



Bolete. *Xerocomus* sp. Wardley woods.

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## Welcome

**The autumn season of meetings has started-** the Biking Birder giving us a flying start with tales of his adventures. It is always good to meet up again after the summer and find out what you've all been seeing and doing, and I hope more of you will want to come along to hear Tim Sexton at our next indoor meeting on November 7th. As I write, at long last it feels as if autumn is truly here. The temperature has at last dropped to normal for the time of year. Deer are rutting; we heard the bellow of fallow bucks this morning on our daily walk, and the swallows have now disappeared. I have yet to see redwings or fieldfares, but they will surely be arriving soon. Climate change has been very obvious this year with record temperatures throughout the world signalling a serious warning for our future.

Thankyou to all those who entered photographs for the calendar and notelets that we are producing. The pictures are really lovely, and it is very difficult to make choices! If you would like to order, then please let me know. We shall be showcasing the photos at our indoor members meeting as usual in December, and I do hope to have notelets and calendars available to show you by then. Of course, December being the "season of good cheer", it is also our opportunity to socialize, with Christmas drinks and nibbles available during the evening. If you are able to **bring along a contribution** to the "feast", let Linda or Peter know what you aim to bring. Thank you in advance.

I really hope that some of you are considering what you can do to help our society continue after the AGM next March. We shall shortly be holding a meeting of our hardworking recorders who are responsible for the information that goes into our newsletter and look forward to hearing their latest news. We are grateful to them all for continuing to work and provide us with such interesting information!

Enjoy the changing seasons, and we look forward to seeing you all soon.

**Linda Biddle** *RNHS Chair.*

## DIARY DATES



### RNHS Outdoor meetings.

The following events are correct at time of publication but may be changed at short notice, so it is important to book your place with Jeff Wilcox-Smith. Details. Mob: 07946733931 or wilcoxsmith@btinternet.com. Full details of all these events appear on our website at [www.rnhs.org.uk](http://www.rnhs.org.uk). Please make sure you are wearing appropriate clothing for the outdoor meetings and if the weather is bad on the day, give Jeff a ring beforehand in case it needs to be cancelled. Jeff may also help with any queries if you are unsure about directions.

**Sunday 29th October. 1.30pm – 3.30pm. (Please note – this is a change of time from August Fieldfare).** A Fungi walk around Barnsdale woods with Tim Sexton, Species and recording officer for Rutland Water Nature reserves. October is the season for all things weird and wonderful! If you are looking for weird and wonderful together, look no further than a walk through the woodlands this Autumn. Meet: Barnsdale car park. Grid ref: SK904 088. Postcode LE15 8AB. A car parking fee is payable.

**Saturday 6th January 2024. Hambleton peninsula Rutland Water.** Wrap up warmly to greet the new year with a brisk walk around the peninsula. Meet: Fishermans car park. (More details on website as it becomes available).

### RNHS Indoor evening meetings.

7.30pm – 9.30pm on First Tuesday of every month from October through to March at Volunteer Training Centre (VTC). LE15 8AD. Ref: SK883 083. Please book your place as detailed above with Jeff Wilcox-Smith as places may be limited. Visitors are asked for a donation of £2.00.

**Tuesday 7th November. 7.30pm. “Green is the new Black”.** A talk by Tim Sexton, Species and Recording officer for LRWT. The former Rufford colliery near Mansfield, Nottinghamshire, closed in 1993 after eight decades. Hear how it has been transformed into the County's biggest heathland recreation programme, totalling over 100 hectares. Tim will take you through some of the incredible and rare wildlife now found there.

**Tuesday 5th December. 7.30pm. Members and recorders evening.** Time to get together to hear all about the best moments from 2023. With a busy year to reflect on, there will be plenty to share, with photographs and videos from our members and recorders – and not forgetting the Christmas drinks and nibbles!!

**Tuesday 9th January 2024. 7.30pm.** “What we found in Jean-Henri Fabre's back yard” An entomological talk about Natural history of south west France by John Tinning.

### Important notices – please read.

Anyone who has not seen the emails, letters, or the website over recent weeks, and who has a Standing Order to renew their RNHS subscription for next year, we now have a **new Treasurer Account, with a new Sort Code and Account Number**. This is a reminder for you to cancel your old payment instruction to your bank now and set up a new one as soon as possible before your subscription is renewed in January. We especially ask that you set up the payment for **3rd January** and annually thereafter to make the accounting system easier for the treasurer to monitor in future. Sadly, because of physical closures of bank buildings in the area, it has become more difficult to process cash and cheque payments, so we also ask those members who have paid by cash or cheque in the past to change to a Standing Order with your bank for payment **if possible**. Anyone without the option to pay by Standing Order, please get in touch with Peter Scott (details outside back cover) who will be able to advise.

The next society A.G.M. will be the usual indoor meeting which will take place in March 2024 (not many months away!) It is an important evening when members vote to re-elect the current committee for another year, and also to nominate and elect new members to take up vacancies left. Next March there will be at least two places to fill on the committee and as yet – no-one to fill them. This could mean an added burden for those left to keep the Society running smoothly for its members. If you feel you could spare just a few hours a month or can help in any capacity, however small, please do get in touch with Linda Biddle (details outside back cover). She will be delighted to hear from you!

## WEATHER

**RECORDER Roy Lemmon**

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### August 2023

A

atmospheric pressure and wind. An unsettled month, the

lowest atmospheric pressure was 984 mb on the 2nd, and the highest was 1024 on the 17th and also on the 21st. Wind directions were mostly SW–NW with 2 days easterly

on the 17th and 18th.

Nationally there were two named storms, Antoni on the 5th and Betty on the 19th, but neither had much effect here, the former being most felt in Devon and Cornwall and the latter passed to the north of Scotland.

**Temperature.** A cool August, the overall mean, 17.64 °C, was 6th in the decade 2014–2022, just ahead of August 2015 at 17.53 °C. The highest daily maximum was 28.7 °C on the 10th and the lowest overnight minimum was 8.1 °C on the 29th–30th.

**Precipitation.** A total of 53.9 mm (2.12 inches) equates to 89% of my long-term mean of 33 years. 75% of this fell in the first 5 days of the month, including 21.5 mm (0.83 inches) on the 3rd.

## September 2023

**Atmospheric pressure and wind.** The pressures in the first 7 days were relatively high, including the highest of the

month, 1028 mb on the 3rd. The remaining days had low pressures except the 30th when it was high again. Winds were NW–NE from 1st to 13th and then SE–NW to the end. On some days it was gusty and at 09.00 on the 20th I recorded gusts up to 18 mph.

There was one named storm - Agnes on 27th–28th but as is often the case it was felt mostly in the West and Scotland; here a couple of hours of fresh winds and no rain!

**Temperature.** A warm month with a mean of 17.81 °C, making it the warmest September in the decade 2014–2023, ahead of September 2021 which was 16.87 °C. It is the warmest September I have recorded since my records began in 1994 and may prove to be the warmest since records began in the UK.

**Precipitation.** A total of 60.9 mm (2.40 inches) which equates to 124% of my long-term mean of 33 years. The highest daily amount, 17.1 mm (0.67 inches) fell on the 20th during a low-pressure spell.

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# AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

**RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore**

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## AUGUST/SEPTEMBER 2023

This has been a quiet two months for amphibians, but lizards and slow worms were in evidence. The only records of **Common Frog** were of two single frogs in adjacent gardens in Ridlington in early September. There were three records of **Common Toad** – one at Ketton Quarry in early September, one in an Oakham garden in the middle of the month and one from Normanton on September 23, which is the first record that I have received from there, although one was seen there 24 years ago. There were no newt records.

Young **Viviparous Lizards** were seen at Bloody Oaks on August 15 and Dave Needham saw twelve there on August 25. Terry Mitcham's grandson saw one at Clipsham Park Wood on August 17 and Tim Sexton saw one at Lax Hill again, reinforcing our hopes that the translocation from Wing Water Treatment Works in 2007 was in fact

successful after all.

