



The colours flooded in with the pre-sunrise glow, RNHS Dawn Chorus, Burley-on-the-Hill Wood, May 7

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Owls were hooting from different parts of the wood. The Plough moved slowly across the starry sky. A train proceeded across the valley, we heard occasional cars and lorries. A small mist set in as the light increased but melted away as the dawn glow brightened. We were rewarded with a dawn chorus all the more thrilling because of the quiet before.

On the walk back, a Lesser Spotted Woodpecker (increasingly rare in Rutland) flew across the ride, and Cuckoos sang. We made our way to the Volunteer Training Centre for warming coffee and bacon butties – thank you Linda and Anthony – and then went up to the first floor for a magnificent view of Rutland Water and of the wildfowl waking up, which was hard to leave. Do come with us next year!

The results from this meeting will be compared to earlier results – 1970 on – obtained at the same site by Phil Rudkin and RNHS members including Linda and Anthony Biddle. They will be published in a later *Fieldfare*.

Hendrina Ellis, *Fieldfare* Editor

EXTRA OUTDOOR MEETING – Fineshade Woods

Please note that there is an extra meeting at Fineshade Woods on Tuesday July 19 at 10.30 am, in order to make a survey of the wildlife that would be affected if planning permission is given for the erection of over 70 holiday chalets, along with their roads, electricity, drainage and water supplies ... in the middle of this lovely ancient woodland. Please come to contribute to the survey.



Privet Hawkmoth. See Moth Night, page 12



Apion frumentarium, see page 12.

The fight against planning permission has been going on for quite a long time, and each time a new plan is submitted the opposition has to present the argument again – which is a typical strategy used to wear them down. Barrie Galpin for the **Friends of Fineshade** presents the arguments at <http://www.fineshade.org.uk/#!letter-to-natural-england/ivav8>, and the Friends can be contacted at friends@fineshade.org.uk. They need all our support.

Linda Biddle, *Chairman*

RNHS Secretary - thank you, Roy

Following a year as a committed Committee member, and then three very busy years as RNHS Secretary, during which digital recording was introduced and a new website set up, and which also included the demanding 50th Anniversary year, Roy Edwards has decided to step down so as to have time to widen his interests. We are hugely indebted to him, very grateful for all his efforts, and look forward to seeing him and Carol at meetings in the future.

This leaves a vacancy among the officers of your Society, so if there is anyone out there who might be willing to spend time continuing to support the Society in the role of secretary, now is the time to volunteer! Please contact me for more information about the role of secretary.

Linda Biddle, *Chairman*

DIARY DATES

Friday 3 June, 6 pm



Sunday June 19, 10 am to 2 pm Cribbs' Meadow



Water Avens

RNHS EVENING MEETINGS

Meetings are held at Voluntary Action Rutland (VAR), Lands End Way, Oakham LE15 6RB. Tea and coffee, free. Visitors are asked for a donation of £2. The Spring meetings have finished. Autumn meetings will start up again on October 4th.

RNHS FIELD TRIPS

Full details of all these events appear on our website at www.rnhs.org.uk. If the weather is bad, check the website or call the 'Queries' phone number for changes.

An evening walk at Dawn's Paddock

Birds, butterflies, wild flowers, and possibly badgers, bats and owls if you stay late enough, at this historic piece of church meadowland. A moth trap will be set up around 9 pm. Leaving Oakham on the Braunston road, after 1.5 miles there is a large layby on the left, just before the Woodland Trust's The Seek. Dawn's paddock entrance is accessed from the layby. (SK 841 073)

Queries: Dawn Whitefield 01664 454578

This National Nature Reserve's name derives from Cribb's Lodge to the south-west, commemorating the last bare-fist prize fight in England at Thistleton Gap, two fields to the south, on 28th September 1811, between Tom Cribb and Tom Molyneux.

Jenny Harris will lead this walk. Notable species are: adder's tongue, cowslip, green-winged orchid, common spotted-orchid and water avens in spring and early summer; agrimony, great burnet and yellow rattle later in the year. As might be expected, the area is good for butterflies.

The reserve is 2 km north west of the village of Thistleton. The eastern boundary of the reserve is formed by the minor road from Thistleton to Wymondham, 5 km to the west. (SK 899188)

Queries: Jenny Harris 01572 755274

Friday 1 July, 2 pm



Seaton Meadows

Joe Costley from Plant Life will introduce our members to survey methodology before directing the afternoon's activity. The finish will be around 4.00 pm. This activity is linked to National Meadow weekend, and may become an annual event. From Harringworth towards Seaton, after passing under the rail viaduct, take the first right towards Morcott, park up after 200 m. Queries: Dawn Whitefield 01664 454578

Saturday July 9, 11 am to 1 pm **Oakham Canal**

The Oakham Canal ran from Oakham, Rutland to Melton Mowbray, Leicestershire. It opened in 1802, but it was never a financial success, and it suffered from the lack of an adequate water supply. It closed after 45 years, and most of it was infilled, although the old track can be seen. This particular section is in effect a small linear lake, with a good selection of dragonflies and other insects.

We meet on the Ashwell to Langham road (SK865110). Please park carefully. The path can often be muddy and slippery, so please bring appropriate footwear. Queries: Gill Chiverton 01780 753820

Tuesday July 19, 10.30 am

Fineshade Wood – extra meeting

The objective of this meeting is to record as much as we can about all sorts of wildlife in this ancient woodland – see page 1 for more details. Directions: bear right at the visitor centre ignoring the sign that says residents only. Follow round to the seven houses around the green – we meet at No 15 Top Lodge, second from the left. SP981982 or post code for Sat Navs NN17 3BB. Please let Linda Biddle know beforehand if you are coming: 01780 762108.

Saturday Aug 6, 11 am to 2 pm **Ketton Quarry**

Led by Alastair Lawrence, this is a repeat of last year's very successful meeting. Ketton Quarry is probably Rutland's best butterfly site. See *Fieldfare* July 2015, page 2, for photos of some of the species found.

