

Kingfisher at Lyndon.
Photo Peter Scott.



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Welcome

As I write, the land is settling down for rest. The powerful energy of spring, maturing into summer, has slowed right down now as the temperature cools and daylight hours shorten. The autumn colours in the trees, especially driving along the Oakham bypass, looks even more spectacular this year than last, and the hedgerows are weighed down with masses of scarlet berries and fruits spilling out onto the roads and into the fields. By the time you receive this autumn issue though, the clocks will have gained an hour, the landscape will have changed yet again as the next named storm of the season will have stripped the trees bare of leaves and the skies become dark and leaden. It is not all gloomy though. The recent rains after a very dry summer has at last brought back the weird and wonderful fungi to our woodlands and grasslands again. Nature always fills in the gaps. Time is never wasted.

Autumn always feels like a time to take a deep breath and reflect on the achievements of the past year before winter finally takes hold and freezes body and soul (mine at least!). The beauty of crisp sunny days at this time of year, is the magical way it has of stilling our thoughts into reflection and at the same time projecting vague ideas into our minds of new beginnings. Did this venture really work, or do we need to do something different next year? Do we need to try harder at the things that defeated us? Linda Biddle is hard at work at this minute compiling our Annual Programme for the coming year. Hang gliding and Scuba diving may not be on the list but there will be plenty of walks and talks to suit us all, and for all of us to enjoy in 2026. No two years are ever the same when it comes to wildlife wandering! In this issue, you will also find the form for next years subscription payment. Please make a note of the small increase and read the notices on page three.

It won't be long before we prepare for coming family festivities, but before we do, there is still time to share a mince pie or two with friends at our Members and Recorders evening on 2nd December. It will be good to see you there!

Jenny Harris



It's hard to believe that Jenny has left us. Jenny was the longest serving member of RNHS committee, joining in the 1970s and until now, was always there. Sometimes she was late, having been tending or collecting a bat, but Jenny always had something pertinent to say on anything to do with protecting or caring for our wildlife. Her early fascination with wildlife developed through her life, changing from an interest to a career and a passion, learning about flowers and other wildlife with the help of colleagues at LRWT and eventually Jenny found her calling, not only to watch and record bats, but to restore casualties to health wherever possible, and to care for those which could not be reintroduced to the wild. Jenny was a superb handler of bats, gently tending to their injuries and cleaning skin and fur, quietly and calmly talking to them all the time. In meetings, Jenny would quietly express her opinion and would stick to her guns in the face of any disagreement. During the time that I was chair, she would always ring me the day after the meeting, and we would chat about what had gone well and anything that had not. Sometimes we disagreed, but we were always able to overcome our differences, because we both wanted the best possible outcome for the natural world. She has been a wonderful friend and supporter, serving this society (the RNHS), of which she was incredibly fond and proud, for a very long time, and we shall miss her greatly.

Linda Biddle.

Jenny joined the RNHS in 1977 and I could see immediately that she would be an excellent worker in addition to our administration and I was not wrong. Jenny became honorary assistant secretary in 1981 and then my secretary when I was Chairman. In 1981 she became an NCC licenced bat worker, becoming one of our recorders and was delighted to be elected "Bat Lady". Although speaking with a soft voice, she was held in respect by her friends and fellow committee. Jenny attended my bird song classes and turned out to be very good at bird song identification! But bats became a passion for her as she took injured bats into her home to look after them. At the recent AGM in March 2024, I had the honour to present her with a Honorary Life Membership which she accepted with delight! I must also mention that she worked with the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust and took some members out to observe the bats scooping low over the Ketton bridge to the delight of the bat groups, which I also attended. Finally, my last outing with the "bat lady" was at Hambleton Woods, in the dark with members of the bat group and a few from the RNHS following Jenny through the dark woods.

President of Rutland Natural History Society: Philip Rudkin.

Jenny was born into a Herefordshire farming family in 1947 and spent her childhood in the countryside, developing her lifelong passion for the natural world. Life events brought her to Oakham where she lived for 50 years working first as a secretary to Tim Appleton and then changing career to become Senior Reserves Manager for the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust (LRWT), managing the reserves in the east of Leicestershire and Rutland. She loved all the reserves, including Ketton Quarry, Bloody Oaks, Holwell, to name a few, but Merry's Meadows was always her favourite. Green Winged Orchid counts have been an important annual event at "Merry's" in which she continued to participate after her retirement, becoming an extremely knowledgeable volunteer. She was a member of many groups including Tolthorpe, Oakham cinema, book clubs and the 'Lit & Phil' (natural history section of course) and recently, moth trapping (always turning up a little late!) with Paul Bennet at Lyndon. Glow worm hunting and verge surveys, were all part of Jenny's life and her friends reached far and wide. Jenny had a lovely smile, an intelligent brain and a good sense of humour. But bats were Jenny's life. As Founder member of the Leicestershire and Rutland Bat group (LRBG), her time was spent educating the public, training bat carers, carrying out and organizing annual roost counts (Egleton has the largest count of Pipistrelles in England). She will be very much missed. She was the best

Linda Clark

DIARY DATES



RNHS Outdoor meetings.

The following events are correct at time of publication but may be changed at short notice. Please book your place with the person who will be leading the walk; phone numbers are beside the listing. Make sure you are wearing appropriate clothing for the time of year and if the weather is bad on the day, please check first by ringing the walk leader. Full details of all these events appear in the Annual programme on the website at www.rnhs.org.uk.

Saturday 8th November. 10.30am. A Fungal foray in Wakerley woods with our Fungi recorder Kate Fortune Jones. You can almost guarantee to see Fly agarics amongst the Silver birch leaves in this lovely woodland owned by Forestry England. **Meet:** Nine miles east of Corby and six miles west of Stamford. Follow the minor road off A43 towards Wakerley village. Car park is approx half a mile further along on the left. Grid ref: SP961987

Saturday 22nd November. 10.30am. A visit to Deeping Lakes Nature Reserve. Lead by Craig Howat. This is a small 160 acre wetland, noted for its diversity of wildlife, including wetland birds and other wildfowl. **Meet:** Nearest postcode is PE6 8RJ. It will take you to a bend on the B1166. At apex of bend is a gravel road with speed bumps. Follow to designated car park to the right. Grid ref: TF086079

Dont forget to bring your walk cards with you!!