Tim Appleton and your recorder found eight **Slow Worms** under shelters in Burley Wood on August 1 and again we found four on August 25 although two were probably the same individuals as on the previous inspection.

The only **Grass Snake** records were of deceased specimens. Your recorder found a 32 inch long female road casualty near his home in Braunston on August 9, quite likely the same individual that was unwisely sunning itself on the road a few weeks earlier. Sadly, there were seven eggs splattered on the road. A small dead snake was found at Wing bus stop on August 20.

My thanks to the following who provided records:- T Appleton, J Colaco, G Griffin, J Harris, A Hill, T Mitcham, J Morrell, D Needham, T Sexton and G Williams

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# BATS

**RECORDER Jenny Harris**

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## June to September 2023

**During the period** June to September inclusive, our bat records have come mainly from grounded bats, bat walks and other formal events, counts for the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP), bat box checks and trapping for the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project (NNPP). As one gets to the end of September the bat activity season is winding down and there will be many fewer records as bats move into hibernation.

On 7 July, 25 July and 15 August, bats were seen flying

over the stage at Toilethorpe outdoor theatre, TF022002, in the light of stage floodlights. These were seen when the floodlights went up again at the end of the interval and one bat was visibly disorientated by the sudden increase of illumination. Although unconfirmed, the size, broad wings and relatively slow flight suggests these were **brown long-eared bats**; there is a known roost in the roof of the Hall.

During the RNHS bat walk at Ketton on 8th September, **common and soprano pipistrelles** were heard and seen at Aldgate, SK982043 and SK984044, while **Daubenton's bats** were seen foraging at Church Road bridge



(SK982043) and over the R. Chater under trees near the Sink Bridge, (SK982044). At least one **Noctule** bat was heard foraging over the road near the Sink Bridge.

At a walk for the local Bat Group and members of the Wildlife Trust on 9th September, **common and soprano pipistrelles**, mainly the latter, were observed foraging east of the Lyndon Hill visitor centre near Gibbet Gorse,

at various points along the southern shore of RW, and around Teal Hide (SK894056). For the first time on this walk no Noctules were heard. The water level of the reservoir was low so that the water in front of Teal Hide was very shallow and quite overgrown with algae. Although probable **Daubenton's bats** were seen far out over deeper water with thermal imaging equipment, they could neither be heard nor picked up in the light of a powerful torch.

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#### NBMP counts at maternity roosts.

Roost name	Date	Species	count	Weather/temp°C
Braunston-in-Rutland Church	12 June	Soprano Pipistrelle	324	Full cloud, calm, dry after rain, 18°C
	23 June	Soprano Pipistrelle	305	Full cloud, calm, dry, 19°C
Egleton Church	10 June	Soprano Pipistrelle	1239	Patchy cloud, light breeze, dry, 22°C at 9pm, falling to 17°C at sunset.
	29 June	Soprano Pipistrelle	1190	Clear, calm, 14°C, dry (rain earlier)
Egleton Church, south side only	05 July	Soprano Pipistrelle	669	Patchy cloud, calm, dry, 13°C
Whissendine Church		Natterer's Bat		Count carried out, no details yet.
Stoke Dry Church		Natterer's Bat		Counts carried out, no details yet.
	29 June	Natterer's Bat	07	Visit to assess access for bats (not formal NBMP count)

In addition to the NBMP counts, the ecological consultants working for the Bats in Churches Project at Egleton, carried out a count as part of the monitoring on 14 June. Their record count of 1,326 topped our June 2022 count by just two bats! On 5 July a community engagement event was carried out at Egleton Church, with talks by the Church Warden and Jenny Harris, followed by a count of bats emerging from the south side of the church. Ten people took part, including the Lord High Sherrif of Rutland and a reporter from the Rutland and Stamford Mercury, with two groups counting the bats (see result in table above). An article appeared in the newspaper on 21 July. Unfortunately, on 5 July it was found that bats were still entering the church, with 25 to 30 pipistrelles flying inside. Additional survey work, funded by the Bats in

Churches Project, pinpointed where the bats were entering and further remedial work to exclude them is planned for October. A Beer and Bats community engagement event, organised by the national Bats in Churches Project, was also held on 3 September at Braunston-in-Rutland Church, attended by approximately 60 people who came to hear various talks and watch the bats emerge. No formal count was carried out on that occasion. At Stoke Dry Church, counters found it difficult to pinpoint where (or even whether) the Natterer's bats were emerging during the two NBMP counts, and there is some concern that reroofing carried out three years ago has affected either roosting or emergence sites. It is planned to try and count the bats in May next year when maternity colonies usually return to the roosts.

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#### Grounded bats.

**Twenty bats** of three species, Common Pipistrelle, Soprano Pipistrelle and Brown Long-eared Bat, including a suckling infant with its dead mother, were recorded (see

details ). Unless otherwise stated, all bats that could be released were released at the site where they had been found.

**KEY:** F/a Forearm length  
Died E Euthanised by vet.

Date	Details
11 June	Adult female soprano pipistrelle, Ketton, SK982047, cat victim, holes in both wing membranes, died.
13 June	Adult male brown long-eared bat, Ketton, SK982047, cat victim, holes in wing membranes, broken shoulder, died.
27 June	Infant pipistrelle sp., South Luffenham, SK939020, f/a 22.5mm, less than two weeks old, died E.
01 July	Adult female common pipistrelle, Oakham, (taken to vet so no address given) wound on stomach, possible cat victim, found dead.
01 July	Infant male common pipistrelle, Oakham, firmly attached to female (above), so not examined on humanitarian grounds. Euthanised by vet. E
04 July	Infant male pipistrelle sp., Knossington, SK799087 away from roost, died E.
06 July	Infant pipistrelle sp., Preston, SK871023, very small and thin, died E.
06 July	Juvenile female soprano pipistrelle, Egleton Church SK876075, weight 3.2g, flying in church, dehydrated, died.
06 July	Juvenile male soprano pipistrelle, Egleton Church, released 6.7 by Linda Clark.
06 July	Juvenile male soprano pipistrelle, Egleton Church, weight 3.7g, found in church, dehydrated, died E.
06 July	Juvenile female soprano pipistrelle, Egleton Church, very thin, died.
08 July	Infant male pipistrelle sp., Oakham SK863096, very thin, 2.5g, wrists deformed, died E.
11 July	Infant pipistrelle sp., Knossington SK800089, 2.8g, broken wrist, died E
15 July	Juvenile Pipistrelle sp., Whitwell SK824088, grounded near roost and returned to roost by N. Hughes
02 August	Juvenile male common pipistrelle, Oakham, SK863095, full grown but only 3.5g, holes in right wing membrane, probable cat victim. Released 26.8.
24 August	Sub-adult male brown long-eared bat, Wing Water Treatment Works, SK898027, F/a 39-40mm, weight 6.8g, not flying. Released 11.9 at Wing Churchyard, weight 10.1g.
24 August	Infant male brown long-eared bat, Great Casterton Church TF001088, on floor. F/a 30mm, c. 2-3 weeks old, very thin, Died E.
25 August	Common Pipistrelle, adult female, Oakham, SK853088, injured left wing, fingers broken, large area of membrane missing. Died E.
03 September	Common pipistrelle, juvenile female, Ryhall TF034109, brought indoors by cat, small hole in right wing, f/a 31mm, weight 4.g. Released 18.9, weight 7.1g.
03 September	Common pipistrelle, adult female, Oakham SK857082, open wound left shoulder, large area of left wing membrane missing. Retained for care.