Meet in the car park at Ketton Quarry reserve (OS grid ref: SK 978054). If you wish to stay into the afternoon, bring a picnic. Queries: Alistair Lawrence 01572 770492

LINCOLNSHIRE WILDLIFE TRUST, BOURNE GROUP

For details of LWT events, see www.lincstrust.org.uk, or phone 01507 526677 in office hours. Meetings are held at the Methodist Church Hall, Bourne.

Sunday July 17, 1 pm

Dragonflies: Stantons Pit LWT Reserve

Joint meeting with British Dragonfly Society. Use car park at TF 034173 (nearest postcode PE10 0JN), about half-way off a minor road running between Little Bytham and Witham-on-the-Hill. Nearest facilities in village pubs. Leader: Brian Hedley 07989 665794 brian_hedley@hotmail.com

LEICESTERSHIRE & RUTLAND WILDLIFE TRUST, RUTLAND GROUP

For events in Leicestershire and Rutland see www.lrwat.org.uk or phone 0116 262 9968. Meetings are held at the Volunteer Training Centre, Hambleton Road, LE15 8AD. Entry £1.

Sunday July 3, 2 pm

Bloody Oaks Quarry Nature Reserve

A guided walk with Anthony Biddle around this NNR, which is notable for its calcareous flora and fauna. Meet at the Reserve entrance, SK 969107. Park on the grass verge opposite.

Saturday July 9, 21:00

60th Anniversary Walk: Bats & Glow-worms, Ketton

Join Jenny Harris, LRWT Conservation Officer and RNHS Bat Recorder, on this evening walk to search for different species of bats in the village and then enjoy the fascinating light display of female glow-worms at the old quarry.

Initially meet at the Church of St Mary the Virgin before moving on to Ketton Quarry. Bring a torch.

Booking is essential, places are limited, £3 per person. Please see the website to book online or contact the Trust office on 0116 262 9968.

WEATHER

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

87 Empingham Road, Stamford PE9 2SU. Telephone 01780 762051
E-mail: Roy.Lemmon@yahoo.co.uk

March 2016

Atmospheric pressure and wind

Pressures were low up to the 9th of the month, then high until the 24th; and the month finished off with further low pressures during which period the month's lowest, 976 mb, was recorded at 09.00 on the 28th. The highest, 1035 mb, occurred on both the 13th and 14th, and at this time there was low visibility, especially early in the mornings. A feature of the month were some very high wind speeds both at the start and also at the end of the month. The most disruptive was storm Katie on the 28th and at 09.00 on that day I recorded a gust of 34 mph in an open area.

Temperature

This was a cold March after the warmest winter since records began. The mean minimum at 1.99 °C was the 9th coolest in the decade 2007-2016, only 2013 was lower at -0.80 °C. The picture for the mean maximum was similar, 10.17 °C against 2013 at 5.87 °C. There were eight air frosts during the month and the lowest overnight minimum was -2.4 °C on 6th-7th, and the highest daytime maximum was 15.2 °C on the 25th.

Rainfall

A very wet month, the total here was 78.5 mm (3.09 inches) which is 212% of the long-term mean for March over a period of 26 years. Looking back at my records for March, 2008 was wetter at 80.4 mm and 2013 was third with 68.0 mm. This year there was a long period, the 10th to the 23rd, when no measurable rain fell; but there were in addition, 3 other days when considerable amounts were measured, on the 8th and 9th a total of 38.4 mm (1.5 inches) and on the 27th, storm Katie again, 14.3 mm (0.56 inches).

April 2016

Atmospheric pressure and wind

From the beginning of the month until the 13th, pressures were low and winds mostly S-SW, and from the 14th to the 27th they were predominantly NW-NE with a corresponding rise in pressures. The last 3 days of the month saw winds SW-W and gusty. The lowest pressure I recorded was 1001.5 mb at 09.00 on the 9th and the highest 1031 mb on the 20th at the same time.

Temperature

This was a cold April, the overall mean, 8.47 °C, was eighth coolest in the decade 2007-2016, and both the mean minimum and the mean maximum were, by a quirk of mathematics, ninth in the same decade. There were 5 air frosts in the month, i.e. when the overnight minimum was below 0.0 °C, and there were two days, the 13th and 14th, when the daytime maximum was 18.0 °C.

Rainfall

A wet month, the total here was 56.1 mm (2.21 inches) which is 128% of my LTM of 26 years. Thus 3 of the last 4 months have seen well above average rainfall and even the one that wasn't, February, was 92% of LTM. It is generally felt that winds this month, although cold, have dried the surface considerably.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

The Stone House, Reeves Lane, Wing LE15 8SD. Telephone: 01572 737343
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March/April 2016

The spawning of **frogs** is the dominant activity of this period. As noted in the previous Fieldfare, spawn appeared in Linda Worrall's pond in Barrowden on 1st March and more fresh spawn appeared on 12th and 20th March there. Elsewhere spawning was considerably later, the next being on 18th March in Oakham and 19th March in Little Casterton. More appeared in ponds in five other parishes until 22nd March, when most spawning seemed to have finished, although I found two fresh clumps in a field pond in Wing, which also had a substantial quantity of older spawn, on 3rd April. (Spawning in this pond is usually a good week behind the rest of Rutland). In due course tadpoles were reported from several sites.

Toads, in contrast, were only reported from two sites, although many toads in amplexus were noted in Exton on 25th March.

The only newt records were from my garden in Wing, where both **Smooth** and **Great Crested Newts** flourish.

A **Slow Worm** was recorded from near Market Overton on 31st March. So far I have been unable to ascertain whether the record was a Rutland record or a Leicestershire record as the details were insufficiently precise.

The only **Grass Snake** record for these months was at Ketton Quarry on 30th March. Ketton Quarry also produced records of one, two and three **Adders** between 13th March and 17th April.

