



Purple Emperor. Photo D. Needham

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WELCOME

What an amazing summer this is! In many ways not good for wildlife, but for those who enjoy high temperatures and low rainfall, the best ever! Our plants have flowered, butterflies and dragonflies have emerged early, and the countryside is looking very parched. Birds and animals are struggling to find food and water, so putting out water, bird and perhaps hedgehog food is a good idea. It does of course give us a wake-up call that global warming is now a fact of life, and we should be doing everything we can to minimise its effects by reducing our carbon footprint wherever we can. Water reserves are at their lowest for many years, and again we can help by being careful with its use.

Our recorders have been busy in recent weeks, surveying the land around Wing water treatment plant, and a mini bioblitz at Oakham canal, with members of the local Canal Conservation Trust, as well as the usual members' outings. We recently visited Naturescape wildflower nursery at Langar, and Bedford Purlieus in June. The turnout of members for these activities was rather disappointing, and your committee has been wondering what may be the reason for this. If you have comments and ideas about how we can encourage more members to participate in these enjoyable activities, please let us know. You can use the contact form on the RNHS website for this.

In September we will be making a return visit to the Allerton Project in Loddington and then a visit in October to Bradgate Park Details are in your annual programme, the website, and later in this edition of Fieldfare.

Now for some good news! Some of you will have read in a recent LRWT newsletter about the importance of our verges and saw my contribution explaining what RNHS has done over the years for verge conservation. As a very happy result of that, we have received a generous donation towards the work of our society from a Mr Bunkall in memory of his friend Mr William Clark. More about this in a later issue. Enjoy the rest of the summer!

Linda Biddle
RNHS Chair

DIARY DATES



RNHS Outdoor meetings

All the following events are correct at time of publication but may still be changed at short notice, so it is important to book your place with Jeff Wilcox-Smith. Details. Mob: 07946733931 or wilcoxsmith@btinternet.com. Make sure you are wearing appropriate clothing for the weather and if the weather is bad on the day, give Jeff a ring beforehand in case it needs to be cancelled.

Thursday 15th September. 10.00am. The Allerton Trust Project.

Set on a 320-hectare demonstration farm, the Trust carries out research into the effects of various farming methods on wildlife and the environment. Celebrating 30 years this year, their principal belief has been to demonstrate a sustainable climate and nature-friendly approach to food production. Meet at Loddington LE17 9XE. Ref: SP791 024.

Thursday 20th October. 6.00pm.

Deer rutting at Bradgate Park.

Meet at Bradgate park entrance car park, NewtownLinford, nr Anstey. Postcode LE6 0HB.

THERE WILL BE CHARGES FOR THIS EVENT. This is the perfect time for when the Red deer rut reaches its peak, coinciding with the beautiful autumn colours in the park. Wild animals, especially in the rutting season can be dangerous so treat with care. Good footwear essential for this walk.

Saturday 12th November. 10.00am

Attenborough Nature Reserve. Barton Lane, Chilwell, Notts, NG9 6DY.

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

RNHS Indoor evening meetings

7.30pm – 9.30pm on First Tuesday of every month, from October through to March. Please book your place early with Jeff Wilcox-Smith as places will be limited. Our new venue for the foreseeable future will be at the **Volunteer Training Centre (VTC). LE15 8AD.** From the A6003, turn right onto Hambleton road and then turn right at the signposted sign to the car park. Ref: SK883 083.

Tuesday 4th October. 7.30pm – 9.30pm.

Spiders of Leicestershire and Rutland.

Dr Alan Cann Joint County recorder from Naturespot and Leicester University

Tuesday 1st November 7.30pm – 9.30pm.

Birds and Climate change.

Professor James Pearce-Higgins. James is a member of the senior management team for the BTO and specifically leads BTO's climate change research involving documenting the impacts of climate change on UK biodiversity. He is author of "Birds and Climate change".

Photographic competition

Did you manage to get your wildlife photo's in before the end of August?

If you are quick - very quick - you may be able to squeeze them in. Here is a reminder of the rules.

- 1). A maximum of three entries per participant, with a short description and/or caption for each, including date and place. Recent photo's are preferred to reflect recent sightings.
- 2). High resolution photo's to support quality printing in the calendar. Please send these as attachments to email to me at: peter.scott27@btopenworld.com
- 3). Please send entries as landscape as we can not use portrait for the calendar.
- 4). Content can be general views of Rutland, or wildlife photo's taken in Rutland or local sites.

Late entries: If you would like to give Peter a ring, please call mobile on 07535 508932.

New Treasurer urgently needed!

It is now five months since the treasurer of the society retired and unfortunately, the post is still vacant. Although some of the committee members have filled the void for the time being, it is obvious that a Society cannot continue to run without a treasurer, so our appeal has now become a plea to our members.

If there is anyone who has just a few hours a month to spare, you really don't need to have a degree in maths or have professional accounting knowledge; just to be numerate and have a bit of an eye for detail. Our former treasurer Margaret will be happy to give you all the help you need to get started. Please call Margaret on 01664 454532 or email: mjconner100@gmail.com. for a chat to see how you may be able to help. Thankyou.

WEATHER

RECORDER Roy Lemmon

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June 2022

Atmospheric pressure and wind. This was a month without any great range of atmospheric pressure. The lowest was 1004 mb on the 8th and the highest was 1025.5 mb on the 13th, but the majority of readings were between 1013 and 1024 mb. The overall effect was of broken sunshine rather than clear blue skies and hence a cool month. Winds were generally light and W-N for the majority of the time, but SW for the last seven days.

Temperature. The overall mean of 16.27 °C puts June 2022 sixth highest in the decade 2013-2022, just below June 2014 at 16.28 °C. The highest I recorded was 31.1 °C on the 17th and the lowest 4.3 °C overnight on the 1st.

Precipitation. The total here was 43.6 mm (1.72 inches) and equates to 82% of my long-term mean of 32 years. 52% of this fell on just one day, the fourth, and there were 20 days out of the 30 without rain.

July 2022

Atmospheric pressure and wind. The weather this month was considerably affected by the 'Azores high', which as its name implies, extends from the area of the Azores

northwards, and included the UK. The highest pressure was 1033 mb on the 8th and the lowest 1008 mb on the 25th, pressures mostly being between 1014 and 1027 mb. This produced anticyclonic weather with generally low wind speeds, little rain and high temperatures. Winds were W-N for the first half of the month and then very variable in direction for the remainder.

Temperature. A very warm month with a new national record high of 40.3 °C at Coningsby Lincs on the 19th, which exceeded the previous highest of 38.7 °C in Cambridge Botanic Gardens on 25.07.2019. Here I recorded 39.4 °C which is the highest of my records since I started recording.

Surprisingly, July 2022 was the second warmest in the decade 2013-2022 with a mean temperature of 20.06 °C, after 2018 at 20.66 °C, and looking at the figures, I find there were 12 days in July 2018 where the temperature was 30.0 °C or higher, whereas July 2022 had just 4.

Precipitation. A total here of 11.3 mm for the month (0.44 inches). This is the second driest July I have recorded, after July 1995 at 10.0 mm. This year rain fell on just 5 days, and on 3 of them, the amounts were 0.2 mm on each occasion.

AMPHIBIANS & REPTILES

RECORDER Dr C H Gallimore

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The survey of Wing Water Treatment Works did not reveal any reptiles or amphibians. In particular no lizards were found. Grass snakes had been seen at the site but did not manifest themselves when specifically sought.

Three Common Frogs were seen in Hebe's Wood in Braunston on 9th June when the Society visited the site. The only other frog record was of four at Leighfield later in June. Common Toads were reported from Leighfield, where about 40 small toads were seen on 28 June, and Wing allotments a few days later. A large toad was found under a stone near the recorder's new pond in Braunston on 12 July.

Smooth Newt efts were found in Linda Clark's pond in Wing and in Lagoon 3 at Rutland Water Nature Reserve.

Grass Snakes were the only reptiles to be reported. Two were seen at the edge of Rutland Water on 29 May (which missed the last *Fieldfare*) and 6 June by the same observer. A very small, deceased snake was found on the road by Wing church on 12 June and one was found in Wing allotments on 4 July. Finally, one was seen on the Hambleton Road on 13 July.