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### Bat Box Check at Barnsdale wood, Sunday 6th August

Jenny Harris attended a check of bat boxes in Barnsdale Wood, SK912087 to SK916087 approximately, carried out as part of the National Nathusius' Pipistrelle Project (NNPP) by Tom Bennett of Derbyshire Bat Conservation Group. Tom holds a special licence from Natural England which has to be renewed annually and covers a variety of sites around Rutland Water, including the nature reserve. There is a total of 51 boxes, mostly made of wood by RW volunteers, in Barnsdale Wood; all that could be found were checked. Tom replaced four that had been lost or damaged with Schwegler woodcrete boxes type 2F or 2FN. One other damaged wooden box was repaired. Bats were found in 13 of the boxes. Seven of these boxes contained single soprano pipistrelles, which were considered to be males, based on experience of checking boxes elsewhere. Boxes with multiple occupancy in late summer and autumn are usually mating roosts, with harems of females accompanied by a dominant male. Researchers have found that single bats are almost always males, but

they are usually in boxes close to those with groups of females. The number of bats in the boxes ranged from four to nine; other boxes were estimated to contain 15, 25, with even 15 to 20 bats in one box. The day was warm and sunny so bats were not examined as they were very active and would not have returned to the boxes once taken out, but all were identified as soprano pipistrelles.

Seven of the boxes contained no bats but had varying amounts of droppings in them, from just one or two, to more than 1cm depth. Various kinds of invertebrates were found in 17 of the boxes (slugs, spiders or their webs, clusters of moths) and nine boxes were totally empty. In addition, the cavities of a group of three rather weedy-looking beech trees were examined with Tom's endoscope; two of these were empty, while the cavity of the third contained two (unidentified) pipistrelles right at the top. No Nathusius' pipistrelles were found during the check.

## **Bat box checks, harp trapping and mist netting, Rutland Water, Saturday 2nd and Sunday 3rd September**

### **Lax Hill Wood 2nd September**

Tom Bennett and his team carried out this year's second check of boxes in Lax Hill Wood, centred on SK887062. All 30 boxes were checked. Five *Nathusius*' pipistrelles were found, three of which were recaptures of bats ringed at Lax Hill in September 2022; seven soprano pipistrelles were found. The *Nathusius*' pipistrelles seem remarkably site faithful.

**Box 1:** *Nathusius*' pipistrelle, male, recapture, previously in Box 2, same tree

**Box 2:** single soprano pipistrelle

**Box 3:** *Nathusius*' pipistrelle, male, ringed for the first time

**Box 6:** *Nathusius*' pipistrelle, male, recapture, previously in Box 6

**Box 7:** *Nathusius*' pipistrelle, male, recapture, previously in Box 10 only 50m away

**Box 8:** Soprano pipistrelle, group of six. Assumed to be mating group

**Box 9:** *Nathusius*' pipistrelle, male, ringed for the first time

### **Berrybut Wood 2nd September**

Eighteen boxes were checked in the main part of Berrybut

Wood. These were put up approximately three months ago to extend the scope of the NNPP survey on the south shore of RW. The boxes were made by LRWT Rutland Water

volunteers and put up by Tim Sexton, and this was the first time they had been checked.

**Box 6:** single soprano pipistrelle

### **Cottage Wood, SK892082, overnight**

Mist netting and harp trapping were carried out overnight on the evening of 2nd and 3rd September at Cottage Wood alongside the Hambleton Road. This is part of the plantation woodland that was planted around the reservoir in the early 1970s, so is still a relatively young habitat. A total of seven bats were caught: three soprano pipistrelles, two brown long-eared bats, one whiskered bat and one male *Nathusius*' pipistrelle, which I assume was ringed that evening as part of the NNPP.

My thanks to the following for their help over this period: Linda Clark for bat care and release of bat at Egleton Church, Donnie Smalley regarding rescue and release of Barmstedt Drive bat. Help with bat roost counts and events: Linda and Anthony Biddle, Linda Clark, Carolyn Baxter, Ann Tomlinson, Egleton and Braunston church wardens, and everyone who came on the bat walk at Ketton.

## **BIRDS**

**Recorder Terry Mitcham**

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### **August 2023.**

**Highlights.** Rutland Water had a Black-necked Grebe (from 29th), six Spoonbills (29th) with five (30th), a Bittern (6th), a White-tailed Eagle from the IOW project (10th, 11th), three Sandwich Terns (10th) and a White-winged Black Tern (17th). A Hawfinch was reported at Empingham (19th). Eyebrook Reservoir had a Bittern (10th) and a Cattle Egret (26th) with a Little Tern (23rd).

**Rutland Water.** (See also the wildfowl count). Other wildfowl were a Barnacle Goose (from 26th) and a Ruddy Shelduck (from 23rd). Some wader counts (22nd) were two Oystercatchers, 114 Lapwings, ten Ruff, ten Common Sandpipers, 14 Green Sandpipers and two Greenshank. Other waders were two Ringed Plover (26th), Whimbrel (24th), six Curlew (26th), Black-tailed Godwit (24th), Turnstone (12th), Sanderling (26th) and Redshank (26th). On (22nd) there were four Yellow-legged Gulls and 144 Common Terns with one Arctic Tern (18th) and up to three Black Terns (17th-24th). There was a late Cuckoo (19th), regular Marsh Harrier and Hobbies, two Whinchats (2nd -15th) and a Wheatear at the dam (11th).

**Eyebrook Reservoir.** (See also the wildfowl count). There was a Common Scoter (8th, 12th, 13th). An Osprey was seen (20th). Some wader counts were 240 Lapwings (20th) and a Common Sandpiper (26th). There was a Yellow-legged Gull and 40 Common Terns (20th) and up to three Black Terns (18th – 20th)

**Other Sites.** (See also the Exton wildfowl count). Fort Henry Ponds had 22 Shoveler, 33 Gadwall and 24 Teal (26th). There was a Green Sandpiper (21st, 26th) and a Golden Plover flew through (27th). Ospreys were seen (1st, 21st and 27th) and there was a Marsh Harrier (27th). Greetham GC had a Hobby and a Peregrine (21st).

### **September 2023.**

**Highlights.** Rutland Water had a Black-necked Grebe (to 28th), a Cattle Egret (from 11th), a Sandwich Tern (7th) and a Short-eared Owl (1st). A Garganey was at Fort Henry Ponds (2nd, 9th).

**Eyebrook Reservoir.** (See also the wildfowl count). There was a Garganey (21st) and a Red-crested Pochard (19th, 21st). 75 Lapwings were present (17th) with three Ruff (21st), two Snipe (17th) and a Common Sandpiper (10th, 17th). A Spotted Flycatcher and a Wheatear were at the inflow (21st).

**Rutland Water.** (See also the wildfowl count). There was a Barnacle Goose and a Ruddy Shelduck all month. Some wader counts were 315 Lapwings (17th), four Ringed Plover (17th), single Turnstone (13th) and Black-tailed Godwit (1st), five Ruff (5th) and four Curlew Sandpipers (11th). There were two Little Stints (15th), 11 Snipe (17th), a Knot (1st), eight Common Sandpipers (13th) and three Green Sandpipers (13th). There were single Black Terns (7th, 29th), six Yellow-legged Gulls (17th) and a Caspian Gull (9th, 11th). Up to three Hobbies were at Egleton (21st) with a Peregrine (3rd), when there were two Ospreys. 12 Yellow Wagtails were at the dam (11th) and a Grey Wagtail there (13th).

**Other Sites.** Peak wildfowl counts at Fort Henry Ponds were 33 Shoveler, 56 Gadwall, 147 Mallard and 137 Teal (all 21st) with four Green Sandpipers (21st). A Marsh Harrier was seen (10th) and a ring-tailed Harrier was near Horn Mill (7th). Sparrowhawks were in two Oakham and one Stamford gardens. Little Owl was regular at Normanton. A Grey Wagtail was in an Oakham garden with one at Fort Henry Ponds on (21st).

