

# Harrogate & District Naturalists' Society



# Report for 2020



Southern Marsh-orchid

*Dactylorhiza praetermissa*

*Drawing: Kevin Walker*

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Compiled and edited by Nick Gaunt, Nigel Harcourt-Brown and Kevin Walker.

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The editorial team wishes to thank all those who have contributed to the compilation of this report.

Report free to members.

\*\*\*PLEASE NOTE\*\*\*

*Members are reminded that observations of wildlife, no matter how seemingly unimportant, are part of the total record. Please forward information about your findings, with date and place, to the appropriate Recorder.*

# Officers 2020–2021

**President:** Dr Nick Gaunt  
Green Ridge Cottage, The Green, Nun Monkton YO26 8EW  
Tel: 07587 226336. Email: [drnickgaunt@gmail.com](mailto:drnickgaunt@gmail.com)

**Vice-President** vacant

**General Secretary:** Mrs Sue Coldwell  
4 Abbotts Way, Knaresborough HG5 8EU  
Tel: 01423 868043 email: gensechdns@yahoo.co.uk

**Membership Secretary:** Ms Val Smith  
97 West End Avenue, Harrogate HG2 9BU  
Tel: 01423 503932 email: memsec.hdns1@talktalk.net

**Treasurer:** Lynne Gilland  
6 Moorland View, Harrogate HG2 7EZ  
Tel: 07748162120 email: lynnegilland@talktalk.net

**Programme Secretary:** Mrs Ruth Upsall  
The Paddocks, Minskip Rd, Staveley, Knaresborough HG5 9LQ  
Tel: 01423 340694 email: mjupsall@btinternet.com

**Members of Council:** Nigel Harcourt-Brown, Kerry Morrison, Kevin Walker.

## Society Appointments:

<b>Honorary Auditor:</b>	Mr A Pease
<b>Archives Keeper:</b>	<i>Vacant</i>
<b>Press Reports:</b>	Mr D Tipping
<b>Editors, Annual Report:</b>	Dr Nick Gaunt, Mr Nigel Harcourt-Brown and Dr Kevin Walker
<b>Visual Aids:</b>	Mr ME Smith
<b>Website editor</b>	Dr Nick Gaunt

**Society's Honorary Warden at Farnham GP:** Miss June Atkinson  
46 Plompton Drive, Harrogate HG2 7DS Tel: 01423 885612

# Recorders

## Botany

**Recorder:** Dr Kevin Walker, Botanical Society of Britain and Ireland  
Room 14 Bridge House 1-2 Station Bridge  
Harrogate HG1 1SS  
Tel: 01423 526481 email: kevin.walker@bsbi.org

## Fungi

**Recorder:** Vacant

## Entomology

### Lepidoptera:

**Macro Moths:** Mrs Jill Warwick Sharow Grange Sharow Ripon HG4 5BN  
Tel: 01765 602832 email: jill@swland.co.uk

**Micro Moths:** Dr Charles Fletcher The Forge Hutton Conyers Ripon HG4 5EB  
Tel: 01765 600586 email: chfletcher@btinternet.com

**Butterflies:** Dr Michael Barnham, 'Somersby', Ripley Road, K'boro HG5 9BY  
Tel 01423 860466 email: barnhammike@hotmail.com

**Coleoptera & other Orders:** Mr Jim Jobe 13 Willow Walk Ripon HG4 2LS  
Tel: 01765 692924 email: gymnopholus@gmail.com

**Odonata:** Mr Steve Worwood 18 Coltsgate Hill Ripon HG4 2AB  
Tel 01765 602518 email: steve@worwood.entadsl.com

## Ornithology

**Recorder:** Mr Stephen Root 4 Plompton Way Harrogate HG2 7DU  
Tel: 07732 123341 email: stephenroot@outlook.com

## Mammals & Lower Vertebrates

**Recorder:** Richard Stobbs  
30 Waterside Bondgate Ripon HG4 1RA  
Tel: 01765 602180 email: rsmoonraker@gmail.com

## Submitting records for inclusion in the Annual Report

The preferred way to report your bird records to HDNS is now via the BTO BirdTrack service. All local records you send to BirdTrack will be forwarded by BTO to the HDNS bird recorder (Stephen Root) and the Yorkshire Recorders, so they are much more widely available. For records of other species, please use the Report Form on the Website or send them directly to the recorder.

If you are unable to submit your bird records via BirdTrack, please use the website Report Form to send directly to the bird recorder.

# Council's Report 2020-21

**Sue Coldwell, General Secretary**

## **Presented to Annual General Meeting, March 2021**

This is the 75th AGM of the Society and is again having to be held by Zoom for the second time. This report has been written again in the circumstances of the continuation of the Covid crisis. It covers the time period April 2020 through to April 2021 and includes the period in which the 2020 AGM was held by Zoom in December 2020.

As Coronavirus restrictions varied throughout the summer and autumn, the Society managed to run several Field Trips while adhering to the Government rules of the day. Social distancing, the Rule of 6 and no car sharing allowed us to run six trips before national lockdowns forced all events to be cancelled. A new venue for the trip programme was Roundhay Park in Leeds to look at Veteran Trees, how to recognise them and report them, with two expert arborists. Kevin Walker, HDNS Botany Recorder, led a summer trip to Hay-a-Park and this was followed by a trip to South Gare, led by David Barlow, the Vice County Recorder. June Atkinson led trips to Teeside, YWT Staveley LNR and Nosterfield LNR. Many thanks to the trip leaders.

There have been no indoor lectures this winter season, they have been replaced by Zoom video lectures. Firstly, they were from Society members, beginning in January with Kevin Walker's delayed talk from last year, counting the number of botanical species found in the HDNS recording area. Remarkably this has now gone up to 1574, but as Kevin mentioned, a lot have been lost over the last century! Nigel Harcourt Brown gave his delayed presentation on Veterinary Aspects of Avian Flight, which was fascinating. Malcolm Jones presented one about his wonderful bird watching trip to Bulgaria, which happened in a previous life. Several presenters from outside the Society have also been booked. A number of the speakers who were lined up when the pandemic stopped face to face meetings have offered either Zoom lectures or to return when it is feasible. Thank you to Muff for arranging these and to the speakers for giving up their time as well. Council meetings have continued by Zoom.

During national lockdown periods entry to Farnham Gravel Pits has been denied to members unfortunately, as the site is under the jurisdiction of the National Anglers Association.

There has been a small amount of vandalism at Farnham and a break in to the hide which resulted in the loss of personal items belonging to the warden, June Atkinson. There have been sporadic incursions into the site, by local teenagers in the main, during lockdown. The police have been informed. Due to Covid restrictions over the winter, the management team has been unable to perform the usual winter programme this year, nor unfortunately have they been able to renew their First Aid certificates. Courses will hopefully be restarted in time for the winter management in September. Thank you to the Warden, June Atkinson and the Management Team for their hard work at Farnham, there is always work to do and any extra help is welcome.