My thanks to the following who provided records: - T Caldicott, L Clark, J Harris, T Mitcham, D Needham, T Sexton and D Walker.

BATS

RECORDER Jenny Harris

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June and July 2022

As usual, there were few 'casual' records from members, although Diana Masters reported seeing a small bat foraging over her garden in Barmstedt Drive, Oakham on 14.7, while I occasionally saw Common Pipistrelle *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* foraging back and forth over my front garden in Woodland View, Oakham.

In June, three sites with bat roosts were counted for the National Bat Monitoring Programme (NBMP) and the results sent to The Bat Conservation Trust.



NBMP counts at maternity roosts

Roost name	Date	Species	Count	Weather/Temp°C
Braunston-in-Rutland church	9.6.22	Soprano Pipistrelle <i>Pipistrellus pygmaeus</i>	417	Patchy cloud, breezy, dry, 15°C
	20.6.22	Soprano Pipistrelle	138	Clear, calm, 15°C falling to 12°C
Egleton church	12.6.22	Soprano Pipistrelle	1,324	Patchy cloud, breezy, 15°C
Egleton church	21.6.22	Soprano Pipistrelle	1,191	Clear, calm, 16.5°C falling
Whissendine church	26.6.22	Natterer's bat	59	No details
Stoke Dry church	n/a	Natterer's bat	No count this year	n/a

At Braunston the count on 20 June was unusually low for this roost, in spite of clear calm

At Braunston the count on 20 June was unusually low for this roost, in spite of clear calm weather, however, the temperature dropped substantially from sunset (9.25pm approximately) until 10.15pm, when the count ceased, and may have continued to do so throughout the evening. This temperature drop may be something the bats are able to anticipate and perhaps decide that the resulting decline in insect activity makes it not worth emerging to forage. Only 15 bats emerged from the east side of the south aisle on 20.6, which was formerly their main exit site, with several hundred usually emerging there.

At Egleton, the number of bats present (assumed to be the breeding females only at this time of year) represented a

new record count, compared with 1,141 bats counted in the same period last year. As a result, both Leicester Mercury and The Rutland Times published an article about the bats in the church.

At Whissendine, both Soprano and Common Pipistrelle were recorded emerging from the church just before the Natterer's bats. The external floodlight has not been turned back on after it was turned off during lock down.

A roost in Wing, which contains a Common Pipistrelle maternity colony, was counted in the third week of June, when 274 bats were present.

Grounded bats

Date	Details
20 June	Adult male Soprano Pipistrelle, Oakham. Puncture wound on chest and several holes in both wing membranes. Died the same day
27 June	Infant Pipistrelle sp. in Lyddington kitchen. It had no fur and after being given water, it was returned to the roost in the hope that its mother was still present.
29 June	Oakham. Infant Pipistrelle sp. away from roost with velvety fur, c. one week old. No roost known, so it was euthanized by vet.
7 July	Juvenile Soprano Pipistrelles, one male, one female on floor of Egleton church. Both were returned to roost in south aisle (LC/JH).
8 July	Two juvenile Soprano Pipistrelles from Egleton Church. One male, one female, both with 29mm forearm. One escaped the pop-up dog kennel where they were housed and ended up inside a paper lampshade where it woke me, making a terrible racket trying to get out. Both bats refused to fly when I tried to release them at the church, so were retained for care and intended release.
9 July	Infant Pipistrelle sp. on doorstep, Stoke Dry. Bats were roosting in garage in May, but this bat was only c. 2 weeks old (f/a 23mm) and very emaciated. Refused puppy milk, died that evening.
10 July	Juvenile male Soprano Pipistrelle. Found dead inside Egleton Church. Weight 4.1g, f/a 30mm, broken right forearm.
10 July	Juvenile female Soprano Pipistrelle inside Egleton Church. f/a 27.5mm, weight 2.6g. Thin, probably dehydrated. Died.
10 July	Oakham. Adult Pipistrelle sp. Right wing badly damaged (possible cat victim) so taken directly for euthanasia by vet without taking other details.
12 July	Egleton Church. Female juvenile Soprano Pipistrelle, f/a 29mm, weight 4.1g, Still in care.
12 July	Egleton Church. Male Soprano Pipistrelle, f/a 24mm, Dead on arrival.
12 July	Egleton Church. Male Soprano Pipistrelle, f/a 29mm, weight 3.6g, still in care.
13 July	Egleton Church. Three juvenile Soprano Pipistrelles. All had died. No details taken.
13 July	Egleton Church. One juvenile male Soprano Pipistrelle, f/a 27.5mm, weight 2.6g. Weigh improving, still in care.
17 July	Preston. Nine juvenile Pipistrelles, probably Sopranos, rescued from bedroom (loft conversion) after coming into room from roost in roof below. All released on 17 July. Seven flew off with emerging adult bats, two went into roost entrance. A further juvenile on 17.7 was found dead in the bedroom.
18 July/19 July	Several more juveniles were found in the same house and returned to the roost entrance.
20 July	Egleton Church. Juvenile male Soprano Pipistrelle, f/a 29mm, weight 3.0g. Seemed distressed after feeding so taken to vet for euthanasia.
21 July	Ketton, Adult female Soprano Pipistrelle found inside house, f/a 32mm, Hole in right wing membrane and possible wound to chest. Antibiotic given from 21.7 for 7 days. Feeding well. Weight not taken on 21.7; she weighed 5.9g on 27.7. I expect to be able to release her soon when wing membrane has healed.
29 July	Oakham. Juvenile male Common Pipistrelle found hanging on a house wall in direct sunlight. It flew off when approached by finder but was caught by their cat. f/a 30mm, weight 2.9g, emaciated and had died by the time I collected it.
29 July	Barleythorpe. 4 bats found in unused wood burning stove. Three were already dead, one still alive. Adult male Common Pipistrelle, with face covered in ash. f/a 31mm, weight 5.1g. Very lively, took water and mealworm inside and was self-feeding from then on. Anticipate he will be released soon.

Most of the grounded bats dealt with this season have been juvenile Soprano Pipistrelles, with 14 live and an uncounted number of dead juveniles being found inside Egleton Church. These bats had all fallen through gaps in the ceiling of the church, below the roosting area of the bats on the south side of the church. Only four of these juveniles are still in care as, for various reasons, most have died or had to be euthanised because they failed to thrive. At least a further 12 Soprano Pipistrelles, again mostly juveniles, were found in other roosts and situations. This

compares to three unidentified pipistrelle species and six Common Pipistrelles; in most years Common Pipistrelles far outweigh Sopranos as 'grounded' casualties. Linda Clark helped with re-roosting bats at the Egleton and Lyddington roosts and was the lead bat carer at the Preston roost.

My thanks to D Masters, L Clark and J Harris for records; L Clark for help with casualties and general bat care, and to the representatives of Egleton Church for alerting me when live baby bats were found in the church.

BIRDS

Recorder Terry Mitcham

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June 2022

Highlights. Up to three Garganey were at Rutland Water to (11th) with a pair at Banthorpe GP (8th). A Quail called at Leighfield Fishponds (22nd). Great White Egrets were at Fort Henry Ponds (11th), Rutland Water from (12th) and Eyebrook Reservoir (17th). There was a Spoonbill at Egleton (10th).

Rutland Water. The count (21st) produced two Mandarin Ducks, 1077 Gadwall, 24 Shoveler, 13 Pochard, 419 Tufted Ducks, 45 Little Egrets, 161 Great Crested Grebes and 67 Common Terns. One or two Marsh Harriers were regular. Waders included 17 Oystercatchers, 23 Avocets, seven Little Ringed Plovers, two Ringed Plovers, 66 Lapwings and a Green Sandpiper (21st). Sanderlings were noted to (12th) with 12 on that date. There were nine Dunlin (5th) with Green Sandpipers from (18th). A Black Tern was seen at Egleton (2nd – 5th) and Barn Owls were at both reserves.

Eyebrook Reservoir. There were eight Grey Herons and a Green Sandpiper (17th), with a Wood Sandpiper the next day. On (30th) there was a Little Ringed Plover, three Ruff, a common Sandpiper and four Green Sandpipers.