RNHS Indoor evening meetings.

First Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm to 9.30pm from October to December at Volunteer Training Centre (VTC). LE15 8AD. Ref: SK883 083.

No need to book. Just turn up. Visitors are asked for a donation of £2.00.

Tuesday 4th November, 7.30pm.

An update on the Great Fen Project with Henry Stanier. This major restoration project to link Woodwalton Fen with Holme Fen is right on our doorstep and we have been avidly following its progress through our speaker Henry Stanier.

Tuesday 2nd December 7.30pm. Members and recorders meeting. As the year comes to a close, join with our members and recorders to reflect on some of the best highlights of the year. Food and festivities provided!

Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust.

Monday 17th November 7.30pm - 9.30pm at VTC. Nature Recovery in Action.

Join Ben Devine, Head of Nature recovery for LRWT as he shares how nature recovery projects are restoring habitats and creating a greener future across Leicestershire and Rutland.

Monday 8th December 7.30pm - 9.30pm at VTC. Restoring the Soar.

Fee Worton, Community engagement and training officer at LRWT will give a talk on the Soar Catchment Project, where people and nature come together to shape a thriving landscape.

No need to book. Just turn up. Go to the events page on www.lrwt.org.uk/events

NOTICES

Linda Biddle will be taking over as Programme secretary for next year. From 2026, indoor MORNING meetings will be on the Annual Programme, with speakers and refreshments as usual. Date and day may be different to our normal first Tuesdays so keep hold of your programme when you receive it in January, and as usual, look on the website frequently for any updates or changes.

Is there anyone who may be able to help with publicity for the RNHS? It could include making posters for our indoor talks, or maybe writing a short piece about the society's events and aims for one of the local free magazines. If you feel you can help, please get in touch with Carolyn. Email on back contacts page.

Fieldfarere has been produced using recycled paper from April this year, reducing the Society's Carbon footprint and has also slightly reduced the cost of publishing. However, the price of paper has risen sharply since lockdown and expenditure for room hire, speakers etc. goes on rising. The decision to raise the subscription in 2026 was proposed and accepted by the membership present at the March AGM in 2025. We hope you agree that this is a small increase for continuing to enjoy all the activities our Society offers, and also keeping open the choice for members to either receive a digital or a paper copy of your newsletter.

WEATHER

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August 2025

Atmospheric pressure and wind. A high pressure month up to the 26th. when low pressure prevailed until the end of the month. There was one named storm, **storm Floris** which was named by the Met Office, and on the 4th. brought a little rain and wind locally, but was weakened when it arrived here. There were also the remnants of **Tropical Storm Dexter** on the 11th.-12th. and of **ex-hurricane Erin** at the end of the month which coincided with a rainy spell.

The named storm season in any year runs from the 1st. September to the 31st. August of the next and in the season just ending, we had 6 storms and in the previous one 12.

Temperature. With a mean of 19.19°C this was the second warmest August I have recorded in the decade 2016-2025 after August 2022 at 20.19°C. The lowest overnight minimum was 7.6°C on the 20th.-21st and the highest daytime maximum was 34.5°C on the 13th. The final figures aren't in yet but it is very probable that nationally this has been the warmest meteorological summer, i.e. June- August, since records began.

Precipitation. Another dry month with a total here of 11.9mm.(0.47 inches) which all fell as rain. 72% of this total fell in the last 5 days of the month, i.e. the low pressure event referred to above.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

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August and September 2025

As usual records were sparse for this period.

Common Frogs were seen in Braunston and Ridlington in both months. **Common Toads** were recorded live in Tim Appleton's garden in both months, and road casualties were observed in Wing in September.

A **Slow Worm** was found at the entrance to Burley Wood in mid-August. There were three **Grass Snake** records – one was found in a garden hedge in Wing, one at the Volunteer Training Centre and the other on Luffenham Heath Golf Course,

My thanks to T Appleton, T Caldicott, A Hill, T Mitcham, J Morrell and T Sexton for their records.

September 2025.

Atmospheric pressure and wind. Between the 1st. and the 21st. pressures were generally low, that is, below 1020mb. and this resulted in an unsettled picture. There were windy days especially at the beginning and later in this period and on the 15th. I measured gusts of 18 mph. at 09.00 and 23mph. at 15.10. Winds were generally SW during this time, then N-NW on the 21st.-26th and SE-SW to the end of the month. There were no named storms but one wonders why the 1st.-4th. didn't qualify?

Temperature. This was a cool September, the mean 15.13°C places it 6th in the decade 2016-2025. Nights were generally cool from the 20th. to the end, and the lowest night-time minimum was 4.0°C on the 27th-28th. The highest daytime maximum was 25.6°C on the 19th.

Precipitation. A total of 58.6mm.(2.30 inches) which all fell as rain represents 111% of my long term mean of 35 years. This is generally acknowledged to have been a dry year so far and I have calculated, using my own figures that at the end of September we have had 77% of LTM. It will be interesting to see how it ends up.



Common frog.

Photo C. Baxter

June to September 2025.

The very hot and dry weather during this period appears to have affected bats during their most active period, namely the birth and nurturing of young in the maternity roosts and survival of young bats once they are flying and have been weaned. The perceived effect of the unusual weather on the behaviour of female bats in roosts that may have become overheated was suggested by lower counts at some roosts. Despite comments from many observers that there was an abundance of flying insects, many bats coming into care to Leicestershire and Rutland Bat Group (LRBG) were full-grown juveniles, with low weight and very dehydrated. We had very few infants or juveniles that had not achieved adult size, compared to the last few years.

There were few records of bat activity away from roosts during the period, although during September a single Common Pipistrelle was seen foraging outside the front of my house in Oakham on a number of warm nights.

Five counts of three maternity roosts were carried out for the National Bat Monitoring Programme: see Table 1 (NBMP), with two counts each at All Saints Church, Braunston-in-Rutland and St Edmund's Church, Egleton, and one count at St. Andrew's Church, Whissendine. All three have been counted for many years. No count was carried out at Stoke Dry Church, as we have been unable to discover whether the Natterer's bats are still breeding there, although the discovery of a dead juvenile female Natterer's bat in the church suggests they are breeding in the village or nearby.

