (2nd-5th).

Eyebrook Reservoir. There was a Garganey to (6th). Some wader counts included 33 Ringed Plover, four Little Ringed Plover (9th), nine Black-tailed Godwit (1st), 14 Ruff (6th) and five Curlew Sandpipers (12th). Also noted were 19 Dunlin (26th), four Little Stints (27th) and three Greenshank (1st). There was a Black Tern (1st). A Redstart was seen (23rd) and there were up to seven Whinchats (6th) and four Stonechats (23rd) and a Wheatear (4th).

Other Sites. Fort Henry Ponds had a Garganey (3rd) with 18 Shoveler and 46 Teal (10th). Leighfield Fishponds had 120 Teal and two Green Sandpipers (11th). There was an Osprey at Fort Henry (16th) and three Green Sandpipers (22nd). Barn Owls were at three sites with Little Owls at Manton Junction. Hobbies were at Quarry Farm (5th, 21st) with a Peregrine (5th). Peregrines were also at Martinsthorpe, Ridlington and Manton. On (21st) a Redwing was over Ridlington (60 on 25th) with 38 Skylarks and 43 Meadow Pipits. Exton Park had a Whinchat (16th, 22nd) and a Stonechat (16th). A Wheatear was at Preston (21st). Spotted Flycatchers were at four sites with the last at Wing (10th). 95 Linnets were at Martinsthorpe (25th) and 150 Goldfinches at Preston (29th).

My thanks to the following for their records: - T.Appleton, T.Caldicott, T.Collins, A.Comber, G.&M.Griffin, CH Gallimore, P.Langston, LROS, D.Masters, I.Misselbrook, T.Mitcham, B.Moore, J.W.Nourish, C.I.Park, RWNIR, P.Scott, T.Sexton.

August/September 2022 Wildfowl counts

	RW 16.08	RW 11.09	EBR 11.09	FHP/Exton park 12.08	FHP/Exton park 10.09	Banthorpe GP. 10.08	Banthorpe GP. 08.09	Holywell lake.02.09
Canada Goose	1130	788	204					92
Barnacle Goose						2		
Greylag Goose	1005	1000	449			28	1	177
Mute Swan	345	424	161	25	25	2	2	2
Egyptian Goose	90	72						
Shelduck	4	1	5					

	RW 16.08	RW 11.09	EBR 11.09	FHP/Exton park 12.08	FHP/Exton park 10.09	Banthorpe GP 10.08	Banthorpe GP 08.09	Holywell lake 02.09
Mandarin Duck	8	9						
Shoveler	72	366	7	3	18			
Gadwall	1505	1740	69	13	27			4
Wigeon	9	1199	20					
Mallard	1538	1762	442	62	87	3	28	68
Pintail	12	148	13					
Teal	241	1053	168	2	46		14	
Red-crested Pochard		3						
Pochard	20	14	32					
Tufted Duck	2483	4094	2	7				2
Scaup	1							
Common Scoter		3						
Little Grebe	100	155	1	4	7			15
Great Crested Grebe	495	760	136					
Cattle Egret	1							
Grey Heron	38	42	4		1			2
Great White Egret	28	40	4					
Little Egret	140	128	3			1		2
Cormorant	692	689	24			1	2	
Water Rail	1	2						
Moorhen	137	93	5	32	45	1		11
Coot	1039	1708	509	44	51			7
Kingfisher	6							
TOTAL	1143	16295	2258	192	300	38	47	382



BOTANY

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August/September records.

The hot weather and then lack of rain has led to much of the vegetation being brown and frazzled and this is probably the main reason for the lack of records since the end of July. I know I thought it not worth looking for flowers during my walks. There are only three records for the period; Tansy and Deadly Nightshade between Oakham and Cottesmore, from Jane and Duncan Ball and Harebell by the Rutland Water cycle track east of Edith Weston, which I found.

Harebell (*Campanula rotundifolia*) has been reported most years in the last ten, from Bloody Oaks Quarry, Egleton, Love's Lane Empingham and Tixover. It is a delicate bellflower which often flowers into the autumn. It has often been called Witch's, Old Man's, or the Devil's Thimble because of its shape; Cuckoo's shoes is another old name, though its flowering period is a bit late for the bird. It is also suggested that the "Bluebells of Scotland" were Harebells and not Common Bluebells. It is the national flower of Sweden.



Left.
Harebell.
Campanula
rotundifolia.
Bloody Oaks

Tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*) is a member of the Daisy family and not unlike Yarrow, though the flowers are in small "buttons" rather than a single head. It has been reported in only three years since 2013, from Egleton and the Ketton area. Its leaves are very bitter and toxic. They were used to keep insects and worms away from meat, and also in coffins to preserve bodies. In the Middle Ages they were often eaten at the end of Lent to get rid of intestinal worms and other parasites and to relieve flatulence which the Lenten diet of fish was thought to have caused. The leaves were often consumed with eggs in a sort of omelette, a "tansie". For these medicinal reasons, it was cultivated widely and taken to New England by Europeans where it is now a nuisance. Tansy,

too, has its own beetle, called, not unreasonably the Tansy Beetle (*Chrysolina graminis*). It is a bright metallic green beetle which lives on the plant as larva and adult and is obviously immune to the plant's poison.



Left. **Tansy.**
Tanacetum
vulgare
Pilton.

I am waiting for a book to be published which is due out next month and is well worth buying. Members of Loughborough Naturalists Club have conducted surveys of the flora and fauna of an area in Charnwood Forest named for many years after a ruined priory called "Grace Dieu", and Steve Woodward and Helen Ikin have now written a book describing all the finds there. The title is "More than meets the Eye". There is a glowing review in BSBI news

I'll make my usual plug for interesting videos about plants produced by, or via, BSBI, Plant life and National Plant Monitoring Scheme (NPMS) which can be found on YouTube and for wildflower hour on Twitter. If you have a rainy hour to spare - do have a look.