My thanks to the following who have provided records: D & J Ball, P Bennett, A & J Comber, H & P Ellis, M Grimes, A Hill, D Masters, T Mitcham, D Needham, P Rudkin, M Spence, M Tyler and L Worrall.

BIRDS

RECORDER Terry Mitcham

30 Sutherland Way, Stamford PE9 2TB. Telephone: 01780 751268.
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March/April 2016

These are always busy months for birdwatchers (and recorders!) with departing winter visitors overlapping with summer migrants and passage waders adding to the mix. Grebes and divers lingered into April as did the much admired Long-billed Dowitcher at Egleton. Warblers and hirundines arrived on cue but many were in low numbers, presumably due to the very mixed weather. Rarities included Crane, Woodlark and Firecrest and there was a good showing of chats, including a Black-Redstart, but Nightingales were very scarce. Gardens came into their own at last with Siskins and Lesser Redpolls noted at a number of feeders.

My thanks to the following for their records: J W Ansley, T Appleton, V Arnold, D & J Ball, P Bennett, A & J Biddle, T Caldicott, A & J Comber, R Edwards, M & J Griffin, M Grimes, LROS, R Lemmon, D Masters, I Misselbrook, T Mitcham, B Moore, G Morley, D Needham, L & B Nicholls, C Park, L Park, P Robinson, RWNR, S Todd, L Worrall.

See also Wildfowl Counts.

Whooper Swan	Two were near Eg between 03 and 07.03, with three flying over on 04.03. One was at RWSA on 18.04 and two flew east over FHP on 24.04.
Egyptian Goose	Three were in Ext Park on 11.03 and 24.04. Two were at FHP on 15.04 and a pair had seven goslings on a farm pond at Tgh on 12.04.
Shelduck	A pair was regular at FHP throughout both months. Two flew over LFP on 27.03 and two were at PC Ponds on 30.03. A pair was in BW on 17.04, presumably prospecting for a nest site.

Mandarin Duck	A female was at Norm Fishing Harbour on 14.03, with a pair at FHP on 20.03 and a pair at Norm on 24.03. A pair flew from a wood near Wg on 05.04 and a pair were in flight around Cott Wood and Westland Wood on 13.04.
Wigeon	The peak FHP count was 116 on 25.03, with the last three there on 09.04.
Garganey	A drake remained at RWNA/Eg from 30.03 to the end of April.
Red-crested Pochard	Three were at RW on 26.03.
Scaup	Present at RW, mainly SA to at least 18.04, with four noted on 05 and 17.04.
Common Scoter	In RWNA there was a female on 11/12.03 and a male on 12.04.
Smew	At RW birds were reported to 22.03, with peak counts of six on 18.03 and five on 11/12.03. EBR had records to 25.03 with a max of eight on 10.03.
Red-breasted Merganser	A female was in RWNA on 07.04.
Goosander	Our final record was from BFP on 16.03.
Grey Partridge	Pairs were near Wymondham on 15.03 and in Ext Park on 22.04.
Great Northern Diver	Present at RWNA/SA throughout both months with four noted on 22.03 and two regular throughout April.
Little Egret	Away from the reservoirs there were singles at FHP on 19 and 23.03, and two at LFP on 23.03.
Red-necked Grebe	The RWNA bird was present to 12.04.
Slavonian Grebe	One remained in RWNA to at least 01.04.
Black-necked Grebe	Three were in RWNA to 22.03.
Marsh Harrier	Singles were at RW on 29.03 and 02.04.
Sparrowhawk	Garden records were received from Barrow, Oak, Norm, Stam and Bden (plucking a tit spp.). Display was noted over BW, WardW, Westland Wood and Stoke Dry Wood. Regular at RWEg.
Buzzard	Well reported, as usual, with the peak counts of six over TunnW on 14.03 and BW on 02.04.
Osprey	The first RW bird returned on 17.03 with subsequent sightings at EBR and LFP.
Merlin	One flew SW at RWEg on 26.03.
Peregrine	One was at RWEg on 18.03 and RWLynd on 01.04. One was perched in BW on 17.04, and one perched by Rygate Lake in Ext Park on 24.04.
Crane	One flew over Oak on 15.03 and two over RWEg on 08.04.
Avocet	One was at RWEg on 11.03, with a pair fairly regularly from 25.03 to the end of April. Two were at EBR on 23.03.
Oystercatcher	At RW there were 22 on 13.03 and 19 on 12.04. One flew south at EBR on 26.03, and there were two there on 10.04.
Golden Plover	70 were on arable land near Cott Airfield on 25.03, with one there on 10.04.
Grey Plover	Singles were at RWEg on 11/12.04 and 29.04.
Lapwing	At RW there were 242 on 13.03 and 20 on 12.04. EBR had 18 on 13.03 and one on 10.04. Breeding activity was noted at both reservoirs, GCast and Banthorpe GP.
Little Ringed Plover	Our only records were singles at EBR on 24.03 and RWEg on 26.03.
Ringed Plover	Four were at RW on 13.03, with six noted on 11.04. One was at EBR on 03.04.
Whimbrel	One at RWEg on 11.04 was the first arrival, with up to three regular to the end of April and five noted on 15/17.04. Three were at EBR on 19.04.
Curlew	11 were at RW on 13.03, with five present on 12.04, and one on 29.04. Calling birds were near Barrow on 15.03; and a pair at Cott Airfield on 25.03 increased to two pairs on 10.04.
Black-tailed Godwit	Two were at RW on 13.03, with singles on 25.03 and 29.04, and two on 30.04.
Turnstone	There were two at RWEg on 29.04.
Dunlin	16 at EBR on 03.03 was the peak count with two there on 25/26.03. Two were at RW on 08.03, with one to mid-April and seven on 16.04.
Common Sandpiper	Singles were at RWEg from 12 to 15.04 and at EBR on 18.04.