National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) counts at maternity roosts in Rutland

| Roost name | Date | Species | Count | Comments |
|-----------------------------------|---------|---------------------|----------|---|
| All Saint's, Braunston0in-Rutland | 09 June | Soprano Pipistrelle | 13 | Full cloud, very windy, 15 deg., count ceased when no further activity. |
| | 18 June | | 89 | Clear, calm, dry, 21 deg., Ceased for confusing behaviour |
| St. Edmund's, Egleton | 06 June | Soprano Pipistrelle | 862 | Full cloud, breezy, mainly dry but occasional brief drizzle, 13 deg., ceased for confusing behaviour. |
| | 16 June | | 693 | Patchy cloud, light wind, dry, 21 deg., no further bat activity |
| Stoke Dry Church | | Natterer's bat | No count | Colony not present this year? But dead bat found (see below) |
| St. Andrew's, Whissendine | 25 June | Natterer's bat | 76 | Flood lights not lit over summer |

At Braunston-in-Rutland the number of Soprano Pipistrelles was well down compared to previous years, even on 18 June when conditions for bat activity were suitable. I was told by the Church Warden that there were nests of wasps and bees in the wall of the south aisle where the bats roost. The number of Sopranos at Egleton was also down, and very few bats emerged from the north side of the church. Work inside the church has prevented the bats getting inside the church so they cannot move easily between the

two sections of the maternity roost (north and south aisles) within the church. What impact this may have had on the bats is not known. It appeared that the maternity colony of Natterer's bats had not been present at Stoke Dry Church in 2025, but a full-grown, juvenile female was found dead in the church by the Church Warden (see description of grounded bats).

KEY:**E** - Taken to Oakham vet for euthanasia.

f/a - Right forearm length.

Grounded Bats

| Date | Details |
|---------|--|
| 14 June | Lyndon Rd., Manton. Female Common Pipistrelle, adult, weight 5.4g, f/a c. 32mm. Found in water trough, taken into care at 3.0pm and fed with 20 m/worms through the day, while kept in a warm place to aid digestion and recovery. As there was no evidence she had ingested water into her lungs, released at 9.45pm on the same day. |
| 18 June | Gates Garden Centre. female Brown Long-eared bat, weight 6.1g, adult, f/a 41mm, Stomach empty, Died 18 June. |
| 21 June | Lea View, Ryhall. Pipistrelle sp., infant, weight 2.5g, f/a 22mm. It drank a little BabyDog milk replacer, but was distressed and struggling to digest it. E, 26 June. |

Grounded bats continued

| | |
|--------------|--|
| 29 June | Belgrave Rd., Uppingham. Adult male Common Pipistrelle, weight not taken because of injuries, f/a 31mm. Badly split left wing membrane, hole in right side of wing membrane and tail membranes, 5 th digit broken at wrist. E, 30 June. |
| 01 July | Stoke Dry Church. Female juvenile Natterer's bat, weight not taken as the bat had been dead for some time, emaciated. f/a 38mm (full grown). |
| 21 August | Stockerston Rd., Allexton. Adult male Soprano Pipistrelle, Weight 4.2g, fur on back ruffled, with possible dried saliva, probable cat or dog strike. Damage to right wing. Still in care. |
| 30 August | Manton Garden Centre. Bat was found in restaurant entrance, contained in a box by a member of staff and moved to a quiet place. When the bat was checked later it had gone. No identification or other details. |
| 07 September | Wood Lane, Geetham, in yard of agricultural building not far from Greetham Valley Golf Club. Brown Long-eared bat, juvenile male, weight 6.1g, f/a 40mm (full grown). Unable to fly, very dehydrated in very hot weather. It had been grounded for more than 24 hours before being picked up. He recovered well after rehydration, and was soon self-feeding. On 19 September he weighed 10.2g and was released at St. Mary's Church, Greetham, where there is a known Long-eared bat roost. |
| 22 September | Edith Weston Academy, Weston Rd., Edith Weston. Male Soprano Pipistrelle, found inside the school. Weight 3.9g, f/a 32mm, dehydrated, thin and very hungry. He was self-feeding by 14 September and on the 25 th weighed 5.6g. He will be released very soon. |

My thanks to members who helped with church roost counts, picking up bats and taking me (and the bats) to

release sites, even when outside Rutland. My thanks too, to staff at Oakham Veterinary Hospital for all their attentive care of the bats I take in to them.

BIRDS

Recorder Terry Mitcham

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August 2025

August and September have seen a continuation of the excellent wader passage, mainly at Eyebrook, which produced two American rarities in a Baird's Sandpiper and a Pectoral Sandpiper. Rutland Water, not to be outdone, hosted a very confiding Grey Phalarope in early September. Wildfowl numbers increased at all the sites we cover with especially good numbers of Gadwall and Shoveler. A juvenile Gannet at Rutland Water did not linger, nor did two Spoonbills at Egleton. As I write we await winter thrushes, hopefully in better numbers than last year. There are certainly plenty of haws for them to replenish their energy reserves. My thanks to the following for their records:

T.P.Appleton, R.F.Baker, C.Butler, B.Fox,
LROS, K.Mathers, T.Mitcham, B.Moore, C.I.Park, P.Scott,

Highlights. Rutland Water had a Bittern (12th, 28th) and a Sandwich Tern (12th). A Ring-necked Parakeet was at Belton (10th). Eyebrook Reservoir had a Red-crested Pochard (10th – 31st), a Cattle Egret (9th – 31st), two Sandwich Terns (6th – 10th) and a White-winged Black Tern (12th).

Rutland Water. (See also Wildfowl Count). Other wildfowl were one or two Garganey (18th – 25th). Marsh Harrier and Hobby were regular at Egleton. Wader counts included four Oystercatchers, 260 Lapwings, six Curlew (all 12th), two Turnstones (21st), seven Ruff (28th), a Little Stint (28th), 24 Snipe (29th), nine Green Sandpipers (12th) and three Wood Sandpipers (19th). 35 Greenshanks were counted (29th). There was a Caspian Gull (28th), 12 Yellow-legged Gulls (12th), 97 Common Terns (12th) and a Black Tern (20th – 30th).