The Wildlife Trusts, The National Trust and RSPB have come together to object to possible Government moves that would threaten biodiversity; changes to support for farmers, abandonment of regulations produced by the EU and the creation of zones exempt from certain environment restrictions. The group have sent emails to their members asking for support and have produced a sample letter that might be sent to MP's. No doubt many RNHS members have seen this and might feel as I do, that they could join this movement and perhaps write their own letter to their MP's.

BUTTERFLIES

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Aug/September record.

A dry warm August was followed by a cooler, wetter September. Looking for butterflies often produced observations of day-flying moths and it was a special year for Hummingbird Hawkmoths, an immigrant from the continent. Another highlight was the CLOUDED YELLOW with two Rutland records this summer.

The last LARGE SKIPPER was a single report from Ketton Quarry (KQ) on 1st August.

The "whites and yellows" had successful 2nd broods this year. BRIMSTONE was seen at KQ and Egleton (EG) on 1st August. The LARGE WHITE was widely reported from across the county with a maximum of 8 in Uppingham (UP) and last recorded at

Wardley Woods (WW) on 19th September.

SMALL WHITE was again extremely common with many widespread reports. It was last seen on 13th September with 3 at KQ and the maximum was 10 at Bloody Oaks Quarry (BQ). There were fewer records of GREEN-VEINED WHITE with singles in August at Oakham (OK) and EG on 1st, Quarry Farm (QF) on 9th, OK on 18th, Lyndon (LY) on 19th and KQ on 30th. The final sighting was one at Wing (WI) on 9th September.

ORANGE-TIP is always a welcome Spring flier but there were very small numbers of 2nd broods, and 5 or 6 bright fresh males were seen on 24th August at the Eyebrook bridge (EY) by Carolyn Baxter. An excellent record.

There were many records across the UK this summer of CLOUDED YELLOW. A late record on 27th July at Cold Overton Park Wood (CO) came with a record photo shot by John Wadham. Tim Caldicott was lucky enough to see 1 in his garden at Manton (MA) on 10th September on buddleia. Again, both excellent records.

HOLLY BLUE was seen in OK in August on 9th, Langton (LA), MA and LY all on 11th with the last one at MA on 13th. All were 2nd brood males.

BROWN ARGUS was seen in August with 5 at KQ on 1st and a single there on 30th. Other August records were 2 at BQ on 10th and 1 at Leighfield Fishponds (LF) on 21st. The final records in September were 1 at KQ on 5th and 2 there on 13th.

It was an excellent year for COMMON BLUE with many records throughout August with the maximum count of 14 at KQ on 1st. Other August records were 5 at QF on 8th, 2 females at LA on bird's-foot trefoil, 4 at QF on 10th, 3 at LA on 11th, 2 at BQ on 15th, 3 at LF on 21st, 1 female at LA on 27th and 3 at KQ on 30th. The last 2 records in September were a male at Stoke Wood (SW) on 4th and 4 at KQ on 5th.

SMALL COPPER was recorded widely in small numbers (maximum 6) throughout both months. August records were singles at KQ and LA on 1st, Leighfield (LE) on 6th, OK on 18th, Gibbets Gorse Meadows (GGM) on 19th, KQ on 30th and 2 at GGM on both 30th and 31st. Records continued through September with 1 at LA on 1st, 6 at GGM and 6 at MA on 5th, 1 at LE on 6th, 3 at GGM on 7th, 1 at GGM and MA on 14th, 2 at MA on both 16th and 17th, 1 at OK, LA and GGM on 18th, with the final records from LA of singles on 22nd and 28th.

DARK GREEN FRITILLARY was last seen in August at KQ on 1st and BQ on 10th.

SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY was seen just once with 3 at KQ on 1st August.

RED ADMIRAL was widely recorded across the county in singles and small numbers with a maximum of 4 at MA on 22nd September. Records came from OK, EG, LA, Exton (EX), KQ, LY and UP with the last record at UP on 25th September.

PAINTED LADY is an immigrant that was first seen in August on 1st at LA. Further August records were 1 in LE on 4th, 2 in WI and 2 in LE on 6th, 1 in Barnsdale Gardens (BG) and 1 in UP on 10th, 1 in EX on 15th, 1 in LA on 16th, 2 in MA on 19th, another in EX on 20th and 1 in MA on 29th August. September saw a few more records with 1 in MA on 10th and 15th and the final record was one photographed at EY on 22nd September.

SMALL TORTOISESHELL was probably underreported with singles in August at OK on 1st, QF on 8th, EX on 15th and UP on 24th. In September the only records were from EX with a single on 7th and 2 on 24th.

PEACOCK numbers seem to be down with hardly any on the buddleia in our garden in UP. August records were just 2 at KQ

on 1st and singles in UP on 10th and 20th. Just one record in September at LA on 12th.

There were only 4 records of COMMA in August – all were singles seen at KQ on 1st, OK on 9th, LA on 11th and 16th. The last single was photographed at EY on 22nd September.

The 1st of August saw 5 SPECKLED WOOD at EG and 3 at KQ. Further August records were 1 at LA on 11th, 7 at BQ on 15, 4 at LA on 16th, 3 at OK on 18th, 9 at LY on 19th, 1 at LA on 23rd with 2 there on 24th, 1 at Wardley Wood (WW) on 29th and finally 3 at KQ on 30th. In September Speckled Wood was seen at EY on 4th, 4 at Panters Orchard (PO) on 9th, followed by singles at KQ on 13th, WW on 15th, Stoke Dry Woods (SD) on 19th and UP on 20th.