Other Sites. A pair of Barnacle Geese were at Banthorpe GP (8th). Fort Henry Ponds had three Gadwall broods (12th) with 40 present on (18th) plus a pair of Shelducks and 18 Tufted Ducks. A Mandarin Duck was on Rygate Lake (26th) with one at Leighfield Fishponds (28th). Peregrines fledged young at a new site. Ten Curlew were at a traditional site in the north (19th) with a Marsh Harrier nearby. A Hobby was over Exton Park (26th). Two Barn Owl broods were ringed at Exton (15th).

July 2022.

Highlights. A Bittern was at Rutland Water (8th – 29th) and a Turtle Dove was at Manton (29th).

Rutland Water. The count (19th) produced 81 Egyptian Geese, nine Mandarin Ducks, 1920 Gadwall, three Wigeon, 59 Teal, a Red-crested Pochard, 19 Pochard, 2075 Tufted Ducks and a Goldeneye. Also counted were 334 Great Crested Grebes, 13 Great White Egrets and a record 120 Little Egrets. Of note were a Ruddy Shelduck (from 12th), a Garganey (24th, 30th) and a Black-necked

Grebe (26th). Waders included five Avocets, seven Little Ringed Plovers, five Curlew (all 19th), a Whimbrel (18th), 34 Black-tailed Godwits (2nd) with 26 on (30th), five Ruff, ten Common Sandpipers, 15 Green Sandpipers (all 19th) and 20 Redshank (9th). There were two Wood Sandpipers (30th – 31st) and two Greenshanks (14th). A juvenile Mediterranean Gull was seen (21st) and on (19th) a Caspian Gull and 13 Yellow-legged Gulls were present with 80 Common Terns. There were four Black Terns (22nd). A Cuckoo was heard (5th).

Eyebrook Reservoir. There were eight Grey Herons (17th), a Green Sandpiper (7th) with four on (30th), when a Little Ringed Plover, Common Sandpiper and three Ruff were also present. There was a Wood Sandpiper (18th).

Other Sites. Tufted Ducks bred at Fort Henry Ponds. Kingfishers were noted in Exton Park, Banthorpe GP, Wing and Leighfield Fishponds with Barn Owls at the latter site. Hobbies were at two sites. A Willow Tit was at Leighfield Fishponds (10th, 16th) and Spotted Flycatchers were at five sites with one pair nesting in an artificial House Martin nest. A Wheatear was at Luffenham Airfield (24th) and Redstarts were ringed there (19th, 26th).

My thanks to the following for their records: - T.Appleton, R.F.Baker, D.Ball, L.Biddle, T.Caldicott, J.Cole, L.Clarke, T.Collins, A.Comber, S.Lister, LROS, D.Masters, T.Mitcham, D.Needham, J.W.& M.Nourish, P.Rudkin, T.Sexton.



Lapwing. Photo P. Scott

June and July 2022 Wildfowl counts

	RW 21.06	RW 19.07	FHP and Exton park lake 18.06	FHP and Exton park lake. 18.07	Banthorpe GP. 16.06	Banthorpe GP. 20.07
Canada Goose	448	1303				
Greylag Goose	866	1182	10	10		33
Mute Swan	272	396	6	6	2	2
Egyptian Goose	25	81				
Shelduck	4	9	2			
Mandarin Duck	2	9				
Shoveler	24	12		2		
Gadwall	1077	1920	40	17		
Wigeon	1	3				
Mallard	317	861	82	121	1	1
Teal	6	59	2	1		
Red-crested Pochard		1				
Pochard	13	19				
Tufted Duck	419	2075	18	6		
Goldeneye		1				
Little Grebe	8	36		3		
Great Crested Grebe	161	334				
Grey Heron	10	18	2	2	1	1
Great White Egret	1	13				
Little Egret	45	120			1	
Cormorant	47	382	2			
Water Rail	14	4				
Moorhen	20	54	8	10	3	3
Coot	414	511	26	21	3	
Kingfisher	1	1				
TOTAL	4195	9404	198	199	11	40

BOTANY

RECORDER John Rodgers

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June and July records.

The hot weather seems to have kept people from botany excursions and certainly everything is so frazzled that it's easy to think "I won't bother", so we haven't had many records since June. It is obviously a difficult time for wild animals and even for farm animals. Burnt-up grass isn't the same as hay; it must be much less nutritious.

Roadside verges are frazzled too, but it's easy to see the effect of the County Council's changed approach to cutting. They are following Plantlife's guidance which makes a great deal of difference. One of the results was to find Pyramidal Orchids on the road from Oakham to Ashwell, spotted by M Markham. They were just beyond the limit of the cut; they'd probably been massacred in previous years.

Otherwise amongst the records received are Meadow Vetchling and Knapweed Broomrape at Ketton Quarry, Rough Chervil and Square-stemmed Willow herb on the Empingham-Ketton verge and Ragged Robin, Hairy Lady's Mantle, and Brook lime in Stretton Wood. Dwarf Spurge and Tansy-leaved Phacelia on a verge at Ketton. This latter flower is a native of the Southern United States and so is probably a garden escapee. One notable exception from the records is Upright Hedge Parsley which usually

follows on from Cow Parsley. This is more likely to be due to a lack of reporting than an absence of the plant. At least I hope so.

There have been one or two surveys which are reported in greater detail in other parts of this edition. Wing water treatment works was visited on two occasions for a survey of the flora and fauna of the site. It was interesting to know that everything is now managed to attract and protect wildlife. Yellow rattle has been planted to reduce grass growth and wildflower seeds from hay collected from local meadows has also been applied. Grass cutting is reduced to once a year, turned into hay and used by a local farmer. Steve Coles (Anglian Water ecologist) feels this has made quite a difference to the plant life and is quite pleased to have found Common spotted and Bee orchids in certain spots.

Oakham canal bioblitz in July led to an interesting list of plants. Among those identified were Water plantain and the narrow-leaved **species too**, Water figwort, Fool's watercress, Rough Chervil and Scullcap.

Records were received from C Baxter, L Biddle, M Grimes, R Lemmon, M Markham, and D Needham. I apologise if I've missed anybody; I can't get at my PC now.

BUTTERFLIES

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April/ May 2022

The weather was very good in both months for observing butterflies. April was generally mild and dry with plenty of sunny days especially in the middle of the month. May was very dry with most of the rain falling in just 3 days. It was also warm and sunny. I recorded only 3 frosts in April and none in May, enabling many pupae to survive and produce adults.

The first DINGY SKIPPER was recorded at Ketton Quarry (KQ) where 4 were seen on 25th April, followed by the first GRIZZLED SKIPPER at KQ on 29th April.

Dingy Skipper was then seen in May at KQ on 2nd and 6th May when a maximum of 5 were seen. Grizzled Skipper was also seen in May at KQ with a single on 2nd and a maximum of 4 on 6th.

LARGE SKIPPER was reported from Gibbet Gorse, Lyndon (LYN) on 19th May and KQ on 27th May. Numbers seem to be down this year.

ORANGE-TIP was first seen on 9th April with single males at KQ and Empingham (EMP). The mild sunny weather brought out lots of males between 12th and 22nd April with many reports from Langham (L), Oakham (O), KQ, Cottesmore (COT), Eggleton (E) and Uppingham (U). The maximum count was 5 in U on 24th April. There were numerous records throughout May from O, KQ, Wing (W),

E, EMP and U. The maximum was 9 at KQ on 5th May. Last recorded at W on 27th May.

The LARGE WHITE was under reported with only singles at E and U, both on 14th May. SMALL WHITE was first seen at KQ on 10th April and seen widely throughout the months. A "few" GREEN-VEINED WHITE were reported from Wing (W) in early to middle May with singles at KQ on 11th May and 2 at E on 14th May.

BRIMSTONE was seen widely from the first date of 10th April when 5 were seen at KQ. Males were then seen at KQ, O, Bisbrooke (B) and E. A maximum of 11 were recorded at KQ on 11th May.

A few SPECKLED WOOD were seen, with the first being 2 at KQ on 15th April. Others were seen at L and KQ with the last one at Barrow (BW) on 6th May.