Eyebrook Reservoir. (See also Wildfowl Count). As the water level fell the excellent wader passage continued with some good counts: 206 Lapwings (10th), a Grey Plover (8th), five Ringed Plovers (13th – 18th), four Little Ringed Plovers (29th, 30th), 12 Black-tailed Godwits (13th) and six Knot (22nd). Also noted were 15 Ruff (21st), a Curlew Sandpiper (29th), a Sanderling (21st – 22nd), three Little Stints (26th), six Common Sandpipers (31st), two Wood Sandpipers (11th, 12th) and three Spotted Redshanks (12th). There were seven Little Gulls (18th) and a regular Yellow-legged Gull with 40 Common Terns (10th) and a Black Tern (17th, 30th). Hobby and Osprey were seen (28th). There were two Whinchats (31st) and a Stonechat (10th).

Other Sites. Fort Henry Ponds had a Shelduck (30th), 44 Gadwall (30th), 58 Moorhens (26th) and 123 Coot (9th). There was a Marsh Harrier (10th) and Ospreys (8th, 10th) with three Green Sandpipers (30th, 31st). A Hobby was over Quarry Farm (27th).



Grey phalarope.
Rutland water.
Photo Peter Scott.

September 2025.

Highlights. Rutland Water had two Spoonbills (21st), a Gannet (22nd), two Shags (2nd, 7th) and a Grey Phalarope (2nd – 6th). A Yellow-browed Warbler was ringed at a private site (28th). Eyebrook Reservoir Had a Baird's Sandpiper (5th) a Pectoral Sandpiper (9th – 13th) and a Red-backed Shrike (2nd).

Rutland Water. (See also Wildfowl Count). Other wildfowl were 20 Pink-footed Geese (29th), a Whooper Swan (22nd), a Garganey (18th) and three Goosanders at the dam (22nd). Some wader counts included 87 Lapwings (7th), a Grey Plover (28th), three Ringed Plovers (20th), eight Curlew (7th), 11 Black-tailed Godwits (7th), two Turnstones (7th), 18 Ruff (7th) and six Curlew Sandpipers (14th). There were also four Common Sandpipers (7th), six Green Sandpipers (7th), a Spotted Redshanks (4th – 9th) and an impressive 52 Greenshanks (7th). There was an Arctic Tern (15th) and six Black Terns (10th). Up to three (7th) Marsh Harriers were regular with Ospreys seen to at least (20th)

and Hobby and Peregrine also noted. Seven Ravens were over the dam (22nd). There was a Whinchat (28th) and a Wheatear (11th) with two Rock Pipits (27th).

Eyebrook Reservoir. (See also Wildfowl Count). There was a Garganey (1st – 21st). Up to three Cattle Egrets were present (1st – 10th). Some wader counts included 112 Lapwings (7th), 35 Ringed Plovers (7th), six Little Ringed Plovers (3rd), nine Ruff (3rd), a Little Stint (27th), eight Common Sandpipers (8th) and one or two Spotted Redshanks (4th – 22nd). There were three Arctic Terns (8th, 9th) and seven Black Terns (10th). A Redstart was seen (5th) and there were two Whinchats (3rd – 6th) with three Stonechats (7th) and a Wheatear (14th).

Other Sites. Fort Henry Ponds had 54 Shoveler, 65 Teal and 109 Coot (all 25th) with 32 Golden Plovers and three Green Sandpipers (19th). There was a Hobby at Belmesthorpe (18th). Nine Yellow Wagtails were in Exton Park (12th).

Wildfowl Counts August and September 2025.

| | Rutland Water 12.08. | Rutland Water 07.09. | Eyebrook Reservoir 10.08. | Eyebrook Reservoir 07.09. |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Canada Goose | 1011 | 613 | 320 | 173 |
| Greylag Goose | 768 | 1137 | 200 | 485 |
| Mute Swan | 455 | 437 | 146 | 104 |
| Egyptian Goose | 50 | 63 | 7 | 2 |
| Shelduck | 2 | 6 | | |
| Mandarin Duck | 3 | 7 | | |
| Garganey | | | | 1 |
| Shoveler | 22 | 527 | | 17 |
| Gadwall | 1712 | 1570 | 21 | 28 |
| Wigeon | 13 | 201 | | 10 |
| Mallard | 1391 | 1979 | 383 | 533 |
| Pintail | 5 | 43 | | 6 |
| Teal | 51 | 960 | 13 | 366 |
| Red-crested | | | 1 | |
| Pochard | | | | 1 |
| Pochard | 9 | 3 | | |
| Tufted Duck | 1935 | 1526 | 3 | 30 |
| Scaup | 1 | | | |
| Goosander | | 1 | | |
| Little Grebe | 105 | 198 | 2 | |
| Great Crested | 419 | 467 | 19 | 24 |
| Grebe | | | | |
| Bittern | 2 | | | |
| Cattle Egret | | | 1 | 3 |
| Grey Heron | 34 | 56 | 2 | 5 |
| Great White | 70 | 78 | | 1 |
| Egret | | | | |
| Little Egret | 156 | 143 | 13 | 7 |
| Shag | | 2 | | |
| Cormorant | 894 | 1024 | 5 | 35 |
| Water Rail | 2 | | | |
| Moorhen | 137 | 105 | 9 | |
| Coot | 1059 | 1647 | 105 | 165 |
| Kingfisher | 1 | 1 | | |
| TOTAL | 10307 | 12794 | 1250 | 1996 |



Baird's sandpiper.
Eyebrook reservoir.
Photo Peter Scott.

| | Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park 09.08. | Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park 06.09. | Banhorpe GP 08.08. | Banhorpe GP 05.09. |
|-----------------------|--|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Mute Swan | 12 | 12 | 7 | 7 |
| Egyptian Goose | 2 | 2 | | |
| Shelduck | | 1 | | |
| Shoveler | 2 | 16 | | |
| Gadwall | 44 | 30 | | |
| Mallard | 54 | 162 | 6 | 16 |
| Teal | | 34 | | 3 |
| Tufted Duck | 1 | 5 | | 1 |
| Little Grebe | 9 | 9 | | |
| Grey Heron | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 |
| Little Egret | 1 | 1 | | 4 |
| Cormorant | | | 2 | 2 |
| Moorhen | 48 | 65 | 3 | 2 |
| Coot | 128 | 67 | 8 | |
| TOTAL | 303 | 406 | 28 | 36 |

BOTANY

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August/ September 2025

Leaves are changing colour and beginning to fall and there aren't many flowers to be found, though there might be a late blooming still to come. I walked around Manton the other day and only saw one flower, a blossom on a bramble bush. There are still lots of fruits in the hedgerows. Once the migrant thrush species arrive, they will rapidly disappear.