The GATEKEEPER (sometimes called the Hedge Brown) was seen throughout August with, typically, just one record in September at KQ on 5th. The August records were 11 at EG, 10 at KQ and a single in OK all on 1st. There were 8 at QF on 8th with singles in OK on 6th, 8th and 9th. There were 2 at BQ on 10th and 1 there on 15th. There was 1 at LY on 19th and singles on 10 occasions in UP throughout August.

MEADOW BROWN was only reported in August from EG and KQ (6) on 1st, QF (9) on 8th, with 'tatty' or worn singles from LA, BQ and in UP on 20th.

RINGLET was only seen at KQ on 1st August at KQ (2).

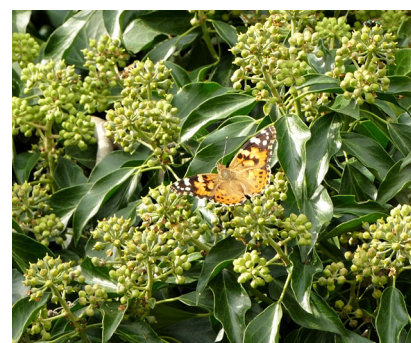
SMALL HEATH was seen in August at UP on 1st and 6th, Empingham (EM) on 7th, OK on 18th and GGM on 31st. There were 3 records in September at GGM on 1st, MA on 6th and at KQ on 13th.

Finally the introduced population of CHEQUERED SKIPPER AT Fineshades Wood, outside our region seems to be having some success. It is early days yet but hopefully we will start to see them in Rutland very soon.

I would like to thank the following for sending in their records:- Marian Markham, Alistair Lawrence, David Needham, Diana Masters, Nigel Webb, Tim Caldicott, Carolyn Baxter, Duncan & Jane Ball.



Left. Brimstone on knapweed. Ketton Quarry.



Right. Painted lady on Ivy flowers. Eyebrook.

FUNGI

RECORDER Linda Clark
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Fungi Report August Sept October (up to 06.10.22)

August and September in Rutland was very dry and conditions not optimal for fungi, however, at the end of September beginning of October with a drop of rain and heavy dews, mushrooms began popping up everywhere. I have spotted many fungi mainly *Mycena* and *Psathyrella*; both are difficult to identify, especially to species level.

Mycena, the Bonnets species, have conical or bell-shaped caps, the colour of which are usually grey or brown and usually striated or grooved, especially when wet. The stipe (stem) is slender but can be tough brittle or elastic. The gills can be adnexed (narrowed at the attachment to the stipe), adnate (the whole width of the gill attached to the stipe), or decurrent (running down the stipe). The spore print is white. Some gills have a coloured edge which can be seen with a hand lens, some exude a juice which seeps from a broken stipe, and some have an unusual odour. There are 102 species in Britain.

Psathyrella, the Brittlestems have flattened or bell-shaped caps, (c/f *Mycena* sp.) and is hygrophanous (colour change) in some species. The gills are pale initially, but darken with age, and the spore print is dark brown to blackish. The stipe is slender and brittle (c/f *Myceana* sp) and usually has a mottled white appearance. Some species form large clumps. There are 57 species in Britain.

A total of 41 species were identified in August/ September and up to 6th October. Included in this total are some fungi which species are identified as 'probable' to species level, I will submit these to be examined by an expert and alter the records accordingly.

Chromista/Slime Moulds recorded were *Fuligo septica* and *Pysarum cinereum*



Shaggy bracket.
Photo Tim Sexton.

The number of species was boosted by a foray to Gibbet's Gorse on Lyndon RWNr by myself and Tim Sexton who kindly joined me one Sunday morning at the beginning of October. We had a grand total there of 23 species. Tim had already recorded a Chestnut Bolete *Gyroporus castaneus* on a previous visit to Gibbet's Gorse; this bolete is rare, has a hollow stipe and is a first for Rutland and VC55. Hunting around for tiny little nut discos Tim found a microscopic cup fungi, Oakleaf Cup *Rutstroemia sydowiana* on an oak leaf petiole. I'm happy to say that more of these were found all on the petioles of fallen oak leaves. I thought the Twig Parachute *Marasmiellus ramealis* was small enough, the cap being up to 1.5 cms across but the *Rutstroemia sydowiana* was in another league altogether measuring just under 2mm. Of particular interest were Weeping Widow *Lacrymaria lacrymans* and Shaggy Bracket *Inonotus dryadeus* of which we had 2 reports. Both Weeping Widow and the Shaggy Bracket exude liquid when they become moist. Take a look (left) at the photo of shaggy bracket and you will see droplets of liquid on under surface.



Rutstroemia sydowiana. Photo T. Sexton

My thanks to Carolyn Baxter, Tim Caldicott and Tim Sexton Reference books. Collins - Complete guide to Mushrooms and Toadstools. Roger Phillips - Mushrooms and other fungi of Great Britain & Europe (1st printed 1981)

MOTHS

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Moth report August/September

This has been a period of slightly lower numbers than usual for late summer, possibly due to the extreme heat experienced during parts of July and August which caused many plants to shrivel up early, although those moths inhabiting shady areas of broadleaved trees may have fared better.