Green Sandpiper	One was at RWEg from 26.03 to 11.04, with one at EBR on 21.04.
Greenshank	One was at RWEg on 19.04.
Redshank	Seven were at RW on 13.03, with 12 noted on 12.04 and one on 29.04.
Jack Snipe	One was at RWEg on 12 and 20.03 and 04.04. One was flushed at QF on 20.03, a good record for the site.
Long-billed Dowitcher	A long-staying bird was at RWEg from 01.03 to 06.04. The previous sighting here of this North American species was in August 2005.
Woodcock	There were March records between 14 and 25 from RWEg, TunnW, Westland Wood and Leigh. All were singles except for two at Westland Wood on 20.03.
Snipe	On 13.03 there were 16 at RW and one at EBR. Ten were at EBR on 10.04, with one at RW on 12.04. Two were at LFP on 03.04, with one on 05.04 and one at Banthorpe GP on 08.04.
Little Tern	Two were at RWEg on 29.04.
Common Tern	One at RWEg on 02.04 was the first, with one or two there and at EBR (10.04) and ten at RW on 12.04.
Arctic Tern	Three were at RWLynd on 12.04, with records to 24.04 in single figures except for c.50 on 23.04. Four were at EBR on 16.04 and nine on 23.04.
Kittiwake	Eight were at EBR on 08.03.
Little Gull	A first-winter was at EBR from 01.03 to 22.03, with one at RW on 23.03. 12 were at RW and 30 at EBR on 11.04, with two at EBR the following day.
Mediterranean Gull	One or two were at RW on six dates between 17.03 and 27.03, with one at EBR on 14.04.
Iceland Gull	A juv. was at EBR on 05.03, and an adult roosted there between 07/09.03 and on 19.03.
Kumlien's Gull	One roosted at EBR on 04.03.
Stock Dove	Seven were in a Barrow garden on 03.03. Singing birds were well reported from Ext woodlands, BCF and BW.
Cuckoo	A very local species so far with the first near Ayst on 14.04, and one or two at CPW, Leigh and PGW between 21.04 and 30.04.
Barn Owl	Records were received from RWEg, Leigh, Prest and Martinsthorpe.
Little Owl	Noted at EBR, BCF and Barrow, where two were calling on 23.04.
Tawny Owl	One called at Bden on 12.03. Two pairs occupied nest boxes in TunnW and one at Mor, and three were calling at Barrow on 08.04, with two there on 19.04.
Short-eared Owl	One was regular at EBR between 03 and 24.04, with one at RWEg between 12.04 and 24.04.
Swift	One at RW on 20.04 was the first, with two there on 23.04.
Green Woodpecker	A very well-reported species with records from ten well scattered woodland sites, with pairs noted in BarnsW, BW and QF.
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Drumming birds were noted as follows: WardW, TunnW (three), Hamb, QF and BW(four). There were garden records from Barrow and Oak.
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker	One was heard near Hamb on 13.03, and a drumming bird was noted at a woodland site in April.
Great Grey Shrike	One was photographed on Pick Drift on 03.03.
Magpie	There was a 'silver sighting' of five in an Oak garden on 07.03.
Raven	Pairs were at five breeding sites, with one flying over RWEg on 24.03.
Goldcrest	Ten were noted around Leigh on 20.03.
Firecrest	One showed well at RWEg on 25.03.
Willow Tit	Pairs were at BCF and LFP, where song was heard in April.
Marsh Tit	One visited a Man feeder in March. Other records were from BarnsW, BW (nest site found), TunnW, Westland Wood, CottW and Oak Canal.
Woodlark	One was heard flying over Leigh on 23.03.

Sand Martin	Two at RW on 15.03 were the first birds, with up to ten noted there and at EBR to 25.03. First seen at FHP on 08.04.
Swallow	The first record was from RWEg on 26.03, with one at LFP next day and three at EBR on 28.03. The first arrival at a regular Bden breeding site was 30.04.
House Martin	One at FHP on 25.03 was an early arrival, followed by two at Man on 03.04 and the first back at Bden breeding sites on 26.04. Numbers seem low this year.
Cetti's Warbler	Well distributed at RWEg with four singing around the lagoons on 13.03.
Long-tailed Tit	One or two noted in two Oak gardens with nine in a Barrow garden on 03.03.
Wood Warbler	One was at RWLynd on 25.04.
Chiffchaff	One was at RWEg on 15.03, with song heard there on 17.03. From 20.03 (TunnW) birds became more widespread with records from FHP, Leigh, BarnsW, KQ and Ext Park. 24 were in song at RWEg on 29.03. BW birds were noted from 02.04, with an impressive 60 singing on 11.04. 28 sang around Leigh on 08.04, and four were at CPW on 21.04.
Willow Warbler	Two at RWEg on 02.04 were the first birds, with three at Leigh on 05.04 the next. Also noted at RWLynd, BCF, TunnW, Oak bypass and BW, where six sang in comp 23 on 17.04. 30 were singing around Leigh on 24.04.
Blackcap	A male frequented a Man garden throughout most of March and one was in an Oak garden on 28.03. The first song was near RW Dam on 27.03. Eight sang in BW on 10.04, with birds widespread after this date.
Garden Warbler	First noted at RWEg on 23.04, nos were low to the end of the month with records only from BarnsW and CPW.
Lesser Whitethroat	One was at RWEg on 12.04, with two at BCF on 17.04 and one at RW Sykes Lane on 19.04. Five sang around Leigh on 24.04.
Whitethroat	First heard at EB Plantation on 10.04, with the next at RWLynd on 13.04. Also noted at GHW and Pick.
Grasshopper Warbler	Singles sang at RWEg and Leigh on 24.04.
Sedge Warbler	First reported from RWEg on 05.04, with nos increasing steadily at this key site throughout the month. One sang at LFP on 24.04.
Reed Warbler	One at RWEg on 16.04 was the first and our only record.
Nuthatch	Well reported with birds in Ext Park and RW woodlands, BCF, Barns Gardens and BW.
Treecreeper	There were garden records from Barrow and BCF with others at Oak Canal, Barns Gardens and BW.
Blackbird	A newly fledged juv was in a Stam garden on 28.03.
Fieldfare	15 at QF on 19 was the only March record but birds were widespread in April with up to 40 in Ext Park and at Steadfold Lane and a large flock of c.400 NW at LFP on 05. The last was a single at Leigh on 30.04.
Song Thrush	There seems to be more singing this year, especially in local gardens – 13 were around Leigh on 30.04 and they were also well reported from most woodlands.
Redwing	300 were at Lynd Top on 05.03, and 200 were near PC on 12.03. The last was one at Leigh on 10.04.
Nightingale	Singles sang at a wood in the county on 23.04 and at RWEg at the end of the month.
Black Redstart	A female was at Park House, Norm on 13.04.
Redstart	Single males were at RWLynd on 13.04, EBR on 17.04 and RWEg on 18.04.
Whinchat	A male was at GHW on 23.04.
Stonechat	Three were at EBR on 01.03.
Wheatear	Single figure totals were noted at RWEg, GtCast, Cott Airfield and Pick following the first at Luff Airfield on 22.03. The peak count was five at RWEg on 02.04.
Dunnock	Counts at RWEg produced 36 on 14.03, and c.50 on 29.03.
House Sparrow	31 in an Oak garden on 28.03 was a good count.