## Wildfowl counts August and September 2023

	<b>RW 22.08.</b>	<b>RW 17.09.</b>	<b>EBR 20.08.</b>	<b>EBR 17.09.</b>
Canada Goose	1143	738	122	64
Barnacle Goose		1		
Greylag Goose	874	692	178	271
Mute Swan	292	432	58	58
Egyptian Goose	89	99	1	
Shelduck			3	
Ruddy Shelduck	1			
Mandarin Duck		2		
Shoveler	50	389	1	4
Gadwall	1167	1354	8	
Wigeon	23	1191		46
Mallard	992	1304	353	245
Pintail	3	80		7
Teal	181	1157	16	48
Pochard	23	8		
Tufted Duck	1819	2949	12	
Little Grebe	102	166	6	6
Great Crested Grebe	437	395	142	89
Cattle Egret		1		1
Grey Heron	17	17	1	3
Great White Egret	14	45	1	1
Little Egret	57	93	1	6
Cormorant	1188	1103	25	28
Water Rail		2		
Moorhen	52	102	6	
Coot	772	1527	109	197
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>9296</b>	<b>13847</b>	<b>1043</b>	<b>1074</b>

	<b>FHP and Exton Park 21.08.</b>	<b>FHP and Exton Park 16.09.</b>	<b>Banthorpe GP 22.08.</b>	<b>Banthorpe GP 15.09.</b>	<b>Holywell Lake 25.09.</b>
Canada Goose					28
Greylag Goose					11
Mute Swan	12	11	6	1	3
Shoveler	20	25			
Gadwall	29	53			
Wigeon		9			
Mallard	136	116			32
Teal	16	96		8	2
Tufted Duck	6	6			3
Little Grebe	1	4			16
Grey Heron	4	2	1	1	
Little Egret			1		2
Cormorant				1	
Moorhen	38	62	4	4	19
Coot	90	108			3
Kingfisher	1				
<b>Total</b>	<b>354</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>119</b>

My thanks to the following for their records. Any which do not appear in these notes will be included in the annual report, which will detail the status of all species reported to us in Rutland during 2023. Please keep sending records of all species as indicated in the recording section of the

website: -  
T.P.Appleton, R.F.Baker, D. & J.Ball, A.Comber, M. & G.Griffin, P.Langston, LROS, M.Markham, D.Masters, I.Misselbrook, T.Mitcham, B.Moore, RWNr, D.Scott, T.Sexton





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# BOTANY

**RECORDER John Rodgers**

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## August/September 2023

Leaves are beginning to turn but not yet to fall. Beechnuts though, are really dropping. I've raked up more than a green bin full already off my lawn. It must be a good year for them. It looks as though the same might be true for Horse Chestnut too.

Quite a few records have come in since the last Fieldfare, though the number of faithful recorders stay much the same. The star of the bunch, because of its unusual occurrence in Rutland, **Wood Sage**, *Teucrium scorodata*, found by Tim Caldicott growing along the lane between Ridlington and Leighfield. It is usually found in the Charnwood Forest area. **Round-leaved Fluellen**, *Kickxia spuria*, and **Many-seeded Goosefoot**, *Chenopodium polyspermum* were found in an arable field near Woodhead Castle by Martin Grimes. The former is quite uncommon, the latter not very much less so. The commonest of the Goosefoots locally is probably Fat Hen *Chenopodium album*, but there are several members of this family to be distinguished whilst those of the Orache family look very similar. Botany can be a quite tricky subject. Other records include **Vervain** and **Hemp Agrimony** at Lyndon, **Clustered Bellflower** at the junction of the A1 and the Tinwell road and two big thistles, **Woolly Thistle** reported by Martin Grimes at George Henry Wood and

**Musk Thistle** near Eyebrook by Carolyn Baxter. Two other records were **Henbit Deadnettle**, *Lamium amplexicaule* on Church Walk Oakham and **Procumbent Pearlwort**, *Sagina procumbens*, also growing in a gap in paving in Oakham. It pays to look around in our towns and villages.



**Vervain, a scarce plant, found by Jenny Harris at Lyndon**

All sorts of things can be found growing in and at the edges of pavements.

There may not be many more flowers to report during the autumn, but you never know with the almost deranged weather we are experiencing. Please keep your eyes peeled and do send in records of what you find.

Thank you to D&J Ball, C Baxter, A&L Biddle, T Caldecott, M Grimes, J Harris, R Lemmon and M Markham for the records they sent in.

## The 13th Annual New year Plant hunt. 2024

Run by the **Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland**, this is an important long term recording project run over 4 days at the beginning of every new year. It gives vital information about how our wild plants are changing in response to climate change. Many volunteers, individually or in groups get outside all over the country to record as many flowering plants as possible in their chosen area, and submitting their results to the BSBI website.

We are encouraging as many of our members as possible to get together on one or two of those days for up to 3 hours between **30th December 2023 to 2nd January 2024** to record our flowering plants in Rutland. If you are interested, **please get in touch with John** at: [rnhsbotanyrecord@gmail.com](mailto:rnhsbotanyrecord@gmail.com) before then for further information about location, times and which of those days we will be out "botanising". If you have a suggestion for a good place to record, that will be welcome, as will individual records taken over any one of those 4 days.

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# BUTTERFLIES

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## August/September 2023

August started with Storm Antoni and was damp and unsettled before warming up and leading into one of the warmest and sunniest Septembers on record.

The last **LARGE SKIPPER** was AT Ketton Quarry (KQ) with 3 present there on 2nd August and where a count of 15 **BRIMSTONE**, also on 2nd was the maximum of the period. Other single records came from Manton (M) on 29th August and in September from Oakham (O), Uppingham (Upp) on 3rd and M on 15th. **LARGE WHITE** was recorded in O, Upp and at KQ on 2nd August and 4th September with 3 there on 13th September. **SMALL WHITE** was more numerous with "lots" in O in August and a maximum of 7 at

KQ on 2nd. In September there were garden sightings in O, Upp and Langham (L) with counts at KQ of 2 on 4th, 2 on 9th, 4 on 13th and 2 on 23rd. Finally, 2 were at Egleton (EG) on 29th. There were only 2 sightings of **GREEN-VEINED WHITE** - at KQ on 2nd August and at M on 11th September. No August records of **SPECKLED WOOD** were followed with sightings in September at L on 5th and at KQ with 2 on 4th, 2 on 6th, 3 on 13th and 1 on 23rd. Just a single record of **SMALL HEATH** came from KQ with 3 there on 4th September. **MEADOW BROWN** was seen widely with maxima of 12 at KQ on 2nd August and 10 at Upp on 3rd September. The last record was 1 at KQ on 13th September. **GATEKEEPER** was widely reported from O, Upp, KQ, Leighfield (LF) and Ashwell (ASH). Maxima



were 16 at KQ on 2nd August, 40 at LF on 3rd August and 7 at UPP on 3rd September. The last was at KQ on 6th September. The last **RINGLET** were 4 at KQ on 2nd August. The last **SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY** were 6 at KQ on 2nd August. **RED ADMIRAL** was seen widely throughout the whole period. Records came from O, Upp, LKQ, M and ASH. Maxima were 16 at KQ on 2nd August and 10 at M on 2nd September. The last record were 3 at KQ on 23rd September. There were 4 records of **PAINTED LADY** at M on 10th and 11th August, Great Casterton (GC) on 17th August and again at M on 25th September. The **PEACOCK** was widely seen with 15 at KQ on 2nd August, 10 at Wing (W) on 7th August, 12 at W on 9th, 2 at Ketton Field (KF) on 6th September, singles at (KQ) on 6th, 13th and 23rd September and finally at M on 21st September. There were 3 records of **COMMA** with 6 at KQ on 2nd

August and singles in L on 5th September and M on 25th September. Single records of **SMALL COPPER** came from M on 6th and 10th August. Two were seen at KF on 6th and 2 at EG on 9th September, The final 2023 record of **PURPLE HAIRSTREAK** were 2 at LF on 1st August. The second generation of **HOLLY BLUE** were much in evidence in August with records from across Rutland at O, Upp, L, W, KQ, M, KF and EG. The final record was at M on 3rd September. There were 4 records of **BROWN ARGUS** at W on 7th and 9th September and 5 at KQ on 2nd August. The last was 1 at M on 3rd September. **COMMON BLUE** was only seen at KQ with 2 there on 2nd August. In September there were 4 on 4th, 3 on 6th and finally 2 on 13th.