Online communication with members is now at its most paramount. There are several ways to keep in touch.

We have a very active Harrogate Naturalist's Forum Facebook Group moderated by Robert Marshall. And, of course, Nick updates the website regularly. This has been useful to get up to date information, sightings, trip reports etc. Recordings of our Zoom lectures are in the member's area on the website, along with newsletters and council minutes.

Richard Bion has been stoically manning the email circulation to members over many years, but this has proved especially valuable in lockdown.

We also have two Twitter accounts, @HDNSFarnham and @HarrogateNats.

The Society's Recorders continue to welcome sightings by members and this makes up a large part of the Annual Report each year. Sadly the 2020 Coleoptera and Other Invertebrates Report will be the last for our very longstanding recorder, Jim Jobe. Jim has been producing reports for the Society since 1993 and his knowledge is encyclopaedic, as anyone who has read our Annual Reports will readily testify! He will still be happy to identify any photographs which members send in to him, and the huge body of work that the report has developed into will be a remarkable legacy for his tenure in the position. If there is anyone who would be willing to collate the records for 2021, please either speak to Nick Gaunt or Jim Jobe.

Stephen Root continues to produce an excellent Bird Report each year, which again gets larger every year and Kevin Walker is producing excellent botanical records for us and the BSBI.

Steve Worwood has produced the Odonata report again this year, and Richard Stobbs, the mammal records.

We are immensely grateful to the contribution the recorders make to the Society and for all the members who provide records.

The Annual Reports, have become larger year on year, and we are very grateful to Val Smith for all her stellar work in collating and distributing them since 2008. She has now decided the time is right to retire and the job has now passed to Nick Gaunt, Kevin Walker and Nigel Harcourt Brown. Kerry Morrison is now labelling and distributing them, with the help of her daughter, Lynda. I'm sure Val finds it extremely gratifying that the responsibility of producing such a valued report has safely passed to others and she can now sit back and relax with them on a 'read only' basis. Thank you Val for all your hard work!

On 7th May 2020 Jack McClean sadly died. Jack was a Life Member of the Society and condolences go to his family and wife Joan, who is also a Life Member. A full obituary will be printed in the 2020 Annual Report [see next page].

I'm sure we all feel a bit disconnected from our former life and activities but the Society will continue to function in a way that makes members feel they are still part.

All members of Council are prepared to stand again, but we very much welcome new members and are especially looking for someone who can prepare the newsletters.

March 2021

# Obituary

## Arthur John (Jack) McClean 1932 - 2020

Jack was born in Ballymena Co. Antrim, the eldest of four children. He finished his formal education becoming an Associate Member of the Institute of Electrical Engineers. As a young man, he joined Short Bros and Harland's missile department and was sent to supervise the launch of missiles in Sardinia.

Having worked for ICI for many years, he retired as Senior Electrical Engineer for Yorkshire Water.



He had a lifelong love of animals and plants, but in particular of birds, which he often said sprang from listening to Corncrakes in summer when he was a child. As an adult, he developed a love of travelling to see exotic species in many remote locations.

When he and his family came to live in Harrogate in the 1970s, he joined HDNS, but it wasn't until retirement that he took an active interest in Farnham and in setting up the computerisation of the Society's records, becoming a Council member, a position which he held for several years, prior to becoming a Life Member in retirement.

He was an extremely friendly man who had an impish sense of humour, loved photographing birds but above all, loved his friends and his family.

Joan McClean.



# Management Work At Farnham Gravel Pit

**Miss June E Atkinson**

## **FGP Management Report Winter 2019-20**

The winter programme of maintenance work was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.

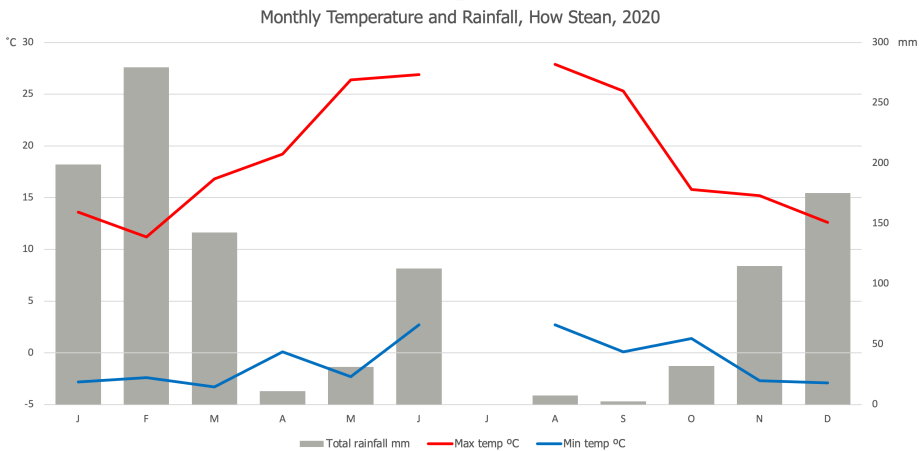
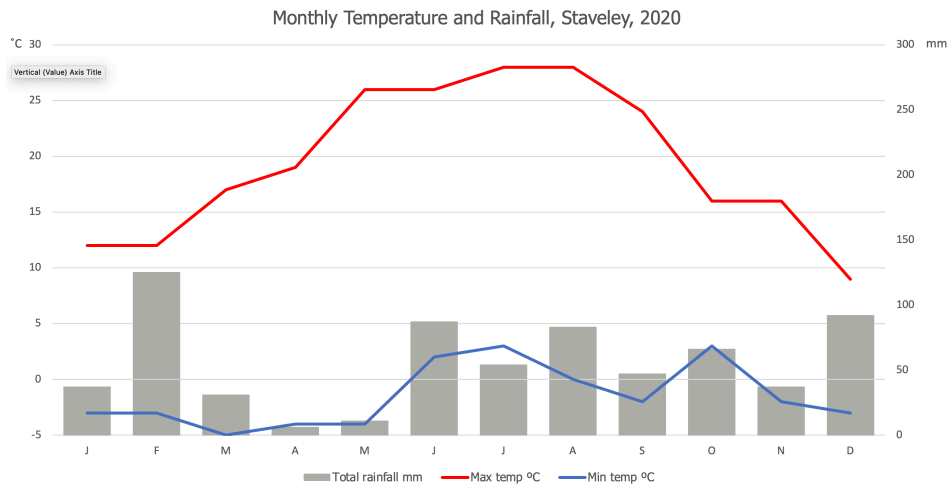
### **Farnham Management Committee Meeting**

Proposed work to be carried out winter 2020/21:

1. Mow paths around the hide and between the willows before Work Day.
2. Car Park Island Area; cut down sapling birches and treat. Clear path to lake for boat access to the lake to go to the islands. Trim willows back adjacent to the hide, by the lakeside and to the right of the hide.
3. Copse – cut back hawthorn and elder by sheds. Cut back hawthorn and blackthorn along path. Cut back overhanging branches along the West Side Path.
4. Pond. Remove *Crassula* by hand if possible. Pull out seedling willows around the pond.
5. Area 5. Cut back birches and hawthorns at top of path.
6. South Bank Path. Strim and cut back brambles.
7. East Bank Top Path. Cut overhanging branches and brambles.
8. Fenced off areas. Rake up after strimming.
9. Clean Tern platform.
10. Clean ditch out to car park.
11. Sand Martin Wall. Top up with sand and remove nettles from the holes. Collect branches cut down last winter.