There haven't been many records since the last Fieldfare but those that have come in contain one or two unusual plants. The prize, if there were one, would go to **Climbing Corydalis**, found by Tim Caldicott at Lyndon towards the end of July. This was confirmed by Geoffrey Hall. It is the first recording for Rutland. It is a member of the Fumitory family and likes acid soil. It does occur in Leicestershire but over in the more definitely acid Charnwood area.



Left: Climbing corydalis. flowerhead.
Photo T. Caldicott



Right: Leaves of Climbing corydalis.
Photo T. Caldicott

Tim also found **Common Fleabane** and **Wild Angelica** in the Leighfield area at the end of August. Fleabane, as its name suggests, was once hung in bunches in the house, or dried and burnt as a fumigant to ward off insects. It is a relative of the species from which pyrethrum derives. Wild Angelica apparently smells like its relative Garden Angelica which is the one used in cooking. This comes from Continental Europe. Terry Mitcham found **Water Forget-me-not** at Ryhall and **Monkey Flower**. Both like moist conditions. Monkey flower is a member of the Figwort family. Its flower is supposed to resemble that of a monkey's face. It was introduced from North America in the early 19th century and has spread widely since then via water courses, rivers and canals.



Right: Wild angelica.
Photo C. Baxter



Left: Common fleabane.
Photo C. Baxter

At this time of the year there are lots of yellow flowers around, in lawns, on verges, in cracks of the pavements; lots of places. It's very easy to come to conclusions about their identity, but you have to be aware. **THEY ARE NOT ALL DANDELIONS.** It's easy to throw a passing glance and think that is what they are, but there are a number of different species, and they can be difficult to separate without close inspection. There are Hawkbits, Hawk's-beards, Hawkweeds, Cat's Ears, Goat's-beards, Lettuces and Sowthistles and more, all members of the Asteraceae Family. They are distinguished by whether they have basal rosettes of leaves or not, the size and shape of the leaves, hairy or not, whether the flower stems are branched or not, the shape of the seeds, and other criteria. Not Easy! These musings were triggered by the report of a flower found at Oakham railway station by Marian Markham in July. She thought it was a Hawkweed, but Naturespot said that identification was difficult, and an expert should be consulted. She sent a photograph to Steve Woodward for his help. He thought it probably was a Hawkweed but said that he would have to see a whole specimen and examine it under the microscope. The type and distribution of leaves, and then of the hairs, need to be examined, and

even then, a national expert would need to be consulted before a final identity could be established. He suggested Marian send him the whole plant, but since there was only one, she decided not to disturb it and settled on collecting seed and trying to grow it in the garden instead. I know that several other members of the Society follow the same path and grow plants in their gardens to try and confirm identity and to preserve species. True naturalists!

Railways make excellent links across the country, allowing wildlife to spread. The best-known plant example is, perhaps, Oxford Ragwort, but others, like Buddleja are more noticeable. Marian has found that Network Rail have a Biodiversity Plan. This was produced in 2020 and set out an aim of no net loss of biodiversity throughout their lineside estate by 2024 and a net gain of 10% by 2035. They are working with local Wildlife Trusts to achieve this. More Hawkweed and less Buddleja?

Records were received this month from D and J Ball, C Baxter, L Biddle, T Caldicott, M Grimes, J Harris, R Lemmon, M Markham and T Mitcham. Thank you all very much.

BUTTERFLIES

.....Apologies from Martin. No report this time. Full summer report in January issue.....

FUNGI

August/September 2025

Despite the heatwave and drought this year, some much needed rainfall in August and September encouraged an early Autumn bloom of fungal fruiting. A particular star attraction were the striking pair of Silky Rosegills that stood loud and proud on their dead Field Maple stump at Egleton Bird Reserve. Just off the main path to the various bird hides, the large robust fungi commanded prime position arresting many a passersby who paused to admire and photograph them. The **Silky Rosegill** (*Volvariella Bombycinia*) is so called because of its distinctive furry cap which starts out as a shiny egg emerging from a sac-like volva which remains at the base. The mature spores discolour the gills pink – hence the name – Rosegill. A close relative is the Stubble Rosegill, another chunky mushroom which is more frequently seen in large groups in woodchip or fertile grassland. The Silky Rosegill is much scarcer and once associated with Elm stumps, so an excellent find.



Silky rosegill.
Photo
K Fortune
Jones

Other notable finds around Rutland have been the uncommon **Redbanded Bracket**, (*Fomitopsis pinicola*), **Blushing Rosettes**, (*Abortiporus biennis*) and **Dyers Mazegill**, (*Phaeolus schweinitzii*), the latter of which is not a familiar sight in the county as it typically grows with conifers. This specimen was found at the base of a white Poplar in Manton. Of the **Boletes** found were **Chestnut**, **Birch** and **Suede** all spotted round Rutland Water. The rare **Solitary Amanita** made another appearance (three years running) at the same birch tree triangle in Stamford,

Blushing rosette.
Photo K Fortune Jones



alongside **Charcoal burners** and a single fat **Lurid Bolete**. **Spectacular Rustgills** appear to have had a good year with big showy blooms around Lyndon and Egleton reserve. The beautiful **Veiled Oyster** (*Pleurotus dryinus*), was found at Wardley woods, which is notable for being edged with tissue like fragments of the universal veil. **Rollrims**

(*Paxillus involutus*) have been everywhere – from Launde Woods, Manton, to Stamford borders, in woods, garden wood mulch to roadside grassy verges.