I would like to thank the following for their records: Diana Masters, Tim Caldicott, David Needham, Alastair Lawrence, John Rodgers and M.Markham.

## FUNGI

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### July/August 2023

These two months saw the appearance of many of our grassland fungi and some of the most colourful – the Waxcaps. At Bloody Oaks Quarry, Jenny Harris, Paul Bennett and others were finishing a Moth trapping session at the end of July when Jenny noticed a bright yellow fungus in the grass just inside the reserve. A later search by Roy Edwards revealed more in the longer grass so one was collected and identified by Craig Howat as **Persistent waxcap** (*Hygrocybe acutoconica* var. *konradii*). It is one of our commoner waxcaps and can be confused with other yellow waxcaps like the **Golden Waxcap** (*Hygrocybe chlorophana*) that Kate Fortune-Jones found at Ketton



**Persistent Waxcap. Photo Roy Edwards**

**Golden waxcap. Photo Kate Fortune-Jones**



Quarry. **Blackening waxcap** (*Hygrocybe conica*) were found by Craig Howat at Alsthorpe playing fields. An email of two unidentified fungi reported by Marian Markham to Linda Clark on 16th October 2021 was finally identified on 8th August 2023! It was another waxcap found in Brooke churchyard (SK849 057). As Linda couldn't be

sure of correct identification at the time, Marian sent some photo's to Naturespot to see if anyone could help. Twenty two months later, Marian received an email from Steve Hindle, the Grassland Fungi Project Officer for the National Trust, who identified the waxcap as the **Oily waxcap**, (*Hygrocybe quieta*). This is a first for Rutland, so it pays to be persistent and get a correct identification for all these difficult fungi. Well done to Marian for her patience!

**Fairy Ring champignons** (*Marasmius oreades*) were spotted not only by Jacky Morrell but throughout the County mostly in grassland areas. A **Giant puffball** (*Calvatia gigantea*) was seen outside Wardley woods at the beginning of August and later that month, produced a great mass of black spores. Good to see it doing what it was meant to do! There were sightings of **Pestle puffball** (*Lycoperdon exipuliforme*), **Common puffball** (*Lycoperdon periatum*), **Earthballs** (*Scleroderma* sp), and **Stinkhorns** (*Phallus impudicus*) in the wooded areas. Quite a few stinkhorns were found on the floor of the conifer part of Wardley woods towards the end of August. The bizarre fruiting bodies had not yet matured and were still in the "egg" stage, so their smell of rotten meat had not yet developed.

More unusual, gilled fungi found in these two months were **Primrose brittlegill** (*Russula sardonia*), a red capped fungus found in Oakham, **Weeping widow** (*Lacrymaria lacrymabunda*) in Stoke woods, **Porcelain fungus** (*Oudemansiella mucida*), a beautiful pure white fungus that grows in "tufts", found at Exton Owl centre. There were two species of **Shield fungi** (*Pluteus cervinus* and *P. salicinus*), found in the beech/ birchwood area of Ketton Quarry (KQ). A deadly **Funeral Bell** (*Galerina marginata*), a solitary specimen was found in Wardley woods.

Of the cup and jelly fungi found, were **Dead Molls' fingers** (*Xylaria longipes*) found in Barnsdale (B) and Wardley woods (Ww), **Green Elfcup** (*Chlorosplenium aeruginascens*) (Ww), **White spindles** (KQ), **Yellow Stagshorn** (Ww), **Witches butter** (KQ) and **Yellow brain** (KQ).

Brackets were **Dryads saddle**, **Turkey tail**, **Ganoderma lipsiense**, **Blushing bracket** and **Beefsteak fungus**.

The Leicestershire Fungi Study Group (LFSG) held a weekend workshop at the Volunteer Training Centre in Oakham in early September. It included a foray into Cherry wood and Barnsdale wood to bring back and identify various fungi by microscopic means. Opposite is a list of what they found.

Many thanks to Jenny Harris, Marian Markham, Jacky Morrell, Craig Howat and Kate Fortune-Jones for their records and for members of the Leicestershire Fungi Study Group (LFSG) for submitting their records.

*Hymenopellis radicata*  
*Laccaria laccata*  
*Psathyrella condolleana*  
*Scleroderma citrinum*  
*Trametes versicolor*  
*Fuligo septica*  
*Ganoderma applanatum*  
*Marasmius androsaceus*  
*Megacollybia platyphylla*  
*Pluteus cervinus*  
*Puccinia glechomatis*  
*Russula ochroleuca*

Hambleton, Cherry Wood  
 Hambleton, Cherry Wood  
 Hambleton, Cherry Wood  
 Hambleton, Cherry Wood  
 Hambleton, Cherry Wood  
 Barnsdale, Barnsdale Wood  
 Barnsdale, Barnsdale Wood  
 Barnsdale, Barnsdale Wood  
 Barnsdale, Barnsdale Wood  
 Barnsdale, Barnsdale Wood  
 Barnsdale, Barnsdale Wood  
 Barnsdale, Barnsdale Wood

## MOTHS

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### August/September 2023

The highlight of late summer was the annual moth bio-blitz held as usual around Rutland Water reserve on the night of 11th August. Eleven volunteers were involved, running twelve traps, taking in Cherry Wood, the meadow by lagoon 2, lagoon 3 reed-bed area, Lyndon Visitor Centre meadow and the area around Tufted Duck and Waderscape hides on Lyndon reserve. In total over 8,000 moths of 176 species were identified, although this figure was considerably distorted by a count of 5,774

**Water Veneers** and **Ermine micro-moth aggregates**, the latter group of species enjoying a bumper year which would have kept the local bat population happy. Possible migrant moths included **Gem**, **Tree-lichen Beauty** and **White-point** with two species, **Webb's Wainscot** and **Square-spotted Clay**, being classified as Red Data Book Nationally Scarce B, having been recorded from fewer than 100 x 10-kilometre squares in Britain since 1 January 1980 up until 2017. Other less common species included **Muslin Footman**, **Small Rufous** and **Twin-spotted Wainscot** while **Gothic** and **Olive** were both new Lyndon site records. Thanks go to Tim Sexton for organising the event, collating the figures, and identifying some of our rarer micro moths.

August was mainly a dry month but with cool nights making them unsuitable for trapping and this trend continued into much of the first half of September, with attempts at Shacklewell Spinney and for the first time, Prior's Coppice, both producing very low returns. Two moths however, caught at Lyndon in early September, are examples of the changing distribution levels and seasonal variations that are occurring in some species. On 3rd September **Engrailed** was caught in the meadow trap. This is a moth that can be seen in small numbers in spring with second generation sightings that used to be restricted to the north of Scotland. The Scotland status appears to be unchanged but there are now two main generations appearing in the southern half of Britain, with a small third generation occurring in September and October, which this fresh specimen would probably have been. A single **Dewick's Plusia** was caught on the 9th September, a first site record and being part of the same sub-family as Silver Y and in appearance sharing some similarities with it, but differing by having a long silver "dog-leg" mark instead of a Y in the middle of the wing beneath a stronger reddish brown area than that seen on Silver Y. Dewick's Plusia is still classed



**Dewick's plusia. A rare moth.**  
**Photo Paul Bennett.**

as an immigrant, however one that is occurring in small but more regular and increasing numbers and spreading to our own VC55 area where it may possibly be breeding in transit. It can sometimes be seen at rest by day or in flight and is one to look out for, particularly from August onwards. The trap on 9th September also had counts of over 50 of three common species, **Common Wainscot**, **Large Yellow Underwing** and **Setaceous Hebrew Character** - and a high count of 47 **Centre-barred Sallow**.