# Weather Report

Weather data from Staveley are kindly provided by Muff Upsall, data from How Stean by permission of mylocalweather.org.uk. Sadly, July data were unavailable for How Stean.



# Meetings 2020/21

## Field meetings

4 January	New Year Plant Hunt, Staveley NR	Dr Kevin Walker
7 January	Nosterfield, Nicholson's Lagoon & YWT Ripon City Wetands	June Atkinson
14 January	Staveley Moss workshop	Nick Gaunt
18 February	Hartlepool and Teesmouth	June Atkinson
4 July	Hay-a-Park	Dr Kevin Walker
14 July	Trees of Roundhay Park	Alan Hunton and John Killingbeck
1 August	South Gare	David Barlow
1 September	Nosterfield and Lingham Complex	June Atkinson
15 September	Staveley NR	June Atkinson
22 September	Hartlepool, Newburn Bridge, Seaton Common, Greatham Creek and Saltholme	June Atkinson

## Winter Programme

### 2020

Programme cancelled because of the COVID-19 pandemic

### 2021

Virtual presentations delivered via Zoom

20 January	1574 and counting	Dr Kevin Walker
27 January	Veterinary aspects of avian flight	Nigel Harcourt-Brown
17 February	Birding in Bulgaria: A Photographic Journey	Malcolm Jones
24 February	Champions of the Flyway	Mark Pearson
17 March	The best of Britain's Summer wildlife	James Lowen

# Botanical Section

Recorder: Dr Kevin J Walker

Covid 19 put pay to much botanical recording in 2020 and travel restrictions meant focussing on areas closer to home. For me that led to daily walks on the south side of Harrogate, especially along the Crimple Valley. Despite these restrictions around 1500 records were made for our area in 2020 and I'd like to thank the following for supplying records either directly to me or via the BSBI: Kevin Birch, Rex Bradshaw, Julie Brown, Mike Brown, David Broughton, Bruce Brown, Heather Burrow, Bob Evison, Dave Higginson-Tranter, Peter Middleton, Deborah Millward, Hazel Mitford, Keith Mitford, Nick Morgan, Kerry Morrison, Sarah Moss, Leigh Parsons, Barry Perks, Anne Readshaw, Linda Robinson, Peter Smith, Sonia Starbuck, Muff Upsall, Keith Waterford and Mark Whorley.

## Ferns

One of our rarest ferns is the **Oak Fern** *Gymnocarpium dryopteris* which is restricted to a few birch woods in the upper dale. In 2020 I found it in at least three new locations for the district in Guisecliffe Wood, where it grows in deeply shaded crevices amongst huge boulders below the cliffs, in similar habitats to the better-known locations in Skrikes Wood just up the road (Fig. 1). Bruce Brown is a very active fern hunter and an expert in the group, who lives in Wharfedale but makes many visits to our area. In 2020 he found **Scaly Male Fern** *Dryopteris affinis* subsp. *affinis* and **Borrer's Scaly Male Fern** *Dryopteris borreeri* near to Hubby, both of which are likely to be under-recorded in our area, as well as the lovely **Lemon-scented Fern** *Oreopteris limbosperma* on Stainburn Moor. During the year I also found **Soft-shield Fern** *Polystichum setiferum*, in a number of new sites around Harrogate and Pannal, indicating that this over-looked species is now relatively common in our area, and may be spreading.



Oak Fern *Gymnocarpium dryopteris* growing in deep rock crevice in Guisecliffe Wood.

## Herbs

One of the few benefits of Covid 19 restrictions was that areas that are usually off-limits, such as golf courses, were opened-up to the public. This gave me a chance to have a nose around Pannal Golf Club where I was amazed to find some large areas of **Heather** *Calluna vulgaris* which were clearly being managed sympathetically by the club. I also found a few patches not far away at Spacey Houses Whin and above Horn Beck, both in rocky areas in pastures had been spared from 'agricultural improvement'.

During a survey of Ripon Barracks, which is being sold-off for housing development, David Broughton found some interesting species. These included **Good-King-Henry** *Chenopodium bonus-henricus*, a herb that was formerly widely grown around farmsteads but which now only occurs sporadically in our area. Also notable was the discovery of

**Des Etangs' St John's-wort** *H. x desetangii* (*Hypericum maculatum* subsp. *obtusiusculum* x *perforatum*). David has a good eye for tricky species such as this one which has a rather enigmatic history in our area. Dorothy Haythornthwaite and Phyl Abbott both recorded it quite widely in the past but there have been no recent records, probably because few botanists (myself included) are familiar with it, and it seems likely too that it is being overlooked as **Perforate St John's-wort** *H. perforatum*. It does appear to replace this more common species in some areas, often in the absence of **Imperforate St John's-wort** *H. maculatum*. The best way to tell it from **Perforate St John's-wort** is to check the sepals which are unequal and with an obvious prickle at the tip (apiculus) in **Des Etang's St John's-wort**.



Wood Crane's-bill *Geranium sylvaticum*  
growing on the side of the road to Scar  
House Reservoir, near to Manchester  
Hole, June 2020.

Another survey that produced lots of interesting records was of the Middle Henge at Thornborough near to Nosterfield. The management of this site is soon to change and so surveys were undertaken by Linda Robinson and Martin Hammond to assess its botanical importance. The three Henges, which are of great archaeological value, date back to the Neolithic period and were dug out from the underlying gravels to create circular ramparts we see today. The ramparts are made up of magnesian limestone rubble and as a result it has a rich limestone turf that has all but disappeared from our area. Although badly degraded in places, it still supports abundant **Rock-rose** *Helianthemum nummularium* with scattered **Betony** *Betonica officinalis*, **Clustered Bell-flower** *Campanula glomerata*, **Burnet Saxifrage** *Pimpinella saxifraga*, **Lesser Hawkbit** *Leontodon saxatilis* and **Dropwort** *Filipendula vulgaris*. On one section there was also a small population of **Dyer's Greenweed** *Genista tinctoria* which is only known from one other site in our area (Bishop Monkton Ings SSSI). In addition, it was subsequently realised that **Saw-wort** *Serratula tinctoria* is also locally

abundant, again a species currently only known from one other locality in our area (Fox Covert, Ripon Parks). Other good finds at Nosterfield included **Rosy Willowherb** *Epilobium roseum* by Linda Robinson and a new population of **Thistle Broomrape** *Orobancha reticulata*, found by Nick Morgan, growing on the banks of one of the lagoons.