KQ is the best place for SMALL HEATH with 3 records on 21st April, 29th April and 11th May.

Reports of RED ADMIRAL came from KQ on 2nd May followed by singles at Leighfield (LF) on 9th and 17th May, and BW on 22nd May.

May saw a concentration of records of PAINTED LADY all between 18th - 22nd. The first was at O on 18th May then singles at BW, Exton (EX) and W all on 19th May. Singles were at Manton (M) and W on 22nd May with the last at

Martinsthorpe (MTH) on 28th May.

PEACOCK was widely reported with the first being 6 at KQ on 12th April and 7 there on 17th April. Further reports came from E, KQ and EXT. The last was a single at EXT on 15th May.

Only 4 records of SMALL TORTOISESHELL were reported – all in April at EMP on 9th, KQ on 12th (2 seen), Wardley Woods (WW) on 18th and O on 21st.

COMMA was only seen at KQ and EMP on 10th April.

SMALL COPPER was only reported from Rutland Water with singles at LYN on 25th May and E on 27th May. KQ is also the best place for GREEN HAIRSTREAK with singles on 21st April followed by 3 seen there on 17th May.

HOLLY BLUE has had a very good Spring with numerous widely scattered records. The first was at O on 11th April with many records in mid-April from KQ, L, E, O, U, COT, W and EXT. The last were 2 at EXT on 14th May. The second broods will start appearing in late July/early August.

The only report of BROWN ARGUS was one at KQ on 6th May.

Finally COMMON BLUE also appears to be having a very good year. The first were 2 in L on 20th April which is very early. One was in U on 21st April followed by singles in U and KQ on 29th April and 2 at Barleythorpe (BTH) the same day. May saw singles at Eyebrook (EY), U and KQ all on 5th May with the last records in W on 14th May and 27th May with 3 present.

I would like to thank the following for sending in their records: – M Markham, A Lawrence, D Needham, D Masters, J Walker, R Lemmon, L Clark, T Caldicott, C



Black Hairstreak. Photo T Caldicott

June. July 22

The weather this summer has been record-breaking and superb for recording butterflies – mostly hot, dry, and sunny. As I write in early August, another heatwave is starting and the lack of rain is becoming problematic.

The final records of DINGY SKIPPER were at Ketton Quarry (KQ) in early June with 3 there on 1st, and 4 present on 2nd when there was also the final record of a single GRIZZLED SKIPPER.

ESSEX SKIPPER was recorded twice – at KQ on 13th July and at Wing Water Treatment Works (WWT) on 21st July. (See photograph).

SMALL SKIPPER was first recorded at Gibbet Gorse Meadows at Lyndon (GGM) on 15th June. For the observer (Tim Caldicott), this was the earliest ever by 5 days. It was then seen at KQ, Eyebrook (EY), Egleton (E) and Uppingham (U) with maxima of 37 at GGM on 30th June, 52 there on 1st July and a remarkable 112 present there on 15th July.

LARGE SKIPPER was first seen at KQ and E on 2nd June. There were "many" at Pickworth (P) on 28th June but only one record in July at E on 7th.

LARGE WHITE was widely recorded in low numbers with a maximum of 10 at Clipsham (C) on 4th July.

SMALL WHITE was first recorded at KQ on 1st June with further records from E, Oakham (O), KQ, U and a maximum count of 10 at Pickworth Great Wood (PGW) on 24th July.

GREEN-VEINED WHITE was only recorded at E on 2nd June and 25th July and also at Oakham Canal (OC) on 23rd July.

A CLOUDED YELLOW was a fine record seen by Diane Masters at O on 12th June.

BRIMSTONE was under-reported with 3 at E on 14th June and 4 at Pickworth Great Wood (PGW) on 24th July. A male was at E on 25th July.

Reports of SPECKLED WOOD came from E with 2 on 2nd June, KQ with 5 on 2nd June and then a long gap to the second brood records in July of 4 at E on 7th, 1 at PGW on 24th and finally 5 at E on 25th.

SMALL HEATH was seen at KQ (2) on 1st June, 3 were seen at GGM on 2nd June, "many" were reported at P on 28th June, and finally one at GGM on 5th July.

RINGLET was widely recorded in good numbers. The first were 2 at KQ on 11th June and the last record was one in U on 31st July. Maxima were 40+ at KQ on 25th June and 112 at GGM on 15th July.

MEADOW BROWN was also widely recorded in good numbers. The first was one at GGM on 7th June and the last were 17 at E on 25th June. There were "many" at C on 4th July and a count of 38 was made at E on 7th July.

The GATEKEEPER first appeared at GGM on 30th June and was then reported in very good numbers throughout July. It was commonly seen in gardens and was widespread. A maximum of 137 was counted at GGM on 15th July!

The beautiful MARBLED WHITE was first seen at GGM on 15th June with the final report of a single at Thorpe-by-Water (TW) on 9th July. Maxima were 17 at GGM on 30th June and 32 at GGM on 1st July. It was also seen at E, KQ and C.

The fritillaries are a beautiful group of butterflies, some of which are very rare and local. Two species, however, are expanding their range throughout our region.

SILVER-WASHED FRITILLARY was first seen at KQ on 20th June, then again on 3rd July. 3 were seen at PGW on 24th July.

DARK GREEN FRITILLARY had a maximum count of 50+ at KQ on 20th June! There were 2 at P on 28th June with the final record of 2 at KQ on 3rd July. (Outside our area there was a single in Essendine on 21st June).

The magnificent PURPLE EMPEROR also appears to be

expanding its range to the north. One was seen in PGW on 6th July by Anthony and Linda Biddle and another was seen in KQ on 12th July. Remarkably, a second was seen in KQ and also photographed by David Needham on the blistering hot day of Tuesday 19th July. (Front cover). The record temperature that day of about 39°C was hot enough to melt the observer's shoes!

RED ADMIRAL was seen throughout the period with records from E, GGM and 4 records from O. Maximum was 8 at GGM on 7th June.

There were good numbers of PAINTED LADY reflecting the southerly winds and warm weather. The first was a single in Manton (M) on 1st June and the last at GGM on 5th July. M, Leighfield (L) and GGM all had a number of records with a maximum of 6 at GGM on 21st June.

PEACOCK was reported from PGW on 24th July, and earlier on 15th June, 40+ caterpillars were found on nettles at GGM.

SMALL TORTOISESHELL was seen at E, KQ and P with a maximum of 20 at Martinsthorpe (MTH) on 16th June.

COMMA was only seen as singles in O, W, PGW and KQ between 3-25 July.

There were 4 reports of SMALL COPPER with singles at GGM on 1st June, E on 14th June and O on 28th July. The maximum was 4 at GGM on 20th July.

PURPLE HAIRSTREAK is a difficult butterfly to see well as they live at the top of the oak trees. Sometimes they come lower down to rest, and one did just that in Oakham on 30th July where it was photographed. Other records came from the oak trees at GGM with one on 1st July, 3 on 3rd July and 10 on 8th July. Finally, a record from Leighfield Fishponds (LF) with 1 on 10th July.

The last GREEN HAIRSTREAK of the year was seen at KQ on 2nd June.

BLACK HAIRSTREAK was a great find by Tim Caldicott at GGM on 30th June. Some superb photographs were taken too.

HOLLY BLUE was recorded in a few gardens in O and U with the first on 3rd June in O and the last also in O on 18th July.

BROWN ARGUS was seen at KQ on 2nd June and LF on 29th July. These were the last of the first brood and the first of the second brood.

COMMON BLUE also saw the last of the first brood with records confined to the first 4 days of June. KQ had 3 on 1st, E had 3 and KQ had 6 on 2nd June and the last ones were 2 at PGW on 4th June.

I would like to thank the following for sending in their records:- A Lawrence, D Needham, D Masters, L Clark, T Caldicott, C Baxter, A & L Biddle, J & D Ball, P Rudkin, D Whitehead, T Mitchell, and P Scott.



Essex skipper. C Baxter

GLOWWORMS

RECORDER Linda Clark
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After 2 years of very little Glow worm hunting and records, I'm pleased to report that Glows are still to be found in Rutland albeit in small numbers.

Three sights were searched, Ketton, Essendine and Barrowden.