Day-flying and garden trap records included **Oak Hook-tip** and **Tree-lichen Beauty** from an Oakham garden on 10th August and an unusual record of an **L-album Wainscot** from another Oakham garden on 30th September, this being

**L-album wainscott. (Rare).**  
**Photo Jayne Walker.**



a species of mainly southern coastal areas. An **Old Lady** was also seen in Oakham during the day. **Hummingbird Hawk-moth** records are so far fewer than the previous year with just three reports received, although this is now a moth being seen well into autumn. Caterpillar records were of a Vapourer in Manton and an Elephant Hawk-moth in a garden in Cottesmore presumably feeding around a Fuschia bush.

Thank you to the following for submitting their records: - D & J Ball, P Bennett, T Caldicott, M Grimes, C Howat, D Masters, J Rodgers, T Sexton, W Smith, J Walker.



## August/September 2023.

At last, during the August/September 2023 period under review, David Needham and I have covered more areas of Rutland Water, Egleton reserve than last year, and with the help of the fine weather, have made up for the surveys that we ran out of time for in 2022. From the Bird Watching Centre, on 8th August we headed south to Wet Meadow, carried on to Snipe Hide and then to Tern Hide. We reached Pin Tail Hide (just below Lax Hill), Lagoon 6 and then crossed over towards Fieldfare Hide. As this was enough, we crossed back and visited 360 Hide. We then had the long walk back to the Birdwatching Centre - a total of four and a half hours! The results were excellent and very satisfying. My walking stick was vital for this survey, and I caught up with Dave on several occasions! In early August, my wife and I made our regular trip to Wing village, and I used the opportunity to survey the Orthopterans in the Wing Burrows area. It was 3 years ago since I last covered this area, and it was pleasing to find the regular species were still in good numbers. It is not surprising, because the habitats involved are still lush, and it is typical English un-spoiled lovely countryside.

I was delighted to survey two fields at Aldgate, Ketton, which was an area I have not covered before. The LRWT manage the fields and the Trust's sheep are regularly held here and do a good job, including keeping the grasses short. David Needham persuaded me to survey these fields for the Orthopterans, so this is a new site for Rutland's (and the RNHS) records, filling some more gaps in our maps. Tim Caldicott, the stalwart of my small team of reporters, was unwell for most of September, but he did manage to slip in some records for August from the Wing Village Allotments. Also, it was with very great pleasure to receive reports from our very own RNHS Membership Secretary, Tricia Marston, from Lyddington Churchyard, and from her own garden in Braunston.

August/September were hot months, therefore, I visited our local sites for more sightings, to complete an important summer for the Orthopterans.

### Bush Crickets

#### **Oak Bush Cricket, *Meconema thalassinum***

18 August 2023. One male, found in member's bedroom inside, Braunston, Rutland. New site: SK832066

#### **Dark Bush Cricket, *Pholidoptera griseoptera***

23 August 2023. Two males, in rough herbage behind Volunteer Training Centre. Regular site: SK885 082.

6 September 2023. Small colony, circa six stridulating males, in edge of Stable Field, LRWT. New site: SK983042.

16 September 2023. Ten plus stridulating males in rough pasture hedgerow. Verge 7, Great Casterton. New site: SK999106.

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

8 August 2023. The first Rutland Water survey at Egleton, had large colonies in all areas checked. Numbers successful.

23 August 2023. Second Rutland Water survey, took place from the VTC. Large colonies of stridulating males

in the lush grasses on the bank (Lagoon 4). Regular site. SK883082.

19 August 2023. Wing Burrows survey. Starting at the village playing fields, an uncut area with a massive colony of stridulating males were logged: New site, SK895028. Regular sites around the Burrows were full of Roesel's Bush Crickets.

6 September 2023, Large numbers of stridulating males in very rough pasture, Stable Field, LRWT, Aldgate, Ketton. New site: SK983042.

6 September 2023 More large populations (heard in neighbouring field) in Priory Field, LRWT, Aldgate. New site: SK983041.

16 September. Large colony of stridulating males, in lush grass verges, Ingthorpe Road, Great Casterton. New site: SK995077.

Other regular sites visited: Verge 7, Great Casterton. Lyndon Lane Wing.



**Macropterus form of Roesels bush cricket. Male. Photo P. Rudkin**

#### **Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus fuscus***

8 August 2023. First Rutland water survey, Egleton. Populations in healthy numbers in all departments surveyed.

15 August 2023 One male, in Wing Village Allotment. Regular site.

19 August 2023. Wing burrows survey. Had usual large numbers in regular habitats, in addition to an excellent number of stridulating males in an uncut area on Wing playing fields. New site: SK895028.

23 August 2023. Second survey at Egleton reserve. Large colony in the grassy banks behind the VTC. Regular site. Also good numbers in the lush verges in nearby Cherry Wood. Regular site.

6 September. Aldgate, Ketton. Large colony of stridulating males, in very rough meadow. Stable Field LRWT. New site: SK983042. More large colonies, in nearby field, Priory Field, LRWT. New site: SK983041.

16 September 2023. Good numbers of stridulating males, in lush grass verges, Ingthorpe Road, Great Casterton. New site: SK995077.

#### **Short-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus dorsalis***

8 August 2023. During the first Rutland Water survey at Egleton reserve, only two colonies were located, in their usual site; but numbers were maintained.

#### **Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima***

3 August 2023. Two males noted, in the Holygate road track, Leighfield. Regular site.

8 August 2023. The Speckled Bush Cricket populations are



still situated in the Bird Watching Centre area, especially on the scrubby bank in their car park.

19 August 2023. Masses of stridulating males and females, in the uncut area, of the Wing playing fields, New site: SK895028. Elsewhere in the Wing Burrows, usual large numbers in all the regular sites.

14 August 2023. One female, found in member's kitchen, Braunston, Rutland. New site: SK832066.

6 September 2023. Both LRWT fields, Aldgate, Ketton, had large colonies of stridulating males and females. New sites: SK983042. Stable Field, and SK963041, Priory Field. Finally, 24 September 2023, Large colony located in trees and hedgerows, at Ryhall playing fields. Regular site.

#### **Groundhoppers**

**Slender Groundhopper**, *Tetrix subulata*.

Only one reported for this period, observed near a ditch on bare earth footpath, at Gunthorpe. New site: SK877056.

#### **Grasshoppers**

**Common Green Grasshopper**, *Omocestus viridulus*

3 August 2023. Two welcome reports of this species; a late time for the grasshoppers, and no stridulating happening. One, observed in grass verge, in the Holygate road track, Leighfield. New site: 809032.

One, caught and identified, in rough sheep pasture, LRWT, Priory Field, Aldgate, Ketton. New site: SK983041.

**Field Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus brunneus*.

15 August 2023. Three observed in the Wing Village Allotments. Regular site: SK889028.

**Meadow Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus parallelus*

3 August 2023. Two, observed in grass verges, Holygate road track, Leighfield. Regular site.

8 August 2023. The first Rutland Water Egleton Survey. A

**Meadow grasshopper. Purple variety.**  
Photo P. Rudkin



welcome large colony of stridulating males, were heard in the lush grasses outside the rear of Tern Hide, new site: SK884066.

20 August 2023. One female, observed on wooden fence, in the Lyddington Churchyard. New site: SP876970.

23 August 2023. During the second Rutland Water, Egleton Survey, small numbers of stridulating males were heard in the lush grasses, on the bank behind the VTC. New site: SK885082.

6 September 2023. Six stridulating males, in rough sheep pasture, Priory Field, LRWT Aldgate, Ketton. New site: SK983041.

**Lesser Marsh Grasshopper**, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*

3 August 2023. Two, observed in grass verge, Holygate Road track, Leighfield. New site: SK809032.

6 September 2023. Finally, four, observed in rough sheep pasture, Priory Field, LRWT, Aldgate, Ketton. New site: SK983041.

Thank you to my small band of reporters for this period: Tim Caldicott, Tricia Marston, David Needham, Phil Rudkin.