Further afield I found **Wood Crane's-bill** *Geranium sylvaticum* along the roadside near to Manchester Hole, Scar House in an area that appears to be a stronghold for this species which has clearly been lost from its more traditional hay-meadow habitats further down the dale. Other good finds included **Goldilocks** *Ranunculus auricomus* on Hay-a-Park Lane, Knaresborough, by Bob Evison and **Dropwort** *Filipendula vulgaris*, at Staveley Nature Reserve by Dave Higginson-Tranter, where it was previously unrecorded. Hazel Mitford found a new location for the parasitic **Field Cow-wheat** *Melampyrum pratense* on



Meadow Saxifrage *Saxifraga granulata*  
growing by the River Crimple, Harrogate,  
May 2020.

Pateley Moor, and during lockdown rambles I found a new population of **Meadow Saxifrage** *Saxifraga granulata* growing with **Betony** *Betonica officinalis* on a streamside near to Crimple viaduct. Another nice find was **Toothwort** *Lathraea squamaria* in Burntroots Wood near to Ellington Banks, found by Kevin Birch.

In Pannal I found a huge population of **Corn Spurrey** *Spergula arvensis* growing on an area used for dumping slurry and farm waste on Walton Hill, and some other nice arable weeds also appeared in Harrogate Cricket Club where **Cut-leaved Dead-nettle** *Lamium hybridum* and **Hen-bit Dead-nettle** *Lamium amplexicaule* were both found growing on some waste ground where sadly they were later 'sprayed-off' with herbicides by the groundsmen. In comparison, it was a relatively quiet year for orchids although I did notice a couple of stems of **Broad-leaved Helleborine** *Epipactis helleborine*, growing at the foot of a hedge outside Ashville College on Green Lane in Harrogate.



Cut-leaved Dead-nettle *Lamium hybridum*



Hen-bit Dead-nettle *L. amplexicaule*

## Aliens

A few notorious invasive plants continue to spread in the Harrogate District including **Giant Hogweed** *Heracleum mantegazzianum*, which Leigh Parsons found just to the east of Markington, which appears to be very close to the source of the infestation that has spread all along the Markington Beck to the River Ure and beyond. There were also a few new locations for **Japanese Knotweed** *Reynoutria japonica* which appears to be confined to railway embankments, roadsides and urban fringes in our areas. There was also a record of the much larger cousin, **Giant Knotweed** *Reynoutria sachalinensis*, which is now well established in a new plantation near to the Crimple Beck just to the south of Harrogate (see photo with my son for scale).



Giant Knotweed *Reynoutria sachalinensis* growing by the River Crimple, Harrogate, July 2020.



Star-of-Persia *Allium christophii* growing on a roadside, Burn Bridge, June 2020.

More benign aliens recorded in 2020 included a number of very photogenic species that many of you will be familiar with in gardens but are only occasionally recorded in the wild. Possibly the most spectacular was the lovely **Star-of-Persia** *Allium cristophii* which is being increasingly grown in gardens for its large, structural flowerheads. It is also now starting to pop-up on roadsides near to habitation, as it did on a roadside in Burn Bridge, where it is likely to have arisen from seed or from discarded garden waste. **Martagon Lily** *Lilium martagon* is also a favourite in northern gardens and we have a few records of plants naturalised in our area; in 2020 I found a small colony along the Crimple Beck near to Pannal where it has clearly been established for some time. An unexpected find was **Chives** *Allium schoenoprasum*, growing on an urban pavement on the Mallinson Estate, Harrogate.



Narrow-leaved Ragwort *Senecio inaequidens*  
growing outside a development site, Cardale  
Park, August 2020.

In 2018 I mentioned the discovery of **Oval-leaved Mitrewort** *Mitella ovalis* along the Crimple Beck at only its third site in the country. Since then, further colonies have been found along the same stretch of beck extending over a much larger area suggesting that it must have been established there for some time, on shaded rocks and soil adjacent to the stream.

Another recent invader from the continent is **Narrow-leaved Ragwort** *Senecio inaequidens*. This was largely unheard of in Britain in the 1990s but since then it has spread rapidly throughout the country along roads and railways and has turned up as far north as Inverness. I first started to notice it in our area about five years ago and in 2020 I saw it in three locations around Harrogate, including at the entrance to the building site near to Cardale Park, where it may have come in on the tyres of lorries (see photo). Many of these populations appear to be transient, only lasting a few years, but it is a species that is likely to turn up with increasing regularity in the years to come, much as **Oxford Ragwort** *S. squalidus* did in the past.

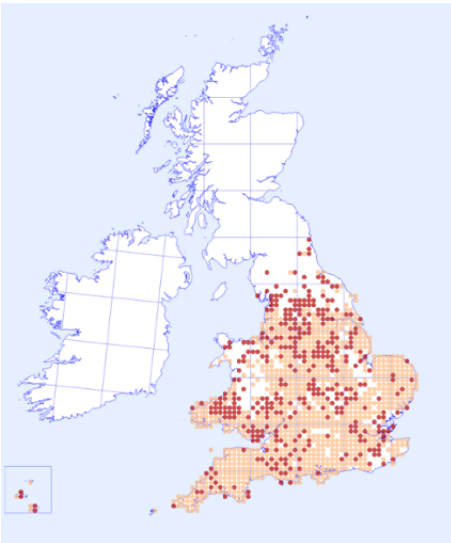


# Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* in the Harrogate District: a recent colonist spreading north

Kevin Walker, HDNS botanical recorder

Following last year's report on the spread of **Bee Orchid** *Ophrys apifera* (Walker, 2021) I thought I would follow on with an update on **Southern Marsh-orchid** *Dactylorhiza praetermissa*, which arrived hot on its heels, having expanded its British range northwards in recent decades. As its name suggests, this orchid is more at home in southern Britain (Fig. 1) where it is locally abundant in marshes and damp grassland, usually on neutral soils, but also those that are mildly acidic to mildly basic. In recent decades, it has also colonised man-made habitats, such as ex-industrial and mining sites, where it often grows in large numbers with **Common Spotted-orchid** *D. fuchsii* and its distinctive hybrid (*D. x grandis*).

Since the late 1980s *D. praetermissa* appears to have consolidated its range in southern Britain and expanded northwards as far as Lancashire, Yorkshire, Durham, Cumbria and Northumberland reaching its most northerly location near to Morpeth by 2012. As with *Ophrys apifera*, this range expansion has occurred as a result of climate change, mainly in response to warmer winters with less severe frosts, which has enabled it to survive in sites much further north than in the past. Its ability to produce 1000s of dust-like seeds has also contributed to this northerly spread, allowing it to migrate quickly and sometimes over long distances. Its propensity to hybridise with other marsh-orchids, especially *D. fuchsii*, can make identification difficult, especially in northern England where its range and habitats are now starting to overlap those of its northern counterpart, **Northern Marsh-orchid** *D. purpurella*.



**Figure 1.** The distribution of **Southern Marsh-orchid** *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* in the British Isles shown at the 10 x 10-km square (hectad) resolution. The dots are displayed to show recent spread and indicate when it was first recorded in a hectad: orange dots, first recorded before 1987; red dots, first recorded since 1987.