I was contacted by one of the National Glow Worm Recorders about a record of one glow seen on Station Road, Ketton by the railway line. I was unable to access the area as work was being done on the line the night I visited and I hadn't managed to do a recce during daylight. Historically there has been a population in the area and this can be investigated next year.

Ketton Quarry NR was surveyed on 4 occasions and glows were found in three different areas on 3 occasions. The areas in which they were found were in the field near the car park, on the track leading from the car park to the Dell, and in the Dell and the Fire Pit area. The night of 30th June showed a total of 8 glowing females and on the night of 15th July, Dave Needham had 6.

Barrowden has protected verges along Back Road and Luffenham Road. Glow worms have been monitored for some years by Linda Worrel, latterly by local resident Ron Fraser and this year by Valerie Fraser who reported 7



Glowworm. Barrowden. C Baxter

glows on Back Road on 28th June. On Luffenham Road on 23rd June, one was found in long grass towards the back of the verge and one was found on the opposite verge, near the village sign, very near the road edge in short grass where the grass had been mown. A further 2 were found on Back Road Barrowden on 30th June; both these glows were found low down in the long grass at the hedge base.

Essendine verges along the Pickworth Road were checked on 10th July. One verge is signed as a protected verge. A total of 6 Glowing females were spotted, most of these being in the longer vegetation. Only one glow was found on the signed verge, 2 being found on the opposite verge and the other 3 were found on the 2 verges nearer the village end.

Unfortunately verges in both Essendine and Luffenham Road (on the right-hand side going out of the village towards the A47) Barrowden, had been mown in strips

along the road edge. If the verges are managed correctly for Glow worms, they should not be mown between the end of May and the end of August. This has been a perennial problem when it comes to verge management and is, ongoing. Rutland County Council have requested advice from the RNHS about cutting regimes, in order to best manage the verges with Glow worms in mind. Advice has been given.

Thanks to C. Baxter. V. Fraser D. Needham and J Harris.

MAMMALS

RECORDER Linda Biddle

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Three **badgers** have been seen in Rutland from April to July. One observed on the track at RWNR Lyndon in April. At Ridlington a badger ran along the roadside at midnight on 8th June, and another was seen on the A47 just the Leicester side of the Uppingham roundabout. At Orchard Road, Langham, the trail-camera recorded badgers on 5 nights in April and 3 in May. No stoats or weasels were recorded in June and July, but in April a **weasel** ran across the top road at Lyndon.

There were no recorded sightings of otters during this period. Spraint, evidence for the presence and activity of **otters** was found on mink rafts at RWNR in April and May, and at the end of June, when the clay from one of the mink rafts was dug out by the unmistakeable claws of an otter! There has been a recent sighting of **Mink** at RWNR and this has caused concern about the possibility of harm to the water vole population on the reserve.

In early June a **fox** was observed close to a deer hide in Pickworth Great Wood and in the lane at Barrow, another was seen as it wandered along in broad daylight. At Langham, red foxes were recorded on the trail-camera almost every night during April and May, and on 3rd and 5th May two appeared together. On 28th May, two appeared together at 04.22, and on 29th one at 10.44, followed by one at 1.08 and then two at 01.28, so the foxes of Langham and surrounds were getting together!

Hedgehogs were seen in gardens in Wing, Exton and Oakham, near Preston at the roadside, and sadly dead hogs recorded at the A47 roundabout at Uppingham, Manton, and Wing. At Langham the first hedgehog of the year appeared on 20th April, and returned for the next nine nights, and came again for 10 nights in May. Another member, to whom I send apologies, reported his first hedgehog for years, I think from Whissendine, but sadly I mislaid the record message among my emails. Probably the most unusual record of the period was of a swimming **mole**, photographed and shown to Laura Brady of LRWT at Lyndon. Sadly 2 other records concerned dead moles, one at Langham near the church, and another on the Glaston road from Wing. The only molehills record came from the garden of the Willows in Barrow, though hills are very commonly seen throughout the county of Rutland.

Brown hares were widely reported. They are often seen sitting in fields, or wandering along hedgerows, where they always look surprised to see anyone. The fact that they can run so fast and escape most predators makes them bold, so they have no need to hide from observers. They were seen at Pickworth, Teigh, Exton, Market Overton,

Wing, and verge 7 Great Casterton during April and May, and Braunston, Pickworth and Wing in June and July. At Wing, Cottesmore, Whissendine and Pickworth **rabbits**, have been seen although this does not represent a true picture of their high population and distribution.

Using Longworth traps, the Leicestershire and Rutland Mammal group surveyed for small mammals at Oakham canal in April and the only animal caught and released was a **bank vole** found on the South arm. Other bank voles were reported from Wing water treatment works, under refugia placed for surveying amphibians and reptiles, and from the patio at The Willows garden in Barrow. Two **shrews** have been reported, again from the refugia at Wing water treatment works, one a common shrew, and the other unidentified. In Linda Clark's Wing garden she has been trying to identify a small mammal that comes and goes on the camera trap, but it's just too fast to see what it is!!

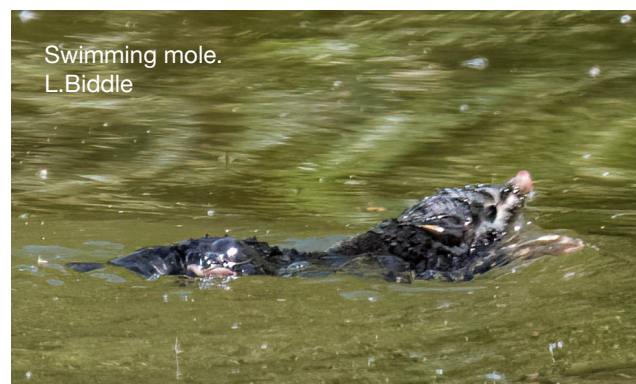
A **wood mouse** ran from the wood store at RWNR Egleton centre in May and a **brown rat** was seen in Wing allotments.

Grey squirrels have been seen in Wing, Barrow, Pickworth and Langham.

Muntjac are widespread throughout Rutland, and recorded this time from Wing, Pickworth, Hambleton, Oakham, Barrow, and Edith Weston, Langham, Braunston and Exton.

Fallow Deer have been less commonly recorded during April to July, only seen and recorded from Pickworth great wood, and walk farm.

Thank you to all our reliable recorders for your records:- Jane and Duncan Ball, A Biddle, Laura Brady, Tim Caldicott, Linda Clark, David Clark, Charles Gallimore, Marian Markham, Diana Masters, Jackie and John Morell, Phil Rudkin, Peter Scott and Jayne Walker.



Swimming mole.
L.Biddle

MOTHS

RECORDER Paul Bennett

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June/ July record

It is often the case that moth numbers greatly increase from around midsummers day and then onwards through the summer, but this has been especially evident this year with huge numbers starting to appear in traps around the end of June. This coincided with a rise in heat and humidity levels to such an extent that on a couple of nights in mid-July it was considered too hot to run traps because of the likely effect of the extreme heat on the well-being of the moths when the traps were opened in the morning. Despite the favourable southerly wind directions that prevailed, it was disappointing not to see a rare migrant in the period although other trappers in the vice-county were more fortunate. Also, the date chosen for the society's return trip to Wing Water Treatment Works was probably the only night in the month that was too cool and unsettled for moths to be on the wing, so it is hoped to arrange another day before the season's end.

This is the time of year when day-flying moths can be most regularly observed in and around houses, gardens, and the wider countryside without the need for traps, nets, or pheromone lures, therefore I will start the report with a roughly chronological account of the species reported to

me by society members over the last few weeks. On 1st June in Stretton wood a Buff-tip, Clouded Border, Silver-ground Carpet and the attractive micro longhorn, *Nemophora degeerella* were seen as well as the larvae of

Lackey and Yellow-tail. On 9th June a Common Wave was observed at Rutland Water Eggleton reserve; various species of wave moths can be seen resting on flowers or be disturbed from shrubbery at this time of year. 12th June produced the micro-Meal Moth on the wall of a house in Oakham. These are attractive moths that can appear in and around cereal storage or garden refuse. A garden trap in Exton on 17th June included a Pale Prominent which is an excellent camouflage moth and can appear in gardens where Poplar or Willow trees are nearby. On 25th June a Barred Yellow was seen flying around Rutland Garden Centre. Gibbet Gorse in Lyndon reserve was regularly visited by a member through June and July with highlights being Orange Footman, Magpie, Vapourer and Hummingbird Hawkmoth with the latter being seen regularly both here and in Manton. Two sightings of Scarlet

Tiger were reported on 24th June in Empingham and 26th June in Barrow.