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## MAMMALS

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### June- September 2023.

Thank you to all of you who have sent in records during the summer; there has been plenty of interest among them! Digital camera records are showing lots of information we did not previously have, but please do continue to send in all of your observations— even if it's a rabbit or a rat, it is still relevant.

On Marian Markham's garden camera at Langham, came a very interesting and unusual piece of animal behaviour; something I've never heard of before, and certainly not seen. A large healthy looking rabbit (a regular on the camera) is browsing contentedly on vegetation in the garden, when a female muntjac comes out of the hedge, approaches the rabbit, and proceeds to "groom" it, licking his/her fur, firstly on its back, and then around its ears.

The rabbit makes no move to escape the attention, it just continues to nibble at the vegetation! Eventually it hops away, followed by the muntjac. **Muntjac** have also been seen in Pickworth and close to the junction of Hambleton road and the A606. Other **rabbits** are recorded from Quarry farm Gt Casterton, and Panter's Orchard, Ketton.

**Badgers** have been reported from Langham, Oakham ring road, Sidney college farm Stamford, and on the trapping project at RWNr at Redshank, Buzzard, and Shoveler hides, where they pop their heads in front of the trap, and then at times, push their whole head in to eat the apple,

seeds and casters (blowfly pupae). Much activity is also seen around Pickworth and Pickworth great wood.

**Otters** are still very much in evidence at RWNr, seen regularly by staff and observers, particularly at Shallow water hide, but they have left prints in clay at mink rafts at Lyndon, Heron bay, Badger hide and Pollards. They have also put in appearances on camera traps at Shoveler Hide, Buzzard hide, the reedbed near Pollards, and W of AWBC. The **Bank vole** is still appearing on the patio at the Willows in Barrow, and they have also been seen on the camera trap at Ramsar field, at Grebe and Redshank hides, and the boardwalk reedbed. They are happy feeding on the bait, which is a seed mixture, and are only put off by the large population of **rats** which dominate proceedings once they have discovered the bait and continue eating it until it has all disappeared. **Short tailed voles** have also been recorded on the trapping project, at Buzzard, Shoveler hides and reedbeds, the channel between lagoons 1 and 2, and in the meadow to the west of AWBC. Also in the traps quite frequently are **fieldmice**, which are much more lively animals, and often climb the sides of the tunnel and move around in there, with their large bright eyes, much larger ears and longer tails than the voles. They have also been reported from Langham. Most speedy of all the small mammals are the shrews, which often move so quickly,

they are just a blur on the camera, but they usually slow down to eat the casters. On one occasion a **common shrew** was seen eating a large snail, which had also been attracted by the bait. **Pygmy shrews** also appear, and a surprising number of **water shrews** have been recorded. **Grey squirrels** also regard the traps as a suitable feeding station, also recorded in Langham, Tickencote and Pickworth.

**Hedgehogs** appear almost every night on Marian Markham's garden camera, but one was also seen crossing the road at the top of Barnsdale Hill. Others were seen between Cottesmore and Barrow, with one or two appearing nightly in Diana Master's Oakham garden through early June, just once in August, and again nightly throughout September.

Between Barrow and Cottesmore a **red fox** was seen in late June and a fox appeared on the trail camera at Langham fairly often in June and July, putting in about

14 shows over two months. Earlier in the year a fox was reported from the N arm of RWNR.

Single **roe deer** have been seen on grassland near the pond at Quarry farm, another at walk farm Pickworth, and south of the River Gwash at Great Casterton. At Clay Hill, between Pickworth and Ryhall 3 **fallow deer** were seen in early August, and at the end of the month 2 fallow crossed the B 1176 near its junction with the Bourne road near Ryhall.

It was good to receive records of **molehills** in Langham and also in Tinwell churchyard. These are extremely poorly reported – I believe evidence of moles could be found in every corner of Rutland. **Please try to prove me wrong, by sending a report every time you see a molehill!!!**

Records received from: - J+D Ball, A+L Biddle, Martin Grimes, Craig Howat, Marian Markham, Diana Masters, Terry Mitcham, Jacky Morrell, S+D Smalley.

## INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

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### August/September 2023.

<b>Odonata - Dragonflies and Damselflies</b>						
<b>August</b>						
Southern Hawker	Aeshna cyanea	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	06/08/2023
<b>September</b>						
Common Darter	Sympetrum striolatum	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	50+	23/09/2023
<b>Aranacnids-Spiders</b>						
<b>August</b>						
Garden Cross Spider	Araneus diadematus	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	13/08/2023
<b>Hemiptera - Bugs</b>						
<b>August</b>						
Spiked Shieldbug	Picromerus bidens	Ketton Quarry	Field next to carpark.	SK 980 060	1	05/08/2023
Eared Leafhopper	Ledra aurita	Oakham	Mendip Road	SK 8404 7083	1	10/08/2023
Green Shieldbug	Palomena prasina	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	13/08/2023
Green Shieldbug	Palomena prasina	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	28/08/2023
<b>September</b>						
Eared Leafhopper	Ledra aurita	Priors Coppice				06/09/2023
Blue Shieldbug	Zicrona caerulea	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	06/09/2023
Brassica Bug/Crucifer Shieldbug	Eurydema olarea	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	3	06/09/2023
Common Green Shieldbug	Palomena prasina	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	6	06/09/2023
Sloe Bug/Hairy Shieldbug	Dolycoris baccarum	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	4	06/09/2023
Woundwort Shieldbug	Eysarcoris venustissimus	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	10	06/09/2023
Tortoise Shieldbug	Eurygaster maura	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	10/08/2023

Leafhopper	Evacanthus interruptus	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	09/08/2023
Scentless Plant Bug	Rhopalus sub-rufus	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	12/08/2023
<b>Coleoptera - Beetles</b>						
<b>August</b>						
False Ladybird	Endomychus coccineus	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	09/08/2023
	Geotrupes stereosus	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	14/08/2023
Harlequin Ladybird	Harmonia axyridis	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	13/08/2023
Rosemary Beetle	Chrysolina americana	Home			1	24/08/2023
<b>September</b>						
Harlequin Ladybird	Harmonia axyridis	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	24/09/2023
Leaf Beetle	Cryptocephalus pusillus	Leighfield	Holygate road/ track highest part	SK 8095 0321	1	03/08/2023
Red Longhorn Beetle	Stictoleptura rubra	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	11/08/2023
2-spot ladybird	Adalia 2-punctata	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	07/08/2023
14-spot ladybird	Propylea 14-punctata	Wing	Wing Hill Allotment	SK 8891 0288	1	07/08/2023
Beetle	Curtonotus aulicus	Gunthorpe area near RW.	Footpath east of main road.	SK 8776 0564	2	20/08/2023
7-spot Ladybird	Coccinella septempunctata	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	2	23/09/2023
Devils Coach Horse	Ocypus olens	Ketton Quarry		SK 980 060	1	23/09/2023
<b>Diptera - Flies</b>						
<b>August</b>						
Hornet Mimic Hoverfly	Volucella zonaria	Rhyll	Bank of the River Guash.	TF 023 110	1	06/08/2023
Sawfly	Sirex noctilio	Rutland Water	Lodge	SK 9302 0583	1	24/08/2023
Large Rose Sawfly	Arge pagana	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	06/08/2023
	Tachina fera	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	25/08/2023
<b>September</b>						
	Sargus bipunctatus	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	24/09/2023
Deer-fly	Chrysops rel-ictus	RW Lyn-don	Meadow area on moth trap	SK 895 057	1	04/09/2023
<b>Hymenoptera - Ants, Wasps, Bees &amp; Relatives</b>						
<b>August</b>						
	Pimpla rufipes	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	15/08/2023
Common Carder Bee	Bombus pas-cuorum	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	2	28/08/2023
Silky Ant	Formica fusca	Gunthorpe area near RW	seen along cycle track	SK 8780 0544	2	21/08/2023
<b>September</b>						
	Ophion obscu-ratus	Exton	Vicars Close	SK 1278 1098	1	07/09/2023



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## PLANT GALLS

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### August/September 2023.