The main event of summer was the moth bio-blitz held at Rutland Water on the night of 20th August, this year concentrated mainly on the Lyndon side and incorporating Berrybut Spinneys and Gibbet Gorse as well as the area around Manton Bay, although traps were also put at the bottom of Lax Hill on the Egleton

side and in Cherry Wood near the Volunteer Training Centre. In total, 25 traps were set out plus a few sugar lures. Overnight conditions were fair but not especially humid and the final total of 3081 moths of 158 species identified was a very good one for the time of year. This total comprised 9 species that were new to the reserve, including Bordered Straw, an immigrant moth which arrives in the UK every year and in most seasons but in widely varying numbers. Other immigrants recorded were Silver Y, Dark Sword-grass and Rusty-dot Pearl. 8 species of Wainscot were recorded with most of them in the vicinity of the reed-bed area around Waderscrape hide. The total number of moth species recorded around the Rutland Water reserve area since its inception, stood at 758 after the event. Thanks go to the 18 volunteers and staff who turned up on the night with some staying out until dawn to see the last moth arrive. Particular thanks go to Tim Sexton for organising it and it is now hoped to run this annually on the reserve as part of an overall 24-hour bio-blitz event.

Prior to this, traps were laid out around Lyndon centre on 10th August, and these produced 270 moths of 67 species. Highlights, were first records there for several years of the immigrant Pearly Underwing and Maple Prominent, one of 5 Prominent species recorded on the night. A total of 10 Square-spotted Clay confirms that this species is now firmly established

in the county and appears from national data to be one of the moths most rapidly expanding its range in Britain, in this case in a north-westerly direction from East Anglia and south-east England. A further session there on 31st August produced 32 species including a first site record of an Oak Hook-tip, a female in this case, which was surprising given its nationally common status. There was just one session held in September on the night of the 14th that produced 25 species including Sallow moths and other early autumn regulars such as Brindled Green and Lunar Underwing.

Sessions were held at Shacklewell Spinney on 13th August and 3rd September, the latter producing a Bordered Straw among just 9 species recorded on the night. Bloody Oaks on 28th August yielded 73 moths of 27 species including 2 Pale Eggars which is a moth that seems to appear there each year but rarely anywhere else in Rutland.

Only a few day-flying records were received with the vast majority being Hummingbird Hawk-moths from 7 mainly garden locations. The warm and humid conditions experienced this summer would certainly have been beneficial for this species. Silver Y's were harder to find apparently, with only 2 reports received.

Thank you to the following for submitting records: - P Bennett, T Caldicott, R Edwards, Dr C H Gallimore, M Grimes, M Markham, D Masters, J Morrell, M Quinlan, P Scott, T Sexton, C Tang.

ORTHOPTERA

RECORDER Phil Rudkin

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August/September records.

I am delighted to inform members of only the second sighting of a Southern Oak Bush Cricket in Rutland. The first was officially recorded for the Society in Empingham on 24 October 2019, with permission from the photographer Andrew Dejardin and Nature Spot.

On 28 August 2022, I received an email from Diana Masters and attached was a stunning photograph of a male Southern Oak Bush Cricket. (See photo below). Incredibly, it was on Diana's car windscreen in her Oakham garage! This attractive creature does not fly, so it had possibly hitched a ride. Interestingly, the first one was discovered (a small colony) on the wall surrounding the Empingham village shop in Church Street. The originals were probably brought in with the vegetable stock? Hopefully a new generation might eventually spread in time, so keep your eyes

Below. Southern Oak bush cricket.
Photo D. Masters



open in 2023.

Climate change is in the news regularly and it has caused changes in our wildlife species activities. The Orthoptera are in this situation. Members will probably remember my comments in Fieldfare number 337, August 2022 edition, about the very early stridulating of six Roesel's on 22 June 2022, in Ketton Quarries? Although the following will not be in this report, I paid a visit to Protected Verge 7 on Sunday 2 October, and once again I was amazed to locate approx. 5 male Meadow Grasshoppers stridulating strongly in the lush verges; by now the grasshopper tribes are about finished.

Rutland Water surveys were carried out on 16 August 2022, behind the Volunteer Training Centre (Cherry Woods), on 19 August at the Lyndon reserve, east of the visitor Centre to Gibbet Gorse Meadows and finally, on 1st September from the Bird Watching Centre area, North-West to Sharples Meadow.

Species Lists.

Bush Crickets.

Southern Oak Bush Cricket, *Meconema meridionale*.

Highlight of this period! One male found on member's car windscreen in the garage, Oakham, 29 August. The second only record of this species in Rutland. New site: SK864096. Photo supplied.

Dark Bush Cricket, *Pholidoptera griseoaptera*.

Well down this period. Usual habitats explored. Burley Woods, Oakham. One adult observed in traditional spot, 26 August. SK88110.

Six stridulating males in Bramble patch at top end of Panter's Wood, near Ketton Quarries. 8 September. New site: SK966053. Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Roeseliana roeselii*.

Large colonies of stridulating males in rough grasses between

trees, Cherry wood, Rutland Water Egleton reserve, behind the VTC building. 16 August. New site: SK886082.

Large colonies located in Gibbet Gorse Meadows, 19 August. New site: SK902059

Masses of stridulating males in lush roadside verges at the entrance to Panter's Wood, on the RNHS joint field meeting with Leicester Entomological Society, 8 September. New site: SK966053.

Regular sites visited: Lyndon and Egleton Reserves, Rutland Water. Lyndon Road near Wing, and Ketton Quarries. Numbers maintained.

Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus fuscus*.

Large colonies of stridulating males in rough grasses between trees, Cherry wood, Rutland Water Egleton reserve, behind the VTC building, 16 August. New site: SK886082.

Large colonies located in the lush meadows of Gibbet Gorse, 19 August. New site: SK902059.

Large colony in lush grasses between tree plantation and nearby roadside verges, and two inside Panter's Wood. Ketton, RNHS Field meeting 8th September. New site: SK966053.