The main highlights in July were a Four-dotted Footman seen on a society trip to Bloody Oaks on the 3rd July, Dark Arches in an Oakham garden on the 11th, a Latticed Heath at Bloody Oaks and an aberrant Six-spot Burnet in the same location on 31st July, the moth having 2 red spots at the base of the wing and 4 yellow spots at the wing edges. Occasionally all-yellow specimens can be found but one with a red and yellow colour combination would appear to be unusual and has been reported to the county recorder for his observations. (See previous photo). Three unidentified longhorn moths were also seen on an earlier day at the same site feeding on scabious. The sole caterpillar record for the month was Mullein (several) at the allotment at Wing on 2nd July.

Lyndon site was trapped on four occasions. On 8th June, 39 species appeared in the Mv trap set out in the meadow. Green Silver-lines was recorded there for the first time, which is surprising given its relatively regular appearance in the area and catholic choice of broadleaved trees as larval foodplants. Other species present that are absent in some years were Light Brocade, Marbled White Spot, Figure of

Eighty and Small Clouded Brindle. Two traps were set out on 27th June but these produced just 68 moths with no notable records. By contrast the single trap session on 10th July produced 283 moths of 64 species situated in and

around the trap. A large amount of time is spent looking for resting moths in the long surrounding grass and thistles

before opening the trap! Six species had double figure counts with 16 Buff Arches being comfortably the highest site count for that species on a single night, a single Maple Prominent being the first recorded there since 2014 was also notable. 24th July both traps were set out on

site after the plan to run traps at Wing Water Treatment Works had to be aborted at the last minute. A sultry night produced 412 moths, which is the highest number recorded around the meadow area in one night. The hoped for rare migrant moth or two still didn't materialise although

Tree-lichen Beauty and Least Carpet show that their presence in the county is now firmly established.

Bloody Oaks reserve had single battery traps set out on three occasions. The still cold conditions on 15th June produced only 13 species of regular spring moths, with 13th July bringing a more respectable 35 species, including several Yellow-tails and Brown-tails and a rare sighting of Blackneck. This latter species is a locally distributed moth but commonly seen including by day, where its main foodplant Tufted Vetch occurs, although

it has also been seen feeding on Marsh Pea and Wild Liquorice. Its habitat requirements are equally unusual, with wet areas preferred but also dry calcareous grassland, preferably with some damp areas within it, which doesn't make Bloody Oaks appear the ideal site. Ringed China-mark is another moth that appears on site from time to



Aberrant 6-spot burnet moth. Photo M. Grimes

time, despite this micro being aquatic in its pre-adult stages, although the adult is more prone than other china-marks to widely disperse. The session on 31st July produced another site record with 166 moths of 60 species. This is an interesting reserve to trap, as species seem to occur here that are only infrequently recorded elsewhere in the county with Antler Moth, Tawny-barred Angle, Purple Bar and the similar looking Scorched Carpet, all recorded again (see also Four-dotted Footman and Blackneck above). Also notable was a count of 5

Black Arches which seems to make this the main Rutland site for this species. Another aquatic larval moth, Beautiful China-mark, was recorded.

Time was found for only one meet at **Shacklewell Spinney**

Another humid night had 287 moths of 67 species which is comfortably the largest return from here since trapping began there in 2019. Pine and Poplar Hawk-moths were recorded and 26 Coronet was a very high count for this species. One final piece of news to mention is that Mark Skevington has

become the new VC55 county moth recorder following on from Adrian Russell so I wish Mark enjoyment and success in his new post.

Thank you to the following for submitting their records: - D & J Ball, P Bennett, A Biddle, T Caldicott, L Clark, D Cotter, M Grimes, A Lambert, R Lemmon, J Morrell, P Rudkin, P Scott, J Walker.

ORTHOPTERA

RECORDER Phil Rudkin

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June/July record.

The month of June 2022 started with the first sighting of a Common Green Grasshopper nymph at Gibbets Gorse Meadows, Rutland Water, on the 7th by Tim Caldicott, followed by a Meadow Grasshopper nymph, at Ketton Quarries, by Dave Needham on the 14th. The first stridulating for June was located at Leighfield, a Common Green Grasshopper, by Tim Caldicott, 16th June. Surprisingly, and a wonderful happening, was my own finding of a small colony of stridulating ROESEL'S BUSH CRICKETS in the thick meadow, adjacent to the LRWT entrance path to Ketton Quarries, on 22nd June. I have researched back to 2019 (checking on 2022, 2021, 2020, 2019), and I have found no earlier stridulating from Roesel's Bush Cricket other than the current 2022. Fantastic, very early for this species, (climate change at work)! As this period is only for June/July 2022, there is more to come in the next few months. Therefore, I have included details of the regular sites, to make it more interesting.

Bush Crickets

Roesel's Bush Cricket, *Roeseliana roeselii*
Five nymphs observed in Gibbets Gorse Meadows, 7 June 2022. SK902057.

Very early find: Six plus, stridulating males in tall meadow grass adjacent to Ketton Quarries, LRWT footpath. 22 June 2022. SK978052.

Large colony, located in small patch of tall grass meadows at the Wing Water Treatment Works, Wing. 21 July. New site: SK897028.

Long-winged Conehead, *Conocephalus fuscus*
From the 1st June, right through to the 29 June 2022, many tiny nymphs were observed in the Wing Village Allotments, Gibbets Gorse Meadows, and Martinthorpe. All regular sites.

Speckled Bush Cricket, *Leptophyes punctatissima*
Three nymphs, observed in Gibbets Gorse Meadows, Rutland Water, on 7 June 2022. Regular site.

Grasshoppers

Common Green Grasshopper, *Omocestus viridulus*
Five stridulating males, in lush meadows, Leighfield, 16 June 2022. Regular site.

Field Grasshopper, *Chorthippus brunneus*
One late instar nymph, located in the Wing Village Allotments, 29 June 2022. Regular site.

Meadow Grasshopper, *Chorthippus Parallelus*
One, late instar nymph, observed in scrub, at the North Arm, Ketton Quarries. 14 June 2022. Regular site.
Two stridulating males, heard in the North Arm, Ketton Quarries, and 50 plus stridulating males in meadow grasses, the Donkey Paddock, Ketton Quarries, 22 June 2022. Regular sites.

Lesser Marsh Grasshopper, *Chorthippus albomarginatus*
Two late instar nymphs, located in Gibbets Gorse, 10 June 2022. Regular site.

Many thanks for the records received: Tim Caldicott, David Needham, and Phil Rudkin

Sightings throughout the month of July 2022 by Tim Caldicott from his Wing allotment plot. All were adults. Roesel's Bush cricket. Long-winged Conehead, Speckled Bush cricket, Common green grasshopper, Field grasshopper, Meadow grasshopper, Lesser Marsh grasshopper.



Long-winged conehead. Photo P. Rudkin

INSECTS & INVERTEBRATES

RECORDER Jayne Walker

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No records this issue

PLANT GALLS

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June 2022

This was a quiet month for gall reports, from just 4 sites. Two of these were from woods, Stretton on the 1st and Hebe's on the 9th, and the results illustrate a big difference for galls between an old well-established wood, the former, and a relatively recent wood, the latter.

Stretton has a varied flora, especially trees, and gave a total 21 galls including 2 previously unrecorded by us, both midge galls on Spruce and Aspen.

The RNHS recorders' visit to Hebe's Wood, despite some serious searching, produced just 8 galls. One of them, made by an aphid, was found on small-leaved Elm, and it is the first time we have it on this substrate, previously only on Wych Elm.

The other two reports were from BOQ on the 6th and Wytchley Warren, Ketton on the 16th. Both of these are basically grassland and accordingly gave small numbers of galls, all nonetheless valuable.