A very surprising find in Carolyn's back garden in Uppingham, was the very diminutive and unusual **Field Bird's Nest Fungi**, (*Cyathus olla*), of which there were many scattered in a dead patch of grass. Whilst a few may question Carolyn's lawn upkeep – I applaud her for encouraging such mycological curios! The bird's nest fungi family (Nidulariaceae) are unmistakeable although easily overlooked, as they comprise of tiny silvery-grey cups which contain what looks like little eggs, which in fact are little spore packets which liberate their spores with the impact of raindrops.



Left: Field Bird's-nest fungi. Photo C. Baxter

Right: Veiled oyster. Photo C. Baxter



Wardley Wood also provided **Orange peel fungus**, **Sticky Scalycap**, **Whitelaced Shank** and **Rooting Shank**, **Charcoal Burners** and **Sulphur Tuft** – all typical woodland species working on decomposing and recycling dead and decaying timber. **Dryad Saddles** have been spotted in great number and size, over summer and early Autumn along with **Chicken of the Woods** and **Great Polypore**. A few Corals have been spotted – the **Upright Coral**, (*Ramaria stricta*) and the **Ochre Coral**, (*Ramaria decurrens*). It's worth noting here that the very rare and once thought extinct **Candlebra Coral fungus**

(*Clavicorona pygidatus*) was found further afield in north west Leicestershire's Burrow Wood in September this year by a member of the Leicestershire Fungi Study Group. A good reminder that anything can turn up if you look in the right place at the right time!



Left: Upright coral.
Below: Ochre coral.
Photo's K Fortune Jones



Not far from these I also spotted the little **Tuberose bracket** (*Polyporus tuberaster*) – which is like a dainty circular version of the big wavy Dryads Saddle.

A first for me was the **Lilac Oysterling**, (*Panus conchatus*), found on rotting timber in the grounds of Launde Abbey. It initially proved a challenge to identify as it was in its younger stage, but an eventual consensus was agreed. A trio of chunky, robust beige-lilac fungi protruded out of the cut end of a decaying log, with deeply forked gills and a rather inrolled rim. Quite an unusual find, which is listed as 'occasional'. Certainly not common in Rutland or Leicestershire.



Lilac oysterling.
Photo K Fortune Jones.

To conclude, these two months finds have proved that a not so promising start in mid summer, with hard parched, drought ridden ground has actually proved rather bountiful. I hope it carries on so with the continued rainfall. With thanks to all the contributors.

RECORDER : VACANT

INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

August/September 2025.

This report has been compiled from records taken by Carolyn Baxter and from records sent to Naturespot. **If anyone is interested in taking over recording this section and sending reports to the newsletter, it would be very welcome.**

Please send your insect records to Naturespot under the RNHS "Project" dropdown menu, and they will be picked up for our Fieldfare newsletter reports. You will

need to register to access the menu. Midges, Gnats, and other Gall bearing insects found in Rutland, have been sent to Naturespot by Roy Lemmon and can be viewed on their website. With thanks to Marian Markham, Roy Lemmon, Charles Gallimore and Peter Scott for their records.

August 2025.

Highlights. August is still a good time for seeing a variety of solitary bees, honeybees and hoverflies in the countryside, feeding on thistles and other late flowering species. With plenty of warm sunny days still, dragonflies and damselflies can be seen near ponds and watercourses and because Shieldbugs tend to be quite big and stationary, they are easily seen and recorded.

Bees, Wasps, Ants.

Common Carder bee – *Bombus pascuorum* and many **Honeybees** – *Apis mellifera* feeding on Creeping thistles and garden flowers. Uppingham garden and Wardley woods (WW) (1st).

Harvestman

Strictly speaking, Harvestmen are Arachnids and like spiders, they have eight legs, but their body parts are fused together, looking rather like a round or oval shape with long legs. There are around 30 species in this country. ***Mitopus morio***. (Wardley woods (1st) is one of the commonest species found on vegetation. The **Spray-legged harvestman** *Dicranopalpus ramosus* agg., a strange looking Harvestman was found on the inside wall of an Uppingham house (10th), although it is usually found on outside walls.

Spiders

A **Nursery web spider** *Pisaura mirabilis* was found next to her nursery web (1st) in grass just outside Wardley woods. You usually see the web glistening with water droplets before you spot the spider itself, which is probably watching you closely with its eight beady eyes!

Flies. A **Flesh fly** *Sarcophaga* sp was seen next to some over ripe blackberries at the edge of Wardley woods (1st). These large black and white chequered flies mostly lay their eggs on carrion and animal dung, but some have the alarming distinction of laying hatched maggots in the open wounds of living mammals!



Left: **Flesh Fly.**
C.Baxter

Bugs. **Hairy shieldbug** *Dolycoris baccarum* nymph on a thistle leaf at WW (1st) and also at Langham churchyard (4th). **Dock bug** *Coreus marginatus* WW (1st) and in a Braunston garden (23rd). **A Tortoise bug** *Eurygaster testudinaria* was found in the Langham churchyard (4th) and a **Nettle bug nymph** *Licoris tripustulatus* in an Uppingham garden (10th).

September 2025.

Highlights. Ivy flowers starting into bloom this month, are a magnet for many bees, wasps and hoverflies who find the flowers a crucial source of nectar at this time of the year. Walk along any ivy-covered hedge that is in dappled sunlight and you will find all kinds of pollinators jostling for space on these little green marble-like flowers. There

have been more reports of Dragonflies this month too, and it seems the Willow Emerald damselfly which was first spotted here in Rutland at the Eyebrook reservoir in 2019 is firmly established now with two sightings in Rutland this September. If you are able to get a good look at the wings, the "Eye spots" are pale brown rather than dark brown or black on the more common Emerald damselfly. A good record from Peter Scott at Buzzard hide, Egleton.

Marian Markham found a Shieldbug *Stictopleurus abutilon*, once thought to be extinct in this country until it was "re found "again recently in the south of the country. Presumably because of climate change, this is another species moving northwards due to warmer dry conditions.

Bees, wasps, Ants. Most of the sightings were seen along Manor Lane in Langham where the Ivy is draped over most of the hedges along the top road. **The Common wasp** *Vespula vulgaris* (25th) of which there were many, and there may have been other *Vespula* species among them, but it was hard to pick any one individual out for comparison. There were **Buff tailed/White-tailed bumble bee workers** *Bombus terrestris/lucorum* (25th), many foraging **Honeybees** *Apis mellifera* (25th).