## Identification

The identification of marsh-orchids can be quite challenging and *D. praetermissa* is no exception. It is probably most frequently confused with *D. fuchsii*, with which it



Fig. 2a **Common Spotted-orchid** *Dactylorhiza fuchsii*, Follifoot Ridge, Pannal



Fig. 2b *D. fuchsia* x *praetermissa* (*D.* x *grandis*), Harlow Observatory, Harrogate

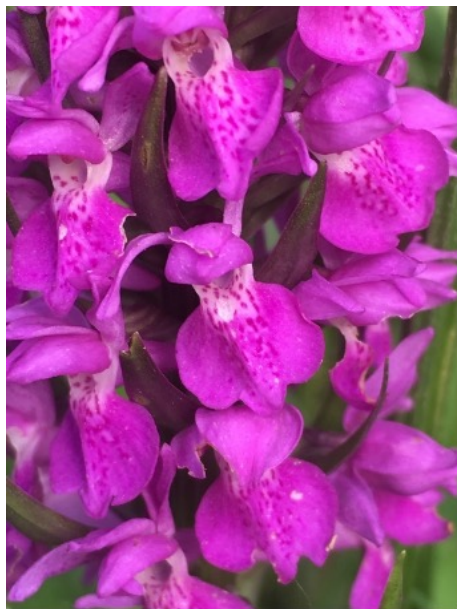


Fig. 2c **Southern Marsh-orchid** *D. praetermissa*, Harlow Observatory, Harrogate



Fig. 2d **Northern Marsh-orchid**, *D. pupurella*, Colonsay, Inner Hebrides.

frequently occurs, and its hybrid, *D. x grandis*, which occurs in all the larger populations in our area. On the higher ground in our area there is also the possibility of confusion with *D. purpurella*, although this is a very rare species in our area occurring in just a few sites in the north and only appears to grow with *D. praetermissa* at Marfield Wetlands (but see comments below). There are currently no confirmed records of its hybrid with *D. purpurella* (*D. x insignis*), but these may occur at Marfield.

These four taxa are shown in Fig. 2 and the main characters used to separate them are given in Table 1. Separating *D. praetermissa* from *D. fuchsii* is usually straightforward. The flowers of *D. praetermissa* are usually a pale pink or purple with a very rounded labellum with a much less obvious central lobe, but often quite distinct, and pale dots and dashes over much of its surface. Its leaves are usually unspotted or occasionally with some pale spots (which are very pronounced in some southern populations named **Leopard Marsh-orchid**, var. *junialis*). In comparison, *D. fuchsii* usually has white to very pale pink flowers, a lower lip (labellum) with three very distinct lobes with very dark loops. Its leaves are also almost always spotted (hence the name) and the spike has narrow triangular shape.

Table 1. Morphological characters used to differentiate Common Spotted-orchid (CSO), Southern Marsh-orchid (SMO) and Northern Marsh-orchid (NMO).

	CSO	CSO x SMO	SMO	NMO
Stem	Solid	?	Hollow	Hollow
Leaves	Spotted	Spotted or unspotted	Usually unspotted	Usually unspotted
Flower colour	White-pale pink	Pale pink-purple	Pale pink-mid-purple	Mid-purple-dark purple
Labellum shape	Three-lobed	Rounded	Rounded	Diamond-shaped
Labellum lobe	Deeply-lobed	Distinctly lobed	Distinctly or indistinctly lobed	Indistinctly lobed
Labellum markings	Dark loops	Dark loops and dashes	Pale dots and dashes	Dark loops and dashes

The hybrid with *D. fuchsii* is more challenging to separate but is usually intermediate in all characters but almost always stands out ‘from the crowd’ as a much taller and robust plant (due to hybrid vigour) with a rounded labellum approaching *D. praetermissa* but with the darker loops of *D. fuchsii*. In some populations these hybrids can be hard to tell apart from *D. purpurella*.

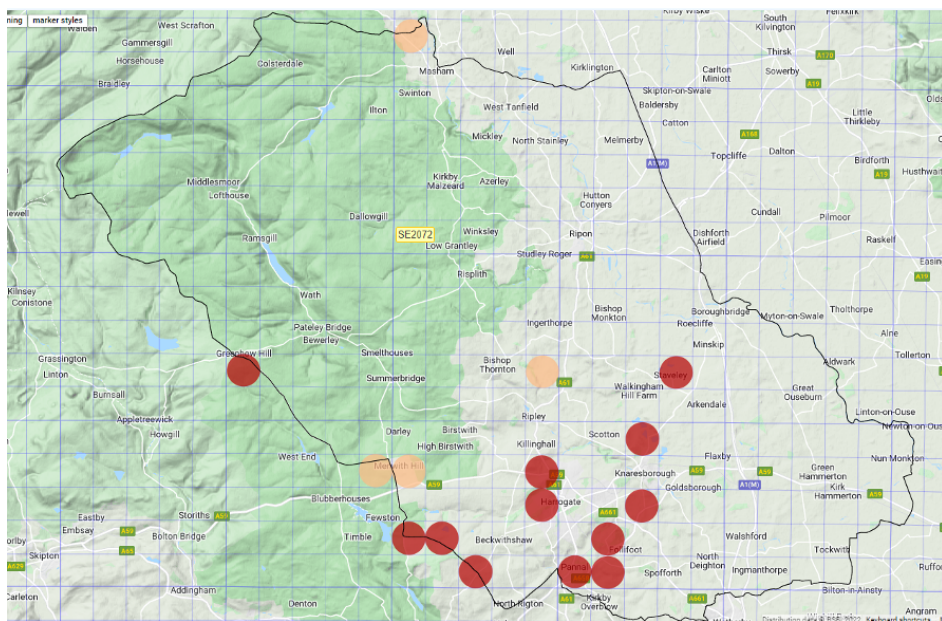
Telling *D. praetermissa* from *D. purpurella* is relatively straightforward as the flowers of the latter are usually a much deeper crimson-purple and the labellum is more ‘diamond-shaped’ with very dark continuous loops. These characters are well expressed in the photo of the plant from Colonsay (Fig. 2d) although towards the south of its range it can have much paler flowers that are much closer to *D. praetermissa*. Typically, the spike of *D. purpurella* is shorter and more conical whereas that of *D. praetermissa* is more pointed and statuesque, often growing 30-40 cm tall in longer vegetation.

An excellent account of the differences between these two taxa is given on pages 200-201 of Sean Cole and Mike Waller’s excellent guide to Britain’s orchids which is a must have

for anyone trying to get to grips with this wonderful group of plants (Cole & Waller, 2020).