(Birds list continues on page 10)

March and April 2016 Wildfowl counts

	Rutland Water		Eyebrook		Fort Henry Ponds and Exton Park		Holywell Lake	Banthorpe Gravel Pit	
	13.03	12.04	13.03	10.04	11.03	09.04	13.03	11.03	08.04
Mute Swan	118	191	37	47	6	5	1	5	5
Pink-footed Goose	2								
Greylag Goose	125	190	19	28	46	26	15	20	20
Canada Goose	107	91	6	7		2	29	2	4
Barnacle Goose	2								
Egyptian Goose	20	33			3		1		
Shelduck	32	28	2	6	2	2			
Wigeon	1555	66	340	1	196	3	4		
Gadwall	90	101	18	23	10	23	17		
Teal	77	63	336	36	20	13	4	12	
Mallard	279	262	33	46	38	32	57	11	5
Pintail	8								
Garganey		1							
Shoveler	29	14	1	1					
Red-crested Pochard	3								
Pochard	56	5	7						
Tufted Duck	1256	748	141	5	45	45	20		2
Scaup		2							
Common Scoter		1							
Goldeneye	341	71	32	2					
Smew	6		3						
Great Northern Diver	3	2							
Cormorant	246	131	16	3	1	2			
Little Egret	10	10	2	7			1		1
Grey Heron	11	6	2	1	1				1
Little Grebe	55	2			1		10		
Great Crested Grebe	184	179	15	32					
Red-necked Grebe	1	1							
Slavonian Grebe	1								
Black-necked Grebe	3								
Moorhen	60	40		1	13	12	14		2
Coot	371	159	6	2	55	47	12		2
TOTAL	5051	2397	889	248	437	212	185	50	42

(Birds list continues on page 10)

Tree Sparrow	Two were in a Barrow garden on 15.03 and two were at Leigh on 05.04.
Yellow Wagtail	One at RW and three at EBR on 02.04 were the first, with two at RW Dam on 14.04 and one at Ext Park on 22.04.
Grey Wagtail	Singles were at Norm on 09.03 and FHP on 11.03. A pair was at FHP on 08.04 and one was at EBR on 10.04.
White Wagtail	Singles were at EBR on 02 and 04.04. Seven were at RW Dam on 19.04 and there were two at RWEg on 26.04.
Tree Pipit	One flew over Leigh on 05.04.
Meadow Pipit	c.58 flew over Leigh on 20.03, with 30 over TunnW on 25.03, and 90 again over Leigh on 31.03. Breeding activity was noted at Luff and Cott Airfields and GHW in April with four holding territory there on 23.04.
Chaffinch	The Leigh roost had c.90 on 20.03 and c.50 on 23.03.
Brambling	One was in a Man garden on 12.03 and at Leigh there were c.120 in the roost on 23.03 with 40 on 10.04, when three fed on waste grain in Ext Park. One was at Leigh on 28.04.
Goldfinch	The peak garden count was just five in Oak on 28.03.
Siskin	Small nos. visited three Oak gardens, and one was in Barrow and two in Stam from 02.03 to 30.04, with a peak of six at Oak on 28.03. Two were in BW on 02.04.
Linnet	24 roosted by an Oak garden on 07.03, with nine still present on 28.03.
Lesser Redpoll	On 06.03 there were still c.150 on game crops near Leigh and one fed in an Oak garden, with two in another Oak garden on 28.03. Two were in a Stam garden on 12.04, and one called over BW on 19.04.
Crossbill	One flew over Leigh, calling, on 03.03.
Bullfinch	24 were around Leigh on 25.03, with 26 on 10.04. Single figure counts came from BarnsW, CPW and RWEg.
Reed Bunting	Good nos noted at RWEg in April and four were in song at FHP on 13.04.
Corn Bunting	One in Ext Park on 22.04 was the first there since May 2009.

BOTANY



RECORDER John Rodgers

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March/April 2016 Spring is definitely here as colour returns to the countryside. Trees and hedges show a wide variety of greens, verges sport the pale yellows of Primroses and Cowslips and ribbons of white, Danish Scurvy-grass along the main roads. We have already seen the yellow of Dandelions and Lesser Celandine; now the Buttercups are in flower, with several records of Goldilocks Buttercup, and another white is appearing, this time of Cow Parsley. Above all, this year, there are thick carpets of blue in Barnsdale, Hambleton and Burley woods.

Common Spotted and Early Purple orchids are beginning to flower, there are leaves of Common Twayblade recorded and Herb Paris is in its usual place in Prior's Coppice. There's lots more to look forwards to. Don't forget, whilst you are enjoying these sights, to send in records of what you have encountered.