Beetles. **7-spot ladybirds** *Coccinella septempunctata* abound everywhere still, as did **Harlequin ladybirds** *Harmonia axyridis* but not so many of these. (25th). A small brown beetle found amongst cut straw in the observers Uppingham garden(28th), was that of ***Nimbus contaminatus***. It is common and supposed to frequent animal dung – but not in this case!

Flies. **The Common Dronefly** *Eristalis tenax* is a chunky hoverfly that looks a bit like a bee (25th), because of the Batman mask lookalike on the thorax. Both were seen flying amongst ivy in Manor Lane, Langham.

Bugs. The **Hairy shieldbug** *Dolycoris baccarum* was seen in Langham (13th) and the **Shieldbug** *Stictopleurus abutilon* also seen in Langham (21st).

Dragonflies. **Brown hawker dragonfly** *Aeshna grandis* seen at Fran's Pond Rutland Water (7th) and the **Willow Emerald damselfly** *Chalcolestes viridis* seen in the same place by two observers (7th). The **Willow emerald damselfly** was seen in Langham on 7th as well.



Willow
emerald
damselfly.
Photo P. Scott

A **Migrant Hawker dragonfly** *Aeshna mixta* was seen at Rutland Water Egleton (21st). A **Common darter dragonfly** *Sympetrum striolatum* was seen sunning itself on the grassy ride in Wardley woods (23rd).

MAMMALS

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August September 2025

The report for August and September is shorter than usual, as we have fewer records, mainly because the small mammal camera trapping work at RWNR paused during the summer. We have also been away on holiday, so we largely relied on members' records. Fortunately, Marian Markham has continued to use her camera trap in the garden at Langham, and one or two others have sent in information.

At Langham there have been regular visits from a **badger** or badgers. We have even had one in our garden in Stamford. We set our camera while we were away, hoping that we would find evidence of the hedgehog or hogs again. We were delighted when one appeared and then amazed to see a single badger investigating our compost heap. The only concern is that the badger may also have discovered the hedgehog! There was one **hedgehog** visit to Langham in August.

The other very regular performer on the camera at Langham is a **Red fox** (or foxes), who comes at any time between 10.30pm and 5.00am.

There have been very few records of **Brown hare**, only seen at Pickworth at the beginning of September and Exton at the end of the month, and **rabbits** were reported from A606 Oakham bypass and Quarry farm Great Casterton. There is a huge warren in the hedgerow towards Little Casterton.

Grey squirrels have been seen at Pickworth wood, RWNR and Langham.

A **Common shrew** was seen in the garden at Langham and a dead **Pygmy shrew** found at Quarry Farm Great Casterton. Several nights in August a **Wood mouse** appeared on the camera trap at Langham, and 3 **Bank voles** were found under reptile sheets in Exton Park.



Hedgehog in Members garden. Photo A Tipping

At Tufted duck and Deepwater hides RWNR, and at Langham in the garden, **Muntjac deer** were recorded. One **Fallow deer** was seen at Fort Henry ponds, and another, a large buck, sheltered between the stand of Silver birches next to Holywell wood at Pickworth.

Finally good news about water voles. At RWNR pollards reed bed and near the reedbed boardwalk, **Water vole** droppings were found on the rafts and at Dog Kennel stream where they have not been recorded for a year or two. Droppings showed that they are still around. Even more interesting, at the bridge at Horn mill on a stone in North Brook, droppings were unexpectedly evident, so in spite of the dry weather, they seem to be doing OK! However sadly there have been no further signs at Oakham canal this year.

Many thanks to the recorders. I do hope that more of you will think it worthwhile to send in anything you observe during the next three months - Marian Markham, Terry Mitcham, DR Charles Gallimore and Stephen Smalley

MOTHS

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August/ September 2025

Apart from a brief spell of unsettled weather in early September there were plenty of nights that were suitable for trapping. Overall totals and species counts continued to be at or above average compared to most recent years. Two other features of the reporting period and more generally of the second part of the year so far, have been the appearance of larger numbers of immigrant moth species beyond the regular arrivals and the emergence of a second generation of a number of species that are normally rarely seen beyond their spring and early summer first generation. Both of these features are probably the result of the long period of dry and warm weather that we have experienced this year. Some of the immigrant arrivals are now believed to be in sufficient numbers over VC55 to be reasonably confident that they are now breeding in the area. It is also

likely that we are losing some species in a northward drift due to the warming climate and a rough assessment of recent departures and arrivals seems like a good winter job for a local recorder!

The Lyndon trap was operated on 4 occasions with another session held on the night of 1st October also included in this report. On 6th August a count of 13 **Poplar Hawk-moth**, probably second generation on account of their fresh looking condition, was unusual for early August as were 6 **Pale Prominent** with most appearances of this moth occurring in June or early July. Other notable records were **Square-spotted Clay**, **Gold Spot** and six **Red Underwing** seen on the Visitor Centre wall on the following morning. 454 moths of 56 species were recorded on 18th

August. This very high overall total was boosted by 20 plus counts of several common species with 82 **Common Wainscot** being the highest number. Also notable were 25 **White-point** with this moth continuing to expand rapidly in the mid-counties. A count of 13 **Six-striped Rustic** was also above average while records of a likely immigrant **Small Mottled Willow**, a site first, and a second generation **White Ermine** were both unusual. The night of 5th September was a slightly cooler one, hence a reduced count of 122 moths with one species, **Square-spot Rustic**, accounting for almost half of these. Two other site firsts, **Delicate** and **Scarce Bordered Straw**, were possible migrant arrivals although the former species, seen also in a Ridlington trap earlier in the year, could now be breeding locally. Both of these moths are irruptive with some years seeing extremely high numbers. The count of 35 species on 18th September was notable for the second site record of **Clifden Nonpareil**, a very large migrant moth distinguished by its blue underwing. A trap run in Cherry Wood near the Volunteer Training Centre also recorded this species on the same night. It has been historically linked to the arrival of Camberwell Beauty butterflies but sadly this now seems unlikely in Rutland. A count of 14 **Yellow-tail** was an extremely high second generation count with this moth still being recorded on the wing in October. **Dark Sword-grass** and **Rush Veneer**, both more regularly occurring migrant species, were also seen. 101 moths of 31 species was well above average for a humid night on 1st October. These included 2 more

Clifden Nonpareil, a second generation **Swallow-tailed Moth**, and four species of Sallow moths including a double-figure count for **Sallow**.