Regular sites visited: Lyndon and Egleton Reserves, Lyndon Road, Wing, Ketton Quarries. Numbers maintained.

Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima*.

High numbers heard in the trees and bushes of Cherry Wood Egleton reserve, 16 August. New site: SK886082. More large colonies located everywhere in trees and shrubs, outside Panter's Wood, 8 September. New site: SK966053.

Ryhall Playing Fields on 18 September, with 10 plus stridulating males in surrounding trees. New site: TF037105.

Regular hotspots visited with large numbers located: Ketton Quarries, Rutland Water reserves at Lyndon and Egleton, Sharples Wood, Lyndon Lane, Wing, Little Casterton Road, Stamford, Gibbet Gorse Meadows. Amazing numbers everywhere! What would we do without our Bat-Detectors!

Groundhoppers.

Slender Groundhopper, *Tetrix subulata*

One found in open area at Gibbet Gorse Meadows. 7 September. New site: SK902057

Grasshoppers.

Field Grasshopper, *Chorthippus brunneus*

One poor specimen observed in open area at the edge of Panter's Wood, Ketton, 8 September. New site: SK966053.

One observed in regular habitat at LRWT Bloody Oaks reserve, 9 August. Photograph received.

Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus parallelus*

One poor specimen observed in open area at the edge of Panter's Wood, Ketton. 8 September. New site: SK966053.

The Wing village Allotments featured in the August/ September period with regulars observed; Dark Bush Cricket, Long-winged Conehead, Speckled Bush Cricket, Field Grasshopper, and Meadow Grasshopper.

Many thanks to our small team of reporters, Tim Caldicott, Linda Clark, Diana Masters, David Needham, Phil Rudkin for their records.

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MAMMALS

RECORDER Linda Biddle

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Mammals and September 2022

I have mentioned before that a new mammal group has been formed and is becoming increasingly active locally. In September a meeting was held at VTC, training participants in the use of small mammal traps. A short session using Longworth traps was carried out, and one harvest mouse was found, the first record this year, and reassuring, as though we know that these tiny mammals are around on the reserve, we don't often find them. Happily, later in the month when the reedbeds were being cleared, a beautiful harvest mouse nest was found – so tiny and with a tiny hole for entrance and exit. They are delightful creatures!



**Harvest mouse nest.
Photo
L. Biddle**

Following these lovely discoveries, a mammal trapping session was carried out at RWNr over a weekend, setting baited traps, but with the trapdoors firmly locked open for the first day and night, then the door released, and the traps checked morning and evening. Animals caught and released included pygmy and common shrews, bank voles, short-tailed voles, and wood/field mice. A very successful outcome, and valuable information on the status of small mammals on the reserve. We hope that the exercise will be repeated in the spring to add to our knowledge of mammals locally.

I have received two lovely reports, both with photos, of otters at RWNr recently. They are being seen increasingly commonly, which is very good news. It is great that they have made such a strong recovery over recent years.

We have also had a report of a stoat, the first for a while, seen at Exton Park near Fort Henry ponds in September. A weasel was also seen in Barrow.

Thank you to all the members and recorders who have sent in reports for August and September. They are appreciated and will be used as usual, and forwarded to our VC 55 mammal recorder, Dr Helen O'Brien. Unfortunately, time has been in short supply, and I'm not able to write the normal detailed report, but thought you'd appreciate some special snippets to be going on with. I will include a full report in the next edition of Fieldfare.

INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

RECORDER Jayne Walker

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August/September record.

As I write this, we are now into October and the daylight hours are getting shorter, but this doesn't mean that insects are not still out there to be recorded, so please keep sending them in. Garden ponds have been a good source of records for dragonflies, with a

number visiting them during the summer months. Other key spots for insect records in general have been the local nature reserves, gardens and allotments, so when you are out and about, keep your eyes peeled and a notebook at the ready, you never know what you might see!

August

Species	Scientific Name	Location	Area	Grid Ref	No.	Date
Common Darter	<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i>	Bloody Oaks Quarry		SK 97 11	1	15th August
Migrant Hawker	<i>Aeshna mixta</i>	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	6th August
Red-veined Darter	<i>Sympetrum fonscolombii</i>	Oakham	Barnstedt Drive	SK 8609 2852	1	6th August
Southern Hawker	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	Oakham	Barnstedt Drive	SK 8609 2852	1	20th August
Southern Hawker	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	Oakham	Barnstedt Drive	SK 8609 2852	1	27th August
Brown Hawker	<i>Aeshna grandis</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	?	6th August
Southern Hawker	<i>Aeshna cyanea</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	6th August
Azure Damselfly	<i>Coenagrion puella</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	6th August
Common Blue Damselfly	<i>Enallagma cyathigerum</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	6th August
Pond Olive	<i>Cloeon dipterum</i>	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	2	1st August
Spider	<i>Araneus diadematus</i>	Wardley woods	Along the path amongst plants and scrub	SP 835 995	1	29th August
Cinnamon Bug	<i>Corizus hyoscyami</i>	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	9th August
	<i>Plagiognathus arbustorum</i>	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	7th August
Hairy Shieldbug	<i>Dolycoris baccarum</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	12th August
Non-biting Midge	<i>Chironomidae spp</i>	Vicars Close	Exton	SK 1278 1098	3	21st August
	<i>Ferdinandea cuprea</i>	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	9th August
	<i>Chrysotoxum verralli</i>	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	9th August
	<i>Chrysotoxum verralli</i>	Near Rutland water	Gibbet Gorse Meadows	SK 9023 0575	1	8th August
	<i>Volucella inanis</i>	Near Rutland water	Gibbet Gorse Meadows	SK 9023 0575	2	8th August
	<i>Volucella inanis</i>	Near Rutland water	Gibbet Gorse Meadows	SK 9023 0575	3	19th August