Thanks to Paul Bennett, Martin Grimes and Roy Lemmon for their reports

July 2022

A quiet month with just two reports, Exton Park on the 7th and Rutland Water Eggleton on the 28th. Each produced 24 galls, but not all were the same as it largely depends on the variety of trees and herbs present on each site.

Exton Park has the occasional Hornbeam and one was infected by a mite which produces quite remarkable galling of the leaves. The only other site where this occurs is George Henry Wood. At Exton there is a mature Lombardy Poplar which also produces galls we seldom see elsewhere.

Eggleton has both Willows and Alders which gave 5 and 3 galls respectively, and in addition there was a midge gall on Birch last seen in 2018. There was also the first example this year of the stem gall on Creeping Thistle caused by a gall fly.

Thanks to Martin Grimes and Roy Lemmon for their reports

FIELD TRIPS

Wing Water Treatment works.

Wildlife Survey, in conjunction with the Wing Neighbourhood Plan Diversity Community Action Policy.

28th April 2022.

Wing village have formed a Natural and Historic Environment Group, (NHEG), chaired by village stalwart John De Jardin. John is acting as liaison for the survey, and is delighted that the Rutland Natural History Society have reacted positively to this project. This resulted in Anglia Water inviting the wildlife recorders of the RNHS to the premises of the Wing Water Treatment Station as a big part of the wildlife survey.

On Thursday morning 28th April 2022 at 10.0am, eleven recorders from the RNHS, plus two guests (very special experts) from the Leicester Entomological Society, arrived at the Anglian Water Treatment Station, on Morcott Road, Wing.

We were greeted in the conference room by Steve Coles and Mike Drew. Steve Coles (the works Biodiversity Champion) briefed the group about health and safety and



Our intrepid recorders at the ready in any weather. Note the grey skies above!

outlined the survey details. Tea, coffee, and biscuits were enjoyed, before the members split into various groups and set off to find the flora and fauna of the site.

It was unfortunately cool and cloudy, so butterflies were almost non-existent and bird song was at a low. However, without a mammal recorder present, it was the botanists that showed their expertise, with some excellent finds. We all 'chipped in' with a combined mammal search (mainly finding and identifying droppings and footprints).

Final lists, included Muntjac (prints and droppings), and a debate concerning the faeces of Fallow Deer or Roe Deer? My opinion was that because there had recently been sightings of Roe Deer in and around Wing village, it suggested this handsome hoofed mammal was the one. An expert on Galls and rusts, had some valuable finds. A limited bird list included Warblers, Blackcap and Chiff Chaff. Others were Blue Tit (one on nest, in nest box), Great Tit, Robin, Chaffinch, Greenfinch, Dunnock,

Blackbird, Pied Wagtail, Red Kite, Woodpigeon and a pair of Linnets.

At 12.30pm, we headed back to the conference room with our findings. The room was now a restaurant and a lovely surprise. The staff had kindly prepared a super buffet lunch for us, which was much enjoyed.

Many thanks indeed to Steve Coles and Mike Drew, and Anglian Water. Hopefully, this is the start of further visits, to include more species, such as Bats.

RNHS attendees: Carolyn Baxter, Paul Bennett, Tim Caldicott, Linda Clark, Charles Gallimore, Jenny Harris, Roy Lemmon, David Needham, John Rodgers, Phil Rudkin, Jayne Walker.

Special Guests; Invertebrates and botany, Helen Ikin, Steve Woodward, from Leicester Entomological Society.

Phil Rudkin

Second survey. Thursday 21st July.

Attendees were again greeted by Steve Cole and as everybody knew the procedure, we quickly set off to discover unknown wonders.

The 21st of July was chosen as it was expected that the weather would be ideal for the showing of Butterflies, Moths, Grasshoppers, Crickets and Reptiles and also due to the fact that the grass was scheduled to be cut at the very beginning of August. Disappointingly the weather was not conducive for all of the above taxa.

John Rogers our Botany Recorder was supported by Geoffrey Hall, Helen Ikin and Steve Woodward, but not a lot was found by their standards, as the vegetation by this time was extremely dry due to the lack of rain and the heat of the previous week. The list is nonetheless impressive to the uneducated and an interesting plant was found.

Tim Caldicott very kindly stepped in and took on the invertebrates without the aid of trapping methods. Three species of beetle were found including a *Nicrophorus humator*, a burying beetle which has bright red/orange antennae tips. A reasonable list resulted with a Pied Hoverfly and a 4 Coloured Cuckoo Bee being good finds. A Roesel's bush cricket was the only Orthoptera recorded. Despite Charles Gallimore's efforts, no reptiles were found under the refugia. This was particularly disappointing as many years ago Common Lizards were found in this area. As mentioned before, Butterflies were few and far between, but Gatekeeper and Essex Skipper were seen. Credit must go to Paul Bennet our Moth Recorder who was unable to set the moth trap due to rain being forecast on the night of 20th. Paul is multitalented and knows his birds and butterflies as well as his moths. He spotted and identified the Essex Skipper, and his sighting was enjoyed by all present before being released to feed again on the grasses.

Mammal traps were not set due to the hot weather. A Bank Vole was seen under a refugia, and excellent views of Hare and Rabbit were had. Muntjac (droppings) Fox (smell) Squirrel (skull) and Wood Mouse (chewed nuts) was evidence of the presence of these mammals.

A quick survey with a newly acquired bat detector identified Soprano Pipistrelles. The Sopranos were seen flying over the open water tanks on the night of the 27th July.

The bird list was 13, which wasn't a bad number given the weather conditions and the time of the year. Yellowhammer and Linnet were good to see. Wing Water Treatment Works is situated on the outskirts of Wing village and is adjacent to fields and is surrounded by hedges.

A debrief took place over a cup of coffee and recorders shared their finds with Steve who thanked everybody for coming. We in turn thanked Steve for giving us access to the site.

It is always good to have access to 'unknown' ground, especially if the site is being managed with a goal to increase the biodiversity of the area.

One of the main aims of the RNHS is to record the wildlife of Rutland and on these two surveys we did just that.

RNHS attendees. President Phil Rudkin. Linda Biddle Carolyn Baxter. Paul Bennet. Tim Caldicott. Linda Clark. Charles Gallimore. Jenny Harris. John Rogers. Special Guests. Geoffrey Hall. Helen Ikin. Steve Woodward. Inverts and Botany.

Linda Clark



Tim Caldicott showing members the Essex skipper found near the entrance to Wing Water Treatment Works.

Hebe's wood bioblitz 9th June 2022.

Hebe's Wood is a private area of woodland and open grass spaces across the valley from Prior's Coppice, developed by the current owner's family and now managed to maintain its biodiversity. The Society were invited to survey the area and a group of recorders met there on the 9th June to take a preliminary look around.

We walked through the site along a broad track with a dense hedge with arable land beyond. There are some small ponds along this track and several paths leading into woodland. There are some more open spaces too. This track leads on to a more established wood and finally back to a trackway which is also a permissive footpath along the south side of the area.

The time of year and the make-up of the group meant that most records were of plants. Some 40 species were identified. Most were common plants typical of Rutland, but we did find Common Spotted, Heath Spotted and Southern Marsh Orchid. This was only a preliminary visit; there is likely to be much more to find. It is an interesting and exciting place, and we hope we will be allowed to make more intensive surveys in the future.

John Rodgers



Leptopterna dolabrata. Hebe's wood.
Photo C. Baxter

Visit to Naturescape wildflower farm Langar. 26th July 2022

Our planned visit to this huge 200-acre wildflower farm in early July had to be rescheduled to three weeks later, by which time most of the country's fauna and flora were gasping from the effects of three days of rocket high temperatures in the UK. This Tuesday, 26th July however, the heat was comfortable for the 9 members who met near the café to wait for their guide for the afternoon – and very apologetic she was too! Looking around the 45 acres of planted wildflower meadows open to the public, (the other 150 acres providing seed and plugs to customers via their website), it immediately became apparent that 40-degree temperatures at the height of the growing season was devastating, not only to our eyes but also to the economy of the farm itself.