The battery trap has now been restored to full working order, albeit a bit too late for the peak summer emergence period. 41 moths of 15 species was a good total when the trap was set up at Bloody Oaks on 26th September with a selection of mainly early autumn species including **Black Rustic** and **Beaded Chestnut**. Other battery trap records included **Pale Eggar** at Prior's Coppice on 10th August and a **European Corn-borer** at Ridlington on 29th August.

Day-flying records received, included **Hummingbird Hawk-moth**, seen at five sites, including regular garden and allotment sightings in Manton and Wing, and a White Ermine in Langham on 11th August. **Toadflax Brocade** and **Convolvulus Hawk-moth** were recorded in the same village on 16th August and 2nd September respectively, both of these moths are more likely to appear in gardens with the Hawk-moth's extremely large caterpillar using its abnormally long proboscis to feed mainly on *Nicotiana sylvestris* tobacco plants, although other tubular flowers will also be used, while any species of toadflax is likely to attract the former moth.

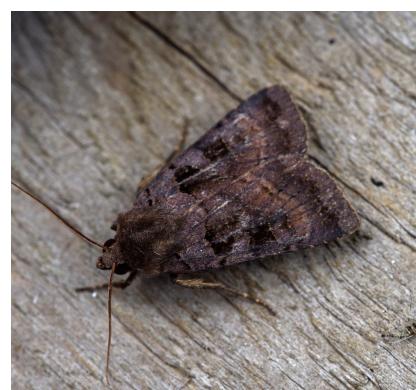
Many thanks to the following for submitting their records: P Bennett, T Caldicott, R Edwards, Dr C Gallimore, C Howat, M Markham, J Morrell, T Sexton.



Beautiful China mark. Roy Edwards back garden



Frosted orange. Jacky Morrell



Square-spotted clay. Roy Edwards



Gold spot. Lyndon. Roy Edwards



Black rustic. Jacky Morrell



Delicate. Lyndon. Jacky Morrell

FIELD TRIPS

Visit to RSPB Frampton Marsh. Saturday 13th September 2025

The Rutland Natural History Society's visit to RSPB Frampton Marsh this year was marked by an extraordinary sight—not of birds in their usual great throngs, but of the landscape itself. After an exceptionally dry year, much of the reserve had shrunk to cracked mudflats and a few tiny residual pools, a stark contrast to the broad lagoons we usually associate with this Lincolnshire reserve.

Normally, Frampton Marsh is alive with the clamour of huge wader flocks and hundreds of wildfowl, offering that almost overwhelming spectacle where you struggle to pick out individual species. On this occasion, however, the birds were scattered and far fewer in number. Even so, careful watching along the 1.9-mile route still revealed 32 species and 478 individual birds—a reminder of nature's resilience in tough conditions.

Highlights among the waders included Little Stint, Spotted Redshank, and both Ringed and Little Ringed Plovers, while a Merlin and a Marsh Harrier provided brief but thrilling raptor encounters over the salt marsh. Western Yellow Wagtails added splashes of colour among the grazing cattle, and Barn Swallows and a lone House Martin skimmed low over the remaining pools, accompanied by smaller groups of Greylag Goose, Wigeon (salt marsh), and Teal.

Though the great swirling flocks were absent, the visit offered a different kind of experience: a vivid reminder of how weather patterns shape habitats and wildlife. Even in drought, Frampton Marsh continued to reward patient eyes, offering moments of beauty and insight into the fragile balance of wetland ecosystems.

Craig Howat.

Bird species recorded. (32 species / 478 individuals)

| Species | Count | Species | Count | Species | Count |
|----------------------|-------|---------------------|-------|---------------------|----------------|
| Greylag goose | 23 | Blk-tailed godwit | 4 | Merlin | 1 |
| Brent goose | 1 | Spotted redshank | 1 | Carrion crow | 2 |
| Cmn. shelduck | 1 | Little stint | 2 | Eur. blue-tit | 1 |
| Wigeon | 25 | Blk.-headed gull | 250 | Barn swallow | 18 |
| Teal | 1 | Euro. herring gull | 1 | Wsn. house martin | 1 |
| Cmn. ringed plover | 2 | Little egret | 7 | Cetti's warbler | 1 (Heard only) |
| Little ringed-plover | 1 | Eur. sparrowhawk | 1 | Cmn starling | 4 |
| Whimbrel | 2 | Wstn. Marsh harrier | 1 | Eur. robin | 2 |
| Eur. curlew | 4 | Cmn. kestrel | 2 | Wsn. yellow wagtail | 13 |
| Pied/white wagtail | 8 | Meadow pipit | 20 | Cmn. linnet | 3 |
| Eur. Goldfinch | 68 | Cmn. reed bunting | 3 | | |

Butterflies and Moths.

Common blue. 6
Painted lady 2
Buff-tip moth caterpillar. 1



Rutland Natural History Society 60th Anniversary lunch Saturday 20th September 2025

The anniversary lunch, held at Wing village hall in September was a heartwarming celebration that brought together members old and new, including some of the longest serving. Those who attended will remember it as a testament to the spirit of our longstanding society but sadly, it was the last time we shared an event together with Jenny Harris who took on the role as host for the day.

The buffet lunch offered a range of cold dishes by Sara Mcallister the caterer, followed by anniversary cake and tea/coffee. During this interlude, some of the members took to the floor to share their thoughts on "What the Society means to me". Phil, our President led the way with positive and encouraging words, while other members followed, each sharing their own perspective and experiences.

As the afternoon drew to a close, Jenny took the opportunity to thank the members and express her gratitude to all who had attended. Her words brought the celebration to a conclusion by reaffirming the society's commitment to its members and its ongoing work to protect and conserve Rutland's wildlife.





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