	<i>Sphaerophoria scripta</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060		12th August
	<i>Volucella inanis</i>	Wardley Woods	Along the path amongst plants and scrub	SP 835 995	1	29th August
22-spot Ladybird	<i>Psyllobora 22-punctata</i>	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	17	29th August
Devils Coach Horse Beetle	<i>Staphylinus olens</i>	Oakham	Barmstedt Drive	SK 8609 2852	1	22nd August
Click Beetle	<i>Athous haemorrhoidalis</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	6th August
7-Spot Ladybird	<i>Coccinella 7-punctata</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	12th August
Big-headed Digger Wasp	<i>Ectemnius cephalotes</i>	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	7th August
Common Carder Bee	<i>Bombus pascuorum</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	6th August
Hairy-footed Flower Bee	<i>Anthophora plumipes</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060		
Forest Cuckoo Bee	<i>Bombus sylvestris</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	3	12th August
Red tailed Bumblebee	<i>Bombus lapidarius</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060		12th August
Common Carder Bee	<i>Bombus pascuorum</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060		12th August
Honeybee	<i>Apis mellifera</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060		12th August
Isopoda – Woodlouse						
Southern Pill Woodlouse	<i>Armadillidium vulgare</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060		12th August
Common Striped Woodlouse	<i>Philoscia muscorum</i>	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060		12th August



Left.
Hoverfly *Volucella inanis*.
Photo C.Baxter



Right.
Nursery web spider. *Pisaura mirabilis*.
Photo P. Scott

September

Species	Scientific name	Location	Area	Grid ref.	No.	Date
Tortoise Shieldbug	<i>Eurygasta testudinaria</i>	near Rutland Water	Gibbet Gorse Meadows	SK 9023 0575	1	3rd September
Box Bug	<i>Gonocerus acuteangulatus</i>	Manton	St Marys Road	SK 8800 0465	1	20th September
	<i>Volucella zonaria</i>	Manton	St Marys Road	SK 8801 0463	1	17th September
The Footballer	<i>Heliophilus pendulus</i>	Wardley woods	Along the path amongst plants and scrub	SP835 995	1	6th September
Hoverfly	<i>Eupeodes latifasciatus</i>	Eyebrook Stockerston	Path overlooking Reservoir	SP849 980	1	22nd September
Hoverfly	<i>Ferninandea cuprea</i>	Priors coppice	In shrubbery	SK831 050	1	10th September
Brown Sedge	<i>Anabolia nervosa</i>	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	21st September

I would like to thank the following members who have submitted records for these months: Tim Caldicott, Carolyn Baxter, Diana Masters and RNHS Bioblitz parties

PLANT GALLS

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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August 2022

It might be thought that the current drought conditions could be affecting the emergence of plants galls, but as the majority of galls are on trees this is not so – numbers per site are much as usual. The A1/A6121 junction, very drought-ridden, gave 10 galls on the 4th. A rust gall on Ladies' Bedstraw and one on Walnut were a little out of the ordinary. George Henry Wood on the 8th had 18 species of gall including 2 produced by gall flies which lay their eggs on the flowers of thistle relatives and hence their larvae are found therein.

A walk beside the Guash in Great Casterton on the 16th, among a total of 24 galls was a tongue-like gall on the female cones of Alder. This was at one time rare, known only from Cornwall in the 1940s, but since 1999 has become common in many parts of the country. This site also produced a leaf-curl gall on Large-leaved Lime, caused by a midge, which was a new record for us. On the 24th the bridleway south from Pickworth towards Christian's Lodge produced 19 galls, including 3 produced by gall flies mentioned above. These were in Lesser Burdock, Hard Heads and Spear Thistle. Finally, on the 30th, Ryhall Heath had a total of 22 galls including one on Dog Rose which wasn't in the book, so has had to go to the British Plant Gall Society for identification. It may take some time.

September 2022

A busier month with 7 reports received from various sites around the county. At the end of August's report, I mentioned a gall on Dog Rose which had been referred to the BPGS for identification, and happily it didn't take long to be resolved. It is caused by a gall wasp which usually parasitises Burnet Rose, but occasionally occurs on Dog Rose, hence our record. Remarkably it was found again in the first report for September, on the 6th, in Aldgate Ketton, some 6 km in a straight line from the first occurrence. Two days later there was a joint RNHS/LES meeting at Panter's Orchard Ketton. This site was planted in the 1920s as a commercial proposition but is now derelict. As a result of a limited flora it only produced 12 galls, including the rust on pear which was also found at the Seek on the 28th. This gall is quite large and turns the leaf bright red, so not easily ignored! Tinwell parish on the 15th produce 21 galls and BOQ on the 16th another 5 to add to the site list for 2022. Lyndon Reserve on the 19th gave 28 galls and the Seek, referred to above, another 28. Thanks to Martin Grimes and Roy Lemmon for their records.

A message of thanks.

John Bristow has until recently been a conservation officer at LRWT and a stalwart member of the RNHS committee. He has been a valuable link between our society and the trust, and has changed his job, now being employed by Leicester City Council to work as an environment officer. John has for example, arranged permissions for us to hold meetings on LRWT reserves, in particular Ketton Quarry, and negotiated permission with Hansen's Cement LTD. for us to hold our recent meeting at Panter's Orchard. We thank him sincerely for his efforts and wish him every success in his new role. We also hope that he will continue to keep in touch with us in the future! Many Thanks John!

FIELD TRIPS

Ketton Quarry butterfly walk.