BUTTERFLIES

RECORDER Richard Brown

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March/April 2016

Given the cool weather for these two months it is no surprise we have so few butterfly records. To put some measure on the slowness of the season we have reports for Rutland of only 6 species by the end of April 2016, compared to 13 species reported by the end of April 2015. Things are slow elsewhere as well – only 11 species for Nottinghamshire so far this year.

First report was of a **Brimstone** in late March in Barrow, with further sightings subsequently at Lyndon, Tunneley Wood, Oakham, Ketton Quarry, Burley Wood and Great Casterton. The maximum number was 6 seen in Burley Wood on 20 April.

Next up were 3 **Small Tortoiseshells** at Ketton Quarry on 30 March, with later reports from Egleton, Quarry Farm, Great Casterton, Lyndon and Burley Wood.

The first **Comma** of the year was seen near Market Overton on 31 March, with other specimens observed later at Great Casterton, Burley Wood, Ketton Quarry and Lyndon.

Two **Peacocks** put in an appearance on 10 April, both at Lyndon and at Ketton Quarry. Other sightings have been at Egleton, Quarry Farm, Burley Wood and Great Casterton. The maximum seen was 6 in Burley Wood on 20 April.

The last two species to appear were the **Orange Tip** and the **Small White**. Two **Orange Tip** were observed at Ketton Quarry on 10 April, with later sightings – male and female – from Lyndon, Oakham and Burley Wood. A single **Small White** was noted at Quarry Farm on 13 April, and another at Lyndon on 20 April.

Contributions were noted from the following, with thanks: D and J Bell, C Butterfield, M Grimes, A Lawrence, R Lemmon, T Mitcham and D Needham.



MOTHS

March/April 2016

RECORDER Paul Bennett

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The 'Build Your Own Moth Trap' workshop held at Rutland Water's Volunteer Training Centre on 8th April was attended by ten people, six of whom were RNHS members. The workshop was run by Paul Palmer, a local moth enthusiast, who has dedicated time and expertise to designing a trap that is lightweight, portable and affordable with the end product being, in his own words, 'a 0.75W UV LED Bucket Trap'. It is designed to be suitable for small gardens or can be set out with other traps in the wider countryside. 10 traps were left out overnight in the wooded area to the east of Lagoon 4 and produced 62 moths from 12 species, which was a respectable total on what was a cold and stormy night. The most common moth recorded was **Hebrew Character**, which narrowly prevented the anti-climax of that honour going to the **Clouded Drab**. Other moths identified were also typical early season fliers such as **Shoulder Stripe**, **Early Thorn**, **The Satellite** and four species of Quaker moths.

The reporting period was very quiet with the unsettled weather being a deterrent and two reports were received.

Eyebrook Reservoir was trapped for the first time this year on 2nd April and resulted in 83 moths from 12 species, with **Common Quaker** and Hebrew Character forming the large majority of the total. The highlight however was an **Oak Beauty** in pristine condition.

Lyndon traps were run on 21st April and yielded just two moths, although Hebrew Character and Shoulder Stripe were both first records for the site.

In the latest edition of *British Wildlife* (April 2016, page 280) there was mention of how a winter's weather can affect the quantity of moths caught in light traps later in the year, with the opinion being that a mild winter leads to fewer moths due to predators and parasites remaining active. As this winter has been initially mild followed by colder conditions, how this will affect numbers in 2016 is anyone's guess; but the hope is that the year will be an improvement on what was a disappointing 2015.

Also looking to the future, every year Atropos and Butterfly Conservation organise a Moth Night week-end which this year is to be held from the 9th-11th June (<http://www.mothnight.info>). The focus will be on Hawkmoths which should be active

(See the photo of the Privet Hawkmoth on page 2.)

around this time. Any reports of these beautiful and easily identifiable moths would be particularly welcome.

Records were received from P Bennett, R Follows, M Grimes, J Harvey.

ORTHOPTERA

RECORDER Phil Rudkin

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March/April 2016



What an interesting start to the new Orthoptera season! In 2015, one of the May highlights was the tiny Slender Groundhopper (see left) found at Ketton Quarry. In 2016 we have exciting news of further sightings of this groundhopper at another site (where it had been seen some years ago). On 27 April at 10.30 am, we (Linda and Anthony Biddle, David Needham and myself) were in Burley Woods, Oakham. We stopped at the first ride just a short way off the entrance, to check for Slender Groundhoppers – none were located. We then moved on along this ride, and just past the glow-worm area, Anthony spotted the first Slender Groundhopper, in the deep muddy ruts of the ride, and further along, we found a grand total of 12 – approximately 300 yards along. So, although not a new tetrad, this was a bigger colony than last year. As expected, there were no other orthoptera reports for this period.

Groundhoppers

Slender Groundhopper, *Tetrix subulata*

An exciting new colony in Burley Woods, with 12 groundhoppers observed along the lower ride, Compartments 18/20, SK889095. Although well away from their stronghold near the entrance to the woods, they fell into the same tetrad.

OTHER INSECTS AND INVERTEBRATES

RECORDER Gill Chiverton

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March/April 2016

The pattern of warm and cold spells of weather has certainly been reflected in the insect records received. As I am writing this at the beginning of May, we are hoping for more warmer weather and hopefully many more interesting records over the next two months. Before I detail the March and April records here is a question – why do almost all our Cockchafer Beetle records come from Barrowden? Do look out on warm evenings towards the end of May for these big, noisy, brown beetles with their feathery antennae. Surely they are out and about in other parts of Rutland besides Barrowden!

BEETLES *Coleoptera*

7-Spot Ladybird

Cochinella 7-punctata

April One insect seen at Burley Wood. <6 insects seen in sun at Clipsham Park Wood. 3 seen amongst leaves and later in month another 7 noted in a Barrowden garden.

2-Spot Ladybird *Adalia 2-punctata*

April One insect noted on hawthorn on Verge 7.