### Distribution in the Harrogate District

The distribution of Southern Marsh-orchid in the Harrogate District is shown in Fig. 3 and the sites it is currently known from (as of August 2022) are listed in Table 2. The first record for *D. praetermissa* in the Harrogate District appears to have been made by Joyce Hartley from the small nature reserve on the north-western corner of Menwith Hill Air Base in 1998. There is some confusion as to whether this was in fact *D. purpurella* but it was recorded again there by A.M. and D. Leather in 2002, apparently in a different location “on footpath crossing the north-eastern corner” but it has never been relocated in either locality despite recent searches of suitable habitat. During a recent survey by the author there were many *D. fuchsii* and a few plants approaching *D. purpurella* but possibly only hybrids which may have been confused with *D. praetermissa* in the past.



**Figure 3.** The distribution of Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* in the Harrogate District Naturalists’ Society recording area, mapped at the 2 x 2 km scale (tetrad). Orange circles are tetrads with records made before 2010 (but not after); red circles are tetrads with records made since 2010.

In 1999 Bob Adams recorded c.200 plants from an undisclosed location near to Greenhow. The exact location is unknown but in recent years a few plants approaching *D. praetermissa* have been found on the floor of Duck Street Quarry, although again possible confusion with *D. purpurella* or hybrids cannot be ruled out.

In 2000 there was an unconfirmed record from Farnham South Lagoon, made by Geoffrey Wilmore, during a botanical survey of the Site of Importance for Nature

Conservation (SINC) but it has not been seen there recently and members involved in the management of the site have no recollection of it ever having occurred.

In 2002 a single plant of *D. praetermissa* was found in a meadow near to Grange Quarry, New Park growing close to a pond dug by Colin Slator in the 1990s (Manson, 2002). Since then, its numbers have increased at this locality and in 2018 there were 100s of flowering spikes growing immediately adjacent to the pond and extending out into the adjacent marshy grassland. The site also supports a strong colony of *D. fuchsii* and many hybrids with *D. praetermissa*. In the same year, it was also recorded in Cayton Gill near to Ripley, during a Yorkshire Naturalists' Union field Excursion although no details were published in the account of the trip (Henderson & Lambert, 2004) and it has not been recorded since.

In 2008 a second large colony was discovered by Ian Wallace along the disused railway line near to Follifoot where it must have been established for some time as there were c.250 plants plus many hybrids with *D. fuchsii* when originally reported (Wallace, 2008). Today this is by far the most extensive colony with more than a 1,000 plants and 100s of hybrids. A year later Linda Robinson found a good colony at Marfield Wetlands reserve, to the north of Masham, where it was growing with *D. fuchsii*, *D. purpurella* and a bewildering range of hybrids (Linda Robinson, pers. comm.).

In 2010 Mike Brown spotted a few plants growing under willows next to Harlow Hill Observatory which he has continued to monitor. In recent years there have been around 10 plants growing under trees and in adjacent damp grassland with both *D. fuchsii* and hybrids.

In 2012 a single spike of an unknown marsh orchid was spotted by Dorothy Griffin in her meadow close to Staveley (Moor End). This meadow had been heavily grazed for many years but due to change in ownership the sheep were removed and it has been managed for hay, with no applications of fertilisers since (Dorothy Griffiths, pers. comm.). In 2013 several spikes flowered and were tentatively identified as *D. praetermissa* and when visited by the author in 2016 there were around 30 spikes with a few hybrids. The author visited again in 2022 but only hybrids appeared to be present.

In 2013 the Bradford Botany Group found a few plants at an undisclosed location in Staveley Nature Reserve but was not seen again until recently when a few plants were found amongst tall grasses near to the ponds in the Orchard Field (Muff Upsall, pers. comm.).

In 2015 Arthur Kinnear reported the presence of a small colony of marsh-orchids on a roadside on Sandwith Moor (Brown Bank), to the west of Harrogate, growing amongst acidic vegetation, where there were still around 18 plants present in 2022. In the same year Dan McAndrew also reported a small colony in rough grassland in the abandoned grounds of the former Dunlopillo factory in Pannal. A survey of the site revealed the presence of around 50 plants growing with *D. fuchsii* and hybrids but the site has since been destroyed by housing developments. A small portion of the turf was translocated nearby but the area was never managed and no trace of the orchids has been found since. A small number of *D. praetermissa* occur in another site close by (Long Acre Walk) where they grow along the edge of a small plantation and on the margin of a semi-improved hay meadow.

In 2016 a second colony of around 100 spikes was located on Sandwith Moor (Broad Dubb), near to the Brown Bank colony, again along a roadside extending for hundreds of metres on both verges. In 2019 it was also found on the verge of the Harrogate eastern ring-road (A658) near to Follifoot where the author remembers having seen orchids a few years before but had never stopped to check which species they were. In 2021 the author found small colonies in a new plantation close to the same ring-road just to the west of Birkham Wood and a damp field near to Bar Lane, on the site of an old gravel working that was landscaped in the late 1980s or early 1990s. Finally, whilst preparing this report the author found two small colonies growing in close proximity on the northern outskirts of Pannal in damp, rough grassland that was formerly semi-improved but appears to have had no agricultural inputs for many years. Both areas have been walked frequently by the author and so the plants almost certainly flowered for the first time in 2022.

Other possible locations include Brimham Rocks and Briscoe Rigg Gas Offtake section near to Beckwithshaw. In both sites there are plants with the characteristics of both *D. praetermissa* and *D. purpurella* which have so far evaded a definite identification!

### **Habitats**

The vast majority of populations of *D. praetermissa* in the recording area are located in relatively species-rich slightly acid to slightly calcareous grassland that has developed on heavy clays that are water-logged in the winter but dry out in the summer. Many of these appear to have been under some form of pasture management in the past, possibly receiving some form of fertiliser inputs (artificial fertiliser, farmyard manure), but have not been managed intensively as pasture for many years whereas others represent areas of rough grassland and/or scrub that has developed on land that was formerly used for gravel extraction, arable cultivation or in areas that have been largely unmanaged for years by the sides of playing fields, railways, roads, waterworks and gas stations.

### **Conclusions**

Although *D. praetermissa* is still a very localised plant in our area we can expect it to become more common in the years to come, possibly even eclipsing Bee Orchids in terms of overall numbers and locations. Hybridisation and introgression with *D. fuchsii* and *D. purpurella* are also likely to increase, which will only add to the confusion surrounding its status and identification. But like the Bee orchid it is a very welcome addition to our flora and one that will give pleasure to all that are lucky enough to chance upon it.

### **Acknowledgements**

I would like to thank Simon Warwick, Dan McAndrew, Mike Brown, Arthur Kinnear, Muff Upsall, Linda Robinson and Martin Hammond for information on individual sites and to Dorothy Griffin for allowing me to look around her lovely meadow at Moor End, Staveley. I'm also very grateful to Ian Denholm for checking some of my identifications.

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Table 2. Sites with populations of Southern Marsh-orchid *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* in the Harrogate District Naturalists' Society recording area. Sites are listed in order of their year of discovery.