Saturday 6th August

There was an excellent turn out for the butterfly walk on 6th August; about three new members appeared along with 17 of our regular members. They must have heard that Dave Needham was leading the walk! The weather was superb and there was plenty to see. Dave imparted his knowledge on butterflies and Damselflies, while John Rodgers provided the expert Botany. Phil Rudkin was busy amongst the herbage locating the Orthoptera using his bat detector. Catching pots were handed to Linda Clark and Luke Nelson as they stalked through the tall grasses catching nymphs of Lesser Marsh grasshopper and adult Meadow grasshoppers before releasing them back into the meadow. Despite hearing masses of Roesels bush crickets and Long winged coneheads, they couldn't find them in the long grass. Bad luck folks!

Martin Quinlan, our butterfly recorder, noted down Common blue, Meadow brown, Brown Argus and (after some discussion) a very worn-out Silver washed fritillary butterfly taking a rest (or was it a nap?) on Knapweed. A Brimstone butterfly wafted past, settling near the entrance to the Quarry, where it posed for the cameras. Despite the dried-up appearance of the quarry, plants were still flowering. Amongst others, Wild marjoram, Common toadflax, knapweed, Viper's bugloss and near the trees, the distinctive flowers of Deadly nightshade.

In the warm sunshine, Luke and Phil discussed the call notes of Willow warbler, Chiff-chaff, the "ticking" of Blackcap and the raucous calls of Green woodpecker in the scrub bank of "The Valley" – but ever alert to the call of the crickets and grasshoppers, Phil was able to record the stridulations of the Speckled Bush crickets in the tall trees of "The Valley", a first of the season! It seemed a shame to go home after all that – but we had to. Phil Rudkin

Right. Silver washed fritillary. Ketton Quarry. Photo C. Baxter



Shaded Broad-bar moth. Ketton Quarry. Photo C. Baxter



Right. Nymph of Meadow grasshopper. Photo Peter Scott.



Dave Needham gathering members together for the butterfly walk at Ketton Quarry.

Allerton Trust Project. 15th September 2022.

Thirteen RNHS members gathered at the Allerton Trust's eco building and were greeted by Joe Stanley who was our guide for the morning. Joe gave us a brief overview, explaining the history and purpose of the Trust. The estate was gifted by Lord and Lady Allerton and is managed by the Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust. It was established in 1992 for the purpose of research into sustainable farming practices to enhance the biodiversity and environmental quality of the area. It is a charity, receiving funding from various sources and it is also a research facility, sharing information and results with policy makers, DEFRA as well as farmers and agricultural professionals



**Above. Joe Stanley giving brief overview of the Trust.
Photo L. Clark**

We then set off to see the practical side of the visit, accompanied by Joe's 2 little dogs, soon coming across a small flock of rare breed Leicester Longwool sheep. Beetle banks which were created in the 1980's, between the field areas are extensive. These predatory insects have been shown to reduce aphid numbers in the cropped areas. The banks are also valuable habitats for mammals, bumblebees, and birds. Field patches are sown with different seed mix to provide food for pollinators and birds in the winter, along with large wide strips of unharvested wheat left as winter food for birds.

Leaky dams have been created using logs, a cheap and effective way of creating wet meadow areas thus increasing the biodiversity of the species which thrive in this type of habitat. Creation of these areas has the added benefit of reducing the likelihood of flooding further downstream in urban areas.

Land management includes the planting of catch crops, cover crops and companion planting. Direct drilling, which prevents break - up of the soil structure, leading to improved crop yields is also used. In the agroforestry area, research is being carried out into planting trees onto pastureland whilst maintaining lamb



The Allerton project. Photo L. Clark

production. The optimum spacing between the trees is still to be worked out. The farm has reintroduced shoot days after assessing the effect of withdrawing predator control and winter feeding in hoppers; the reintroduction of both has led to an increase in wild pheasant, songbird and hare numbers.

When trialling methods haven't worked out as expected, lessons have been learnt and measures revised to improve outcomes. Many of the above schemes are undertaken at a cost to the farmer as they take land out of agriculture.

As we walked along, the conversation flowed easily and included the effect of climate change, food prices, food and availability and the role of supermarkets with regard to payments to farmers. It was evident that the members who have visited before found this visit as informative as those who were first timers as so much had changed and is continuously changing. I felt very privileged to have been able to visit such a valuable and important enterprise. Many thanks to Joe Stanley whose knowledge about all things farming was excellent and also to Jeff Wilcox Smith our Programme Secretary who organised this visit.

Linda Clark

A Special survey at Panter's Orchard September 8th, 2022.

Back in the early spring it was suggested that a joint meeting between RNHS and LRES (Leics and Rutland Entomological Society) would be a good idea, and committee member John Bristow raised the possibility of visiting Panter's Orchard, a site owned by Hansen's Cement, and little visited, even less surveyed for many years. The Orchard is apparently one of the oldest in the east midlands but has no designation for protection. The importance of surveys in such a site cannot be overestimated, as any change in biodiversity cannot be measured without a baseline. The site is apparently mentioned as a site of biodiversity gain in the Ketton Quarry management plan, but no habitat work has been carried out. It took John a little time to negotiate access to the site, close to the edge of the quarrying area at Ketton, but by late August we were able to set a date and invite members, and luckily the day dawned bright and dry, and a group of around 17 individuals from both groups assembled by the gate. Unfortunately, although we had been granted access, this had not included keys to the padlocked gate, but as usual with ingenuity, determination, and a certain degree of technical skill, we managed to gain entry!