Weevil *Apion frumentarium*

April One specimen of this brightly-coloured weevil (see photograph page 2) found in Burley Wood. See also the drawing on the cover of the *Annual Report*, Number 48, 2013.

FLIES *Diptera*

Common Bee-fly *Bombylius major*

April A single insect was seen in a Barrowden garden.

BEES *Hymenoptera*

Tawny Mining Bee *Andrena fulva*

White-tailed Bumble Bee
Bombus lucorum

Early Bumble Bee
Bombus pratorum

Red-tailed Bumble Bee
Bombus lapidarius

Buff-tailed Bumble Bee
Bombus terrestris

At the end of March a good number of various bee species were noted nectaring on creeping comfrey flowers in a garden at Barrowden.

April One observed in a garden at Barrowden.

March A queen bumble bee was seen in a Barrowden garden.

March A queen bumble bee was seen on in a Stretton garden.

April Single queen bumble bees were noted at Burley Wood, Clipsham Park Wood, RWEgleton and at Verge 8.

March A queen bumble bee was seen in a garden at Barrowden.

April A queen bumble bee was noted on Verge 8.

Thank you to the following observers: G Chiverton, D Cotter, M Grimes, R Lemmon, D Needham, P Rudkin and L Worrall.

GLOW-WORMS



RECORDER Linda Worrall

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On May 2nd I had an e-mail from Ronald Fraser, who wrote in *Fieldfare* last year about how he set about finding the Barrowden glow-worms, even finding a glowing female right in front of his house. He says that earlier in the morning he had just left home to walk to his allotment, when he saw a 'movement' crossing the road – and realised it was a glow-worm – 'I know, I know, we shouldn't interfere with nature, but I placed a bit of leaf litter in its path and moved it to the verge.' A good size, it could have been a 2 year-old larva looking for an open place to pupate. The potential danger to this Back Road colony from traffic increase, unauthorised grass-mowing, the farmer's slug and snail deterrence, and light from nearby housing attracting males away from their mates, is huge. In addition, and most unfortunately, field crops are now officially allowed by Government to be planted nearer hedges, and this has indeed happened here this year. Glow-worms were spread all over the limestone hillside until DDT use and changes in farming practice took place; just a few survived and their descendants are trying to increase their numbers. To put it mildly, we owe them a bit of whatever positive interference we can muster. During the couple of weeks before and after midsummer night, do go to the verges on the lower part of Luffenham Road just above the 'Barrowden' village sign, and Back Road which runs off a little further down to the west, and let me know what you see?

In April there was good news from the Barnack Hills and Holes. When Society members counted over 400 glow-worms there one night in the early 2000s, we were also aware that villagers nearby had occasionally seen glows in their gardens too. Paul Ellis has found that some have been seen in gardens recently, and hopes, with villagers' help, to have a look.

The Community Engagement Officer (Black to Green Project) of the Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, Ben Devine, was delighted when local people around Moira, northwest Leicestershire, let him know they had spotted glow-worms there. They will be looking this year in the nights around midsummer and Ben has planned a get-together on site on Friday 8th July. He would very much welcome anyone from RNHS who would like to be there too; give him a ring on 078028 79682 for details. It's a long night's drive, but think – a new site, found by people who just went looking!

Burghley Estates has recently decided to activate the very old, but official, ironstone mining permission to the northwest of Wakerley Woods, so overlying limestone can be taken out for roadworks for the next 25-40 years. This is a blow to many. An access road is to be built later this year over fields and south of Wakerley village, crossing the Wakerley-Fineshade lane above Wakerley Church, and

continuing on to join the A43 at or near the exit of the existing lane from Wakerley. Over the years members have often found glow-worms along the A43 end of this lane. All sightings this year will help in trying to protect the colony, so please try to get there and let me know at once what you see, thanks.

At the moment, glow-worms in Fineshade are safe (but see page 1), if ever a glow-worm is, and representations have been made to Natural England in connection with providing SSSI status. Again, spend an evening there if you can, and get back to me please.

I hope your 'usual' sites give pleasure this summer. Every year, each glow seems more amazing!

[Editor's note: Jenny Harris on behalf of LRWT is leading a bat/glow-worm walk at Ketton - see page 4, you need to book early.]

PLANT GALLS

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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The start of the gall season is usually gentle and this year it appears to be no exception. There were just 3 reports in March and 13 in April, and as is usual the majority were either left over from last season or were galling rusts which seem to be well advanced this year, perhaps due to the exceptionally mild weather in December to February.

March 2016

On the 14th at Lyndon there was a report of a mite gall on Ash, which is a hang-over from last season. Verge 7 on the 31st gave us two, one a rust gall on Bluebell and the other a mite gall which causes distortion to the leaves of Cleavers.

April 2016

Burley Wood on the 2nd had the rust on Bramble, as did Barnsdale Wood on the 7th together with those on Dog's Mercury and Bluebell. The Bramble rust was on RWlagoon 3 on the 21st along with a mite gall on the leaves of Elder, which appears to be a new record of us. Yew Tree Avenue and Clipsham Park Wood on the 28th gave a total of 7 rusts, which included the rust gall on Betony and a mite gall on Sloe; the leaves of the latter weren't fully developed but the galls were already there.

It would appear to be a good start to the season, it will be interesting to see how it will develop.

Thanks for M Grimes and R Lemmon for their records.

MAMMALS

RECORDER Linda Biddle

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March/April 2016

Our reports this time are greatly enhanced by information received from Dr Charles Gallimore's reptile survey at RWNr. 136 small sheets have been put down around the reserve, in the hope that reptiles will use them as shelters. Unfortunately so far none has, but small mammals have, and so we are able to report on a group which are normally under-recorded here. 29 mammals have been seen and 54 nests found, though some nests may be left from last year. Under the shelters in Fields 45 and 46 (behind the ringing hut) **Bank Voles** have been found and previously a **Pygmy shrew**. Those covers in field 44 west of lagoon 3 have sheltered Bank Voles, **Short-tailed Voles** and **Field mice**. Bank Voles have also been found near Egleton Centre, fields west of Heron Bay, and in several places near Lyndon Centre. **Common Shrews** were found at Lyndon, Field 15, behind lagoons 2 and 3 and in Field 45. Pygmy Shrews were found in Field 45, and also at Wing, under a sheet in Dr Gallimore's garden.