Locality	1-km	First	Habitat	Size
Menwith Hill	SE1957, SE2057	1998	Damp acid grassland amongst scrub	?
Greenhow Hill	SE1163	1999	Original location unknown but a few plants were found in Duck Street Quarry in 2017	c.200
Farnham South Lagoon	SE3559	2000	Unknown	?
Grange Quarry, New Park	SE2957	2002	Damp neutral grassland around pond	c.1000
Cayton Gill	SE2862	2002	Unknown	?
Follifoot, old railway	SE3351, SE3352	2008	Damp neutral grassland, marsh and scrub	c.1300
Marfield Wetlands	SE2182	2009	Unknown	?
Harlow Hill, Harrogate	SE2854	2010	Damp neutral grassland and scrub	c.10
Moor End, Staveley	SE3662	2012	Damp neutral grassland managed for hay	c.30
Staveley Nature Reserve	SE3663	2013	Damp neutral grassland by pond	c.5
Pannal, old business park	SE3051	2015	Damp neutral grassland, now destroyed	c.50
Pannal, Long Acre	SE3051	2015	Damp neutral grassland and hay meadow	c.15
Sandwith Moor, Brown Bank	SE2153	2015	Damp acid grassland on roadside verge	c.18
Sandwith Moor, Broad Dubb	SE2252	2016	Damp acid grassland on roadside verge	c.100
Follifoot, A658 (ring-road)	SE3352	2019	Damp neutral grassland on roadside verge	c.30
Bar Lane, Knaresborough	SE3558	2021	Damp neutral grassland on former gravel pit	c.5
Birkham Wood, west of	SE3554	2021	Damp neutral grassland / scrub	c.10
Pannal, All Saint's Court	SE3052	2022	Damp neutral grassland	c.20

# Invertebrate Section

## Butterflies

**Recorder: Mike Barnham**

### Introduction

The butterfly season started off very promisingly, but poor weather produced a disappointing second half. Depending on their timing and requirements, a number of species did relatively well this year including the skippers, Orange-tip, Small White, Brimstone, Small Heath, Dark Green Fritillary, Peacock and Small Tortoiseshell. Migrants were generally weak, with no sightings of Camberwell Beauty or Clouded Yellow in the district this year; nor were there any reports of Marbled Whites here. In all, 29 species were recorded in the season. With the Covid-19 pandemic causing restrictions on movement and the closure of a number of our nature reserves in the spring, opportunities for hunting butterflies were frustratingly limited at that time.

Perhaps the most interesting developments this year were the discovery of two new colonies of the Dingy Skipper, one quite extensive and clearly flourishing (see below), and the increasing observation of Silver-washed Fritillary in suitable sites here, especially in the woodlands – something to watch for in the coming seasons. In our colony of Small Blue, now seen over a period of eleven years, small numbers of second brood specimens have been reported in August in three of those years.

Late reports from the 2019 season included the sighting of a male Silver-washed Fritillary at Harlow Carr Gardens on 21 July (DA). Further material was gleaned from Butterfly Conservation publications, based on data submitted to them by visitors to our district. The more notable of these records included Green Hairstreak at Ellingstring in April, Silver-washed Fritillary at Brimham Rocks in early July, two Small Heaths at Staveley on 23 September, a second-generation Small Blue on 5 August and a Swallowtail at Harlow Carr on 13 August. This last record included a photograph that showed features consistent with the continental form, a butterfly that does turn up occasionally at the Yorkshire coast; in our district it amounts to the third documented sighting after Staveley (in 2006) and Harrogate (2011).

The information here will continue to be set out in the currently agreed taxonomic order as described in the 2013 document of Agassiz DJL., Beavan SD and Heckford RJ: A Checklist of the Lepidoptera of the British Isles. The reference numbers of the earlier scheme of Bradley and Fletcher are included in brackets.

Abbreviations used in the text include GP (Gravel Pit), NR (Nature Reserve) and MOD (Ministry of Defence land, visited only by special permission).

### Hesperiidae

57.001 (1532) **Dingy Skipper** *Erynnis tages* The first sighting of this inconspicuous and highly localised butterfly was of five insects in the woodland clearings at Low Grantley on 6 May. The peak sighting of 21 butterflies was at our main stronghold, Ellington Banks MOD, on 19 May. Just one insect was noted at Nosterfield NR during the month. Excitingly, two new positions for the butterfly were discovered this year - at Ripon City



Wetlands in May, and on 1 June at Warsill High Moor, where thirteen butterflies were counted on open stony tracks and ditches in the forest.

57.006 (1526) **Small Skipper** *Thymelicus sylvestris* The first butterflies were noted on the early date of 13 June at West Tanfield and Nosterfield NR. During a flight season that lasted to 12 August reports were widespread from our lower land up as far as Humberstone Bank. There was an impressive maximum count of 251 insects on knapweeds and creeping thistles in the grasslands below Bilton Hall on 24 July, and other good counts included Low Grantley woodlands (112), Wetherby: Sandbeck to Swinnow road verges (60) and Kirk Deighton Whin (30).

57.009 (1531) **Large Skipper** *Ochlodes sylvanus* The first butterfly was seen at Thruscross Reservoir on 28 May and the season lasted until 21 July, when insects were recorded at Winksley, Low Grantley and Spa Gill. Numbers are usually in single figures at most sites in our district, with higher counts in June this year at Laver Banks (29 butterflies), Knaresborough: Hay'a'Park (24), Aldfield: North House Wood (21), Goldsborough: Pikeshaw Wood (17) and Staveley NR (10+).

## Pieridae

58.003 (1553) **Orange Tip** *Anthocharis cardamines* This year the butterfly was seen on the wing from 5 April at Burton Leonard: Lime Kilns NR until 17 June at Bellflask. It is a widespread butterfly generally seen in small numbers, but good counts this time included 50 insects at Ripon Parks, High Batts NR area (30+), Bellflask (30), Nosterfield NR (20), Goldsborough Woods (16), Staveley NR (15+), Low Grantley (14) and Ferrensby: Fox Covert (11). From 27 April eggs were noted widely, and up the dale as far as How Stean Gorge, on Garlic Mustard, Honesty, Sweet Rocket and Cuckooflower, while larvae were apparent from 26 May to 15 June.

58.006 (1549) **Large White** *Pieris brassicae* From the initial butterfly noted at Harrogate: Plompton Drive on 5 April, the first brood insects were seen in numbers of one to four until the last on 15 June at Aldfield and Hutton Conyers. The subsequent generation was seen from 23 June at North Stainley to 17 September in Knaresborough and Harrogate with peak counts featuring the High Batts/Pennycroft area (with 20-30 butterflies), Goldsborough Woods (24), Wormald Green old tip (21), Staveley NR (12+), Bilton Hall fields (12) and Farnham (11). Singles reported from Ripon Parks on 4 and 5 October might represent a partial further generation, not often seen here.