#### August 2023

The plant gall season tends to start relatively late in the year and by now is in full swing. This will continue until leaf-fall.

August has seen reports from 10 sites and gall numbers vary from 1 to 23 per site, mostly depending how often the particular site is visited. Many galls appear at nearly every site of course, but some appear to be elusive; when they should be appearing they don't, such as the gall on the stems of Creeping Thistle which is caused by a fly which lays eggs in the main stem, mostly, and causes it to swell. There have been only 2 reported so far, both in the parish of Ketton but it may be that others will appear.

#### September 2023

Reports were received from 6 sites in the County, giving a total of 97 galls, several of which were of course repeats of the same gall. It is always interesting to find a gall which is new to our records, and this happened on a visit to the village end of Pickworth Drift on the 21st; not one

but two new galls, one on Sloe and the other on Hedge wound-wort, the latter being also new to NatureSpot and the former had just 7 previous reports. When a species is unknown to NS a photo is helpful and this was duly provided.

A gall that appears at this time in the season is caused by the 'pale Bramble rust' and there were records from Prior's Coppice (PC) on the 5th and Stoke Dry Wood on the 16th, the latter by email from a member, with a photo attached thus making confirmation easier.

Other galls that appear later in the season are those on Pedunculate Oak, nearly all caused by Gall wasps. There were 5 at PC, 6 at The Seek on the 8th, 4 at Stretton Wood on the 13th and 6 at RW Cherry Wood on the 27th. Actual numbers per leaf are down, but still there!

Thanks to Carolyn Baxter, Martin Grimes and Roy Lemmon for their contributions

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## FIELD TRIPS

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### Ketton Family Day. 5th August 2023.

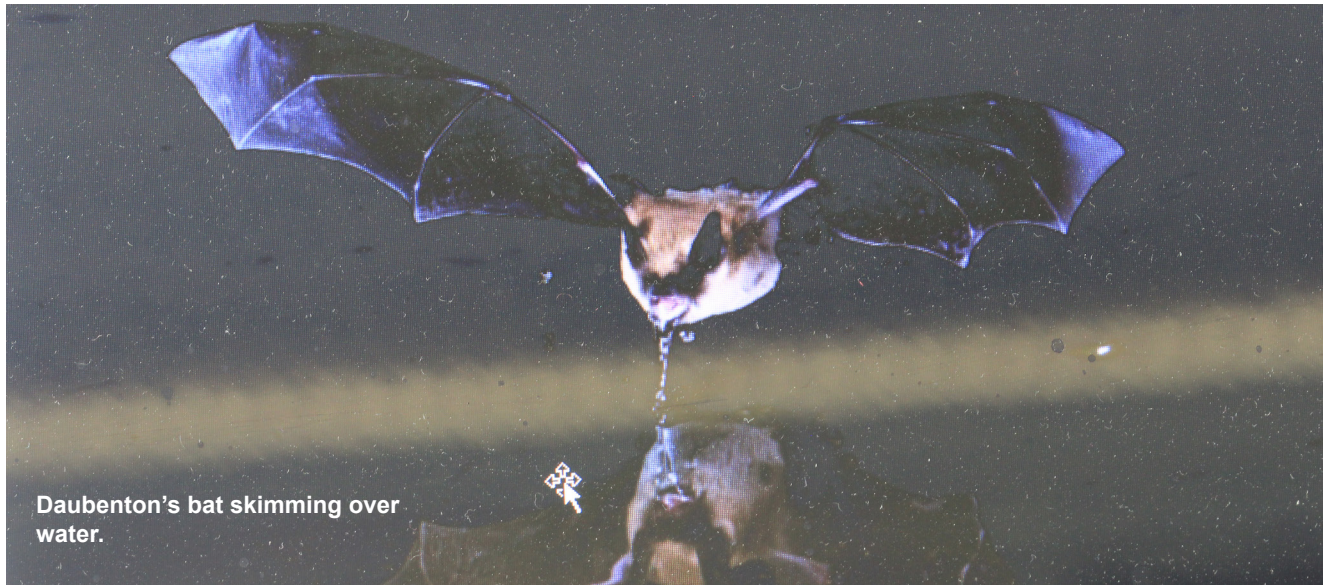


It was advertised in the June newsletter as "Bugs, Butterflies and Flowers"! It was going to be a typical August summers day in the middle of the school holidays, scouting around Ketton quarry with our youngest enthusiasts, armed with butterfly nets and bug boxes. The forecast was to "Expect rain" for the day and so we did make a few contingencies. But we didn't get rain – we got a deluge! Those families that did brave the torrent to come and see us at the Ketton scout hut were, we hope, not disappointed by the not so lovely creatures that we found crawling about under the microscopes set up on tables around the hall. Pond samples from Linda Biddle's Garden revealed a whole new world of creatures too small for eyes to see – Amoeba's, Paramecium, Hydra, and the larger inhabitants of our ponds – water boatmen, water shrimps etc. Katy Atkinson came along with some saturated moss from her house roof. Why? Well, who would have known that you

only need to squeeze out the water from a soggy sponge of moss, to see a squirming mass of Tardigrades wiggling about under your eye? Tardigrades (also known as Water bears) are fascinating microscopic creatures that can survive in the most extreme conditions on earth. We also had a rolling video set up by Linda Biddle of all the many little mammals spotted on a trail camera at Rutland water. Even a badger, attracted by the peanuts in the camera box managed to get his "mug shot" photographed with all the other celebrities in the video. Craig Howat set up a camera on his computer to look at the more intricate workings of the natural world not normally noticed around us. Phil Rudkin, our President was happy to share his knowledge of our local Crickets and Grasshoppers with a display of lovely Orthoptera photographs. Coffee, tea and biscuits were served throughout the morning by Donnie and Steve Smalley with disposable cups kindly provided by Costa coffee (Bevin).

It was a day that could have been a disaster, but it wasn't. Those families who came, stayed well beyond the end of the morning session, but as the rain continued unabated, we reluctantly decided to call it a day and ended our "2023 Bug Hunt" at around 1pm.

Thank you to all those who gave their enthusiasm and commitment to the day and especially to John Rodgers, the Botany recorder, and Jayne Walker the Insect recorder, who would have been sharing their specialist knowledge with our young guests, but were instead waiting patiently, hoping the weather would eventually clear.



Daubenton's bat skimming over water.

It was a very warm day when 16 of us met at sunset (7.30pm) at Ketton church for a bat walk in the Aldgate area of the village. After an introductory talk, we walked round into Aldgate, where we were very soon hearing echolocation calls, mainly of soprano pipistrelles foraging under the tree canopy. The road is lined with houses, mature gardens and trees, so a few common pipistrelles were soon heard and seen too. Crossing the R. Chater by the footbridge we turned left into Hall Close, a grassy area with the river on one side, a scrubby wood on the other, where plenty of bat foraging has been seen in the past. It was fairly quiet there, however, perhaps because previous warm nights had given bats plenty of feeding opportunities. Shallow sections of the river created a lot of sonic interference which deterred bats, but approaching a deeper pool with a calm surface, sheltered by overhanging

trees, we began to hear the rapid, machine-gun chatter of Daubenton's bats passing up and down the river. In the beam of a strong torch, we could see them flying fast and low over the water, executing rapid aerobatics to catch insects. Loud 'feeding buzzes' (where echo-location calls get closer together as bats approach insects) were heard as the bats fed continuously over the water. Some members, especially those with more sophisticated Echo-meter detectors, also occasionally heard the lower-pitched calls of noctule bats flying over us. As we walked back to the cars, several more Daubenton's bats were seen flying under the Church Road bridge close to us, and we lingered late to watch them in the torchlight. Leaving Ketton after a lovely batty evening, at 10.00pm the temperature was still 22°, a perfect night for foraging bats.  
Jenny Harris

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