John Bristow and members outside Panter's orchard

The orchard is very overgrown, and access to the inner part is quite difficult, so some members opted to do their surveys outside the orchard itself, but the rest of us pushed through the vegetation and meandered into the undergrowth. There are apples, pears, and plums or bullace, all loaded with fruit, though completely wild and unmanaged. Before long it was difficult to see anyone, as each undertook their own survey method, looking at tree trunks for lichen, collecting spiders, catching crickets and grasshoppers, searching out bees and butterflies, or just looking at birds and flowers.

In spite of the very dry season which reduced the specimens seen, the results are numerous and varied. Phil Rudkin found Roesel's Bush cricket, long winged conehead, speckled and dark bush crickets outside the trees, and Tim Caldecott, Roesel's and long winged coneheads, in the orchard. Meadow and Field grasshoppers were also found. Tim was also lucky enough to see a spotted flycatcher, a nice ornithology record to add to the tits and great spotted woodpecker. One of the interesting plants found was Fern Grass *Catapodium rigidum*, and another the colourful Viper's Bugloss. 10 grasses were among the other 70 species of vascular plants identified. 16 mosses 3 liverworts, a shaggy bracket and one other fungus *Mycoacia uda* were also listed. A number of lichens found were all identified. Galls were found on thistles, caused by the thistle gall fly, and a woodlouse spider *Dysdera erythrina* was the less common of the two British species of woodlouse spiders. The best find of the day



Jenny Harris, Dave Needham and Steve Woodward in the thick of it. Photo L. Biddle

for Graham Finch, VC55 beetle recorder was the larval case of a micromoth *Coleophora kuehnella* (see photo opposite) which is a first record for VC55. He also found a beautiful metallic blue weevil *Lasiorhynchites cavifrons* of which there are only 20 records for this species in VC55. Included in 13 beetle species were 2 Bruchid beetles and 3 ladybirds, Pine, 24 spot and 7 spot, and 14 species of micromoth also found. Southern and brown hawkers zoomed among the clearings and common darter dragonflies flitted about the trees. Badger latrines, muntjac and fallow prints were noted.

All in all, a really interesting and useful day, and it was thanks to the organisation of John Bristow, the permission of Hansen Cement, and the cooperation of the LRES members that we were able to find out what we did. Our thanks to everyone who contributed to the day, and to those who have sent in their records and reports. We look forward to more joint meetings in the future.

Recorders: - Alan Cann, Ivan Pedley, Hazel Graves, Phil Rudkin, Tim Caldicott, Steve Woodward, Helen Iken, Dave Needham, Roy Lemmon, Graham Finch, Nicola Bashforth, Jenny Harris, Brian Kinealy, Gill Chiverton



Jill and Hendrina searching for insects just outside the orchard. Photo P. Rudkin



Helen Ikin and Steve Woodward searching the undergrowth. Photo L Biddle



Stock image of Woodlouse spider *Dysdera erythrina* found in the orchard. (Read text opposite).



Viper's bugloss also found at Ketton Quarry walk. Photo C. Baxter

List of species found at Panters orchard by Graham Finch.

SPECIES	SCIENTIFIC NAME	NUMBERS	COMMENTS
Micro moth	Phyllonorycter corylifoliella	Present	Leaf mine on Hawthorn
Micro moth	Phyllonorycter corylifoliella	Present	Leaf mine on Malus sp.
Micro moth	Coptotriche marginea	Present	Leaf mine on Bramble
Micro moth	Psyche Casta	1	Larval case on Ash leaf
Micro moth	Stigmella aurella	Present	Leaf mine on Bramble
Micro moth	Coleophora kuehnella	Present	Larval case on Oak
Micro moth	Endothenia gentianaeana	3	Larva inside Teasel heads
Micro moth	Metznaria metzneriella	1	Larva inside Knapweed heads
Micro moth	Stigmella plagiocella	Present	Leaf mine on Prunus sp.
Micro moth	Paromix agnicella	Present	Leaf mine on Hawthorn
Micro moth	Lyonettia clerkella	Present	Leaf mine on Malus sp.
Micro moth	Lyonettia clerkella	Present	Leaf mine on Hawthorn
Micro moth	Phyllonorycter blancardella/ cydoniella	1	Leaf mine on Malus sp.
Micro moth	Ectoedemia angulifasciella	1	Leaf mine in Rosa sp
Micro moth	Calisto denticulella	1	Leaf mine on Malus sp.
Beetle	Aphthona euphorbiae	8	Beat from low branches
Beetle	Aphthona euphorbiae	20+	Swept from low vegetation
24-spot Ladybird	Subcoccinella virgintquatuorpuncta	5	Beat from low branches
Pine Ladybird	Chilocorus bipustulatus	3	Swept from low vegetation
7-spot Ladybird	Coccinella septempunctata	10	Swept from low vegetation
Beetle	Sitona lineatus	8	Swept from low vegetation
Beetle	Dromius quadrimaculatus	1	Beat from low branches
Beetle	Calodromus spilotus	1	Beat from low branches
Beetle	Salpingus planirostris	1	Beat from low branches
Beetle	Psylliodes chrysocephala	6	Swept from low vegetation
Beetle	Paradromius linearis	1	Beat from low branches
Beetle	Bruchus loti	1	Swept from low vegetation
Beetle	Bruchus rufimanus	1	Swept from low vegetation
Beetle	Lasioryhynchites cavifrons	2	Beat from low branches



**Above. Micro moth larval case of *Coelophora kuehnella*. A first record for VC55.
Photo Graham Finch (VC55 Beetle recorder).**



Above. Stock image of *Lasioryhynchites cavifrons*. A large metallic blue weevil found at Panters orchard by Graham Finch. Only 20 records for this species in VC55.

Photo list of species found by Alan Cann (Joint Naturespot County spider recorder) at Panter's orchard. All photos supplied by Alan Cann



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