Thank you to all of you who have responded to my request for molehill observations. There are quite a lot of them, and I will show them on a distribution map in the next edition of *Fieldfare*. However there are still a lot of areas not covered, so please don't stop sending them in!

The spring is the season when we usually see **Brown Hares**. At Lax Hill they are often seen, on one occasion in early April a group of 6 sitting in a circle and in the adjacent field two others. A single animal was on the service track by Field 15. Just off the reserve near Lyndon another was observed. Two were watched cavorting at Pickworth and two others observed sitting in a field nearby. Reports also came from Langham, Market Overton and near Cottesmore. **Rabbit** reports have been received from Barnsdale, Great Casterton, Egleton, Lyndon and Ketton Quarry.

A **Fox** was encountered at Quarry Farm Great Casterton in March at around 9.00 am one morning. It came across an open area towards us, then ran in the opposite direction. It was frightened by a man in the distance with a dog, so ran back again and came into the middle of a large open grassy patch and sat and looked around, just its head visible above vegetation about 30 yards from us. It remained there for some minutes and when the man with dog had gone, continued away from us into the distance, although not apparently in any hurry. There are numerous rabbits in this area, so he was obviously late finding breakfast. Other foxes were seen at Beaumont Chase Farm near Wardley Wood and at Mounts Lodge Lane Great Casterton. The fox was seen almost every night on the camera at Langham. Only one **Stoat** has been seen, on Glaston Road Uppingham, carrying prey as it crossed.

Badgers have been active at setts in the area, leaving brimming latrines on Verge 7, and sadly several road casualties have been found including at Gunthorpe and Pickworth. The visitor to Marian's garden at Langham has been less regular, only three appearances in March.

A **Brown Rat** put in 5 appearances on the trailcam in early March, and once later in the month, and **Grey Squirrels** visited frequently. Grey squirrels are also recorded in Burley and Pickworth Woods, Burley Road, Langham and Barleythorpe.

A small **Hedgehog** was rescued mid-March by a Barrowden villager, and taken by Debbie Oake of Greetham to be fed until it has reached a healthy size – it will then be released. A week later another hedgehog was released in hedgehog-friendly Barrowden, following the winter being nursed to health from injury by Debbie. Linda Worrall had a medium sized hog feeding in her garden on 16th and 21st, then one was heard 'chortling' on 22nd. Animals visited nightly until 31st. In early April 2 really large hogs were feeding together, and visited regularly in ones and twos until the end of the month. A hedgehog made use of facilities provided, sleeping in a hedgehog house in Sutherland Way Stamford (not Rutland I know). Found at the end of March, he stayed until 17th April feeding each evening, then returned on 24th. At Langham the hedgehog visited the garden regularly during March, and a **Muntjac** was also regularly seen. Muntjac were also reported from Main Street Barrow, Wing, Bloody Oaks NR, RWNR Fields 13,15, 16 and Fort Henry Ponds. Three reports of **Roe Deer** seen in ones and twos all came from woods on the Exton estate, and **Fallow** were seen at Tunnely, Cottesmore and Burley Woods, and a road casualty next to the A606 at Whitwell.



Evidence for the presence of **Otters** comes from Fort Henry Ponds, where the remains of a large bream were found at the end of March, from mink rafts around RWNR, and also a mud slide with lots of spraint at Pollards reedbed (adjacent to Field 45). **Water voles** have left droppings on rafts to confirm their presence at RWNR, but only one of the rafts at Oakham Canal showed any sign of activity.

Many thanks for records from: D Ball, P Bennet, A Biddle, Donnie Smalley, G Chiverton, C Gallimore, M & G Griffin, M Grimes, R Lemmon, M Markham, T Mitcham, D Needham, J & J Rodgers, P J Rudkin, L Worrall

BATS

RECORDER Jenny Harris

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March/April 2016



From the records' point of view it has been a slow start to the season, as I received no records for March. In April the first record of bat activity was on the 15th, when Charles Gallimore noticed droppings beneath an exit point on his house in Wing. There were 'copious droppings' of two species on 19.4, below an entrance where he has observed **Common Pipistrelle** and **Brown Long-eared** bats to emerge in previous years. Bats were observed at dusk in his garden on 23.4.

On 19.4, I visited part of Burley Wood with a colleague from the Bat Group. Roughly thirty minutes after sunset four **Nathusius' pipistrelles** emerged from a known roost near the main east/west ride. At 8.50 pm a bat returned to 'buzz' the entrance; a fifth bat emerged at 9.0 pm. 'Buzzing' took the form of the bat flying up to the entrance, as if to enter, emitting a loud burst of sound (almost like a squawk) heard on the bat detector, before swooping away again. During the visit, several **Soprano Pipistrelles** were seen, and identified on the detector, over the ride between compartments at SK887097, and both Soprano and Nathusius' Pipistrelles were heard passing across the main east/west ride, flying towards the southern part of the wood. Between 8.30 pm and 9.0 pm five passes by **Noctule Bat** were heard, with one bat seen to fly low over the ride. No feeding buzzes were heard from any of these species. The evening was cool and still with a clear sky.

In Barrowden, Linda Worrall observed two pipistrelle-sized bats at 8.40 pm on 20.4, chasing each other round her garden and patio.

With the bat season now well under way, if you are near any insect-rich habitat at dusk (around 30 minutes after sunset) look out for bats. I would particularly like to hear of bats flying with hovercraft-like flight low over the surface of rivers or water bodies (including ponds) as these could be **Daubenton's bats** and would be worth following up.

Records from C Gallimore and J Harris

RIVERS

RECORDER David Roome

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No report, please continue sending in any records.

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