Not to be put off though, as we wandered through the long lines of different kinds of wildflowers still hanging on to life

(Greater knapweed, field scabious, Agrimony, Mallow and more) - our guide gave a very entertaining talk about how the meadows are planted, which wildflowers are grown and how seed is collected and stored, along with some amusing anecdotes from the annals of "Old wives flower tales" thrown in. As we progressed around the site, our guide collected seed from various dead flowering heads, blowing off the "chaff" and giving us handfuls to keep or showing us the devastating result of heat withering the flower heads too early for the seed to set properly. The result was a large percentage of sterile seed.

Altogether, it was interesting to learn little known snippets from our guide, who had spent many years being intimately involved with the growing of our native wildflowers and we really only scratched the surface on the day. It was a shame too, that the flowers had been so badly affected by the high temperatures, so it would be good to go back again to see the wildflower meadows in full flower.

Oakham Canal Bioblitz by Tim Sexton Species and Recording Officer for LRWT.

Introduction

A 'BioBlitz' was undertaken at the Oakham Canal from Burley Road (SK 86502 11026) south to the dam (SK 86317 10672), on 23rd July 2022. The canal at this section is preserved in much of its original condition and rich in wildlife. There is a wide body of water and a public right of way along the towpath. The section is leased to Oakham Angling Society and there are a number of fishing pegs along the route. Much of the water's surface is covered in macrophytes and this stretch is dominated by Yellow Water Lily (*Nuphar lutea*) along with Coloured Water Lily (*Nymphaea marliacea*) and Canadian Waterweed (*Elodea canadensis*). A large area of Mare's Tail (*Hippuris vulgaris*) was noted in the middle of the section. The Water-Lily Leaf Beetle (*Gallerucella nymphaeae*) was noted in huge number, feeding on the leaves of the water lilies. Although widespread and common across much of Britain, this is only the second record of this species in Leicestershire and Rutland.

As part of the BioBlitz, a survey of aquatic invertebrates was undertaken from one of the fishing pegs at the bridge on the Burley/Barleythorpe boundary at SK 86320 10692.

Method

The Biological Monitoring Working Party (BMWP) sampling method was used to conduct the aquatic invertebrate survey. The BMWP is a scoring system where macroinvertebrates are used to analyse and monitor the health of freshwater bodies (typically rivers, canals and streams) based on their varying tolerances to different stressors, such as pollution (i.e. nutrient enrichment that can affect the availability of dissolved oxygen).



Water Lily Beetle (*Gallerucella nymphaeae*)

Each family of macroinvertebrate is assigned a score from 1- 10 based on their sensitivity to pollution. The higher the score, the less tolerant (more sensitive) the macroinvertebrate is to organic pollution. For example, invertebrates that are only tolerant of the cleanest water bodies will be given a tolerance score of 10, and those tolerant of more polluted water bodies will be given a lower BMWP score. In addition, the ASPT (Average Score per Taxon) and the Ntaxa (Number of taxa contributing to the assessment) are calculated.

The standard method to collect specimens for BMWP consists of a 3-minute pond/sweep net along with an extra 1-minute hand search to ensure the maximum number of taxa have been found – this will be mostly surface dwelling invertebrates.

The macroinvertebrates from each sample were then sorted and recorded to family level on site, using a field microscope for any tricky taxa. In addition to recording family groups through BMWP, specimens of some taxonomic groups were taken for identification to species level (mostly beetles).

Results

In all, 21 families were recorded through the BMWP survey with a combined score of 110. A summary of the families recorded and their score can be found in Table 1.

Order	Family	Score
Beetles	Dytiscidae	5
	Haliplidae	5
Bugs	Gerridae	5
	Mesoveliidae	5
	Naucoridae	5
	Nepidae	5
	Notonectidae	5
	Pleidae	5
Caddisflies	Limnephilidae	7
Damselflies	Lestidae	8
	Coenagrionidae	6
Dragonflies	Aeshnidae	8
	Libellulidae	8
Fly Larvae	Chironimidae	2
Leeches	Glossiphoniidae	3
	Hirundinidae	3
Mayflies	Baetidae	4
Shrimps	Gammaridae	6
Snails	Viviparidae	6
	Lymnaeidae	3
	Planorbidae	3
Water Slater	Asellidae	3
	Total:	110

A number of families were expected (due to their tolerance of most water conditions and which are locally common), but were not encountered during the survey. These include Hydrophilidae (water scavenger beetles), Gyrinidae (Whirligig Beetles), Unionidae (Large Freshwater Mussels), Sphaeriidae (Pea Mussels), Corixidae (Lesser Water Boatmen) and Physidae (Bladder Snails). These, along with other families of Caddisflies would massively increase the overall score.

Table 2 - Interpretation of BMWP scores

BMWP score	Category	Interpretation
0-10	Very Poor	Heavily polluted
11-40	Poor	Polluted or impacted
41-70	Moderate	Moderately impacted
71-100	Good	Clean but slightly impacted
>100	Very good	Unpolluted, unimpacted

Based on species richness (i.e. the number of families present) the score gives the canal a rating of 'Very Good' – Unpolluted unimpacted. An interpretation of BMWP scores can be found in Table 2.

Additional metrics for the BMWP sample are included in table 3.

Table 3. Additional metrics for BMWP

Metric	Score
Total Number of Taxa	21
Total BMWP Score	110
Average Score Per Taxa	5.5
Number of Alderfly, Dragonfly and Damselfly Families	4
Number of Beetle Families	2

Average score per taxa (ASPT) can vary from 0.00 (grossly polluted) to 6.00+ (excellent quality). The ASPT score for the canal is 5.5 and considered 'Very Good'.



Order	Family	Scientific Name	Common Name	Qty	Grid Ref	
True Bugs	Pleidae	Plea minutissima	Pygmy Backswimmer	10+	SK 86311 10679	
	Gerridae	Gerris lacustris	Common Pondskater	100+	SK 86311 10679	
	Mesoveliidae	Mesovelia reticulata	a Water Cricket	10+	SK 86311 10679	
	Notonectidae	Notonecta glauca	Common Backswimmer	50+	SK 86311 10679	
	Naucoridae	Ilyocoris cimicoides	Saucer Bug	10+	SK 86311 10679	
	Nepidae	Ranatra linearis	Water Stick Insect	2	SK 86311 10679	
	Nepidae	Nepa cinerea	Water Scorpion	1	SK 86311 10679	
	Cicadellidae	Cicadella viridis	Green Leaf-hopper	1	SK 86311 10679	
Odonata	Aeshnidae	Aeshna grandis	Brown Hawker	2	SK 86311 10679	Nymph
Snails	Viviparidae	Viviparus viviparus	River Snail	2	SK 86311 10679	
	Succineidae	Succinea putris	Amber Snail	20+	SK 86311 10679	
	Lymnaeidae	Lymnaea stagnalis	Great Pond Snail	10+	SK 86311 10679	
Beetles	Halipidae	Halplus lineolatus	a Water Beetle	1	SK 86311 10679	
	Dytiscidae	Ilybius fenestratus	a Diving Beetle	1	SK 86311 10679	
	Chrysomelidae	Galerucella nymphaeae	Water-Lily Beetle	100+	SK 86311 10679	Widespread - larvae and adults on water lily leaves
	Chrysomelidae	Donacia simplex	a reed beetle	20+	SK 86311 10679	
	Curculionidae	Cionus alauda	a weevil	1	SK 86311 10679	
	Coccinellidae	Harmonia axyridis	Harlequin Ladybird	1	SK 86311 10679	
	Coccinellidae	Coccinella septempunctata	Seven Spot Ladybird	1	SK 86311 10679	
Spiders	Lycosidae	Pirata piraticus	Pirate Wolf Spider	1	SK 86311 10679	
Lepidoptera	Crambidae	Donacaula forficella	Pale Water Veneer	1	SK 86311 10679	
Diptera	Eristalini	Helophilus pendulus	The Footballer	1	SK 86311 10679	
	Dolichopodidae	Poecilobothrus nobilitatus	Semaphore Fly	50+	SK 86311 10679	

All records taken by T.Sexton





Mullein moth. Photo J. Walker

Mother Shipton moth. Photo P. Scott



Visit to Naturescape Wildflower farm in July

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