58.007 (1550) **Small White** *Pieris rapae* In the first brood, butterflies were noted widely from 7 April at Knaresborough: Aspin to give peak counts in April and May of twenty one butterflies at Goldsborough Woods, fifteen at Knaresborough: Hopewell House and twelve at Burton Leonard. Although numbers dipped, sightings were continuous with the next brood, and fresh butterflies were seen from 21 June at Goldsborough Woods. The insect then put on a strong appearance from July to September, later waning to give the final record of two butterflies at Staveley NR on 22 October. Peak sightings in the second showing included 200 butterflies in a Brassica field at Scotton, Goldsborough Woods (114), Ripon Parks (57), Burton Leonard: Rakes Lane (54), North Lees (50), Walshford (43) and Staveley NR (30+).

58.008 (1551) **Green-veined White** *Pieris napi* The first two butterflies were noted at Hutton Conyers on 7 April, and peak sightings in May included Goldsborough Woods

(32 insects), Dacre Banks (27), Ilton (24), Scar House reservoir (20+), Fellbeck (19) and Heyshaw (14). Fresh butterflies at Spofforth on 22 June and Mickley and Musterfield on 23 June overlapped with first brood insects, and this second generation featured peak sightings in July and early August at Wormald Green old tip (52 butterflies), Goldsborough Woods (30), High Batts NR (30), Bilton Hall fields (21), Laver Banks (18) and Low Grantley woodlands (16). The last six butterflies were seen at Goldsborough: Pikeshaw Wood on 9 September.

58.013 (1546) **Brimstone** *Gonepteryx rhamni* This species continues to do well in our district. Sightings in the first showing ranged from 22 March at Grafton to 1 July at Spofforth, with reports from nearly forty sites stretching from Upper Dunsforth to Pateley Bridge and Thornborough. Good counts in this, the principal showing of the year, included eleven butterflies in the Nidd Gorge woodland at Scotton Banks, ten at Bellflask, Staveley NR (8), High Batts NR area (6) and Hutton Conyers (4). Eggs were found on buckthorns at Knaresborough: Somersby and Thornborough: Centre Hill in May, and larvae were recorded at the Knaresborough site from 19 May to 14 June. The second showing, noted at twelve sites, dated from 27 July at Staveley NR until 30 September at Spofforth, with no count higher than three insects.

## Nymphalidae

59.002 (1615) **Wall** *Lasiommata megera* The first showing of Wall ran from 9 May at Ripon: High Batts NR until 15 June, when the last one of eighteen reported locations was at Hampsthwaite. Numbers were mostly in low single figures, with peak counts of eight butterflies at both Blazefield and Hartwith Moor. Butterflies in the second showing were reported from just eight sites, dating from mid-July at High Batts to 15 September at Humberstone Bank: Hoodstorth Lane. During this time peaks of eight butterflies were seen at Nosterfield and five at Heyshaw: Hill Top.

59.003 (1614) **Speckled Wood** *Pararge aegeria* The butterfly was first seen at Copgrove slopes on 5 April, and sightings continued throughout the season until the last one was recorded at Nosterfield NR on 20 October. Sightings were widespread and plentiful, mainly in single figures, but in the early autumn there were twenty seen at both Ribston Big Wood and High Batts NR area, and good numbers also at Winksley Plantation (19), Spofforth (18), Knaresborough: Hay'a Park (13), Staveley NR (12+), Ripon Quarry Moor (11), with ten each at Goldsborough Woods, Fellbeck, Low Grantley woodlands and Ellington Banks.

59.005 (1627) **Small Heath** *Coenonympha pamphilus* This year we had reports from seventeen sites, dating from 20 May at Heyshaw: Hill Top moorland to 3 August at Ilton Galloper, Grewelthorpe Moor and Kirkby Malzeard: Wreaks Lane. The best numbers were seen in grassy areas at Beckwithshaw: Little Alms Cliff (41 butterflies), Warsill High Moor (39), Greenhow: Duck Street Quarry (11) and around Scar House Reservoir (11).

59.009 (1629) **Ringlet** *Aphantopus hyperantus* The first three butterflies were seen at Staveley NR on a typical date of 16 June, and the flight period lasted until 11 August at Hutton Conyers. As usual there were some strong counts in grassy areas, such as at the roadside verges at Wetherby: Swinnow (242 insects), Low Grantley woodlands (237), A1 / A168 verges near Hopperton (157), High Batts NR area (150), Winksley Plantation (128), Allerton Mauleverer roadside verges (113) and Galphay: Laver Banks (103).

59.010 (1626) **Meadow Brown** *Maniola jurtina* The butterfly made its first appearances quite early this year, with single records such as Staveley NR on 29 May, Nosterfield: Lingham and Farnham both on 2 June. The main hatch was from 14 June and the flight period was prolonged into September, with single sightings then at Blazefield, Wormald Green old tip, Farnham GP until the last on 14 September at Ripon Quarry Moor and Bishopton. High counts in July and August included 'hundreds' of butterflies at Staveley NR, High Batts NR area (200+), Farnham GP (183), Ellington Banks: Birkby meadow (153), Thorpe Underwood: Morsel House (129) and Spofforth (120). A specimen of the unusual pale aberration *ab. cinerea* was found on the grassy A168 roadside at Allerton Mauleverer on 1 July.

59.011 (1625) **Gatekeeper** *Pyronia tithonus* The first butterfly was spotted at Hopperton: A168 flyover on 4 July and a total of twenty locations were reported in our lower land before the last specimen was seen at Farnham GP on 5 September. Good counts in early August included Farnham GP (148 butterflies), Tockwith: South Field (55) and Knaresborough: Hay'a Park (46), while the butterfly was considered 'plentiful' at Harrogate: Almsford Bank. Our position is close to the northern limit for this species, and this year we had sightings at Nutwith Common, High Batts: Pennycroft, Hutton Conyers and Ripon: Little Studley.

59.017 (1608) **Silver-washed Fritillary** *Argynnis paphia* On 6 July three fresh butterflies were seen flying and nectaring on bramble blossom in clearings along the public footpath below Ellington Banks, and a further, single record came from the MOD site above on 6 August. On 19 July a female was seen nectaring on Spear Thistle flowers at Goldsborough: Pikeshaw Wood, and on 21 July a male and a female were found in separate clearings at Low Grantley: Kendale and Hencliffe woods. The final record for the year came from Kettlesing, where a male was observed feeding on buddleia flowers on 24 August. These increasing records appear to show that the butterfly is now settling in at suitable spots in our district.

59.019 (1607) **Dark Green Fritillary** *Argynnis aglaja* Records this year started with a sighting at Staveley NR on 16 June, followed by three butterflies at Ripon: High Batts: Pennycroft and one in the reserve on 25 June; the final butterfly at High Batts was seen on 30 July. Records from previous seasons both there and over the river at Bellflask seem to indicate that there has been, and remains, an enduring small colony closely within that locality. At Nosterfield NR singles were seen on 26 June and 2 July. At the high-altitude and regular site of Greenhow: Duck Street Quarry the year's maximum of fourteen fresh insects was recorded on 12 July, while by month end the count there was down to five butterflies.

59.023 (1590) **Red Admiral** *Vanessa atalanta* As usual and unexceptional, the number of this species built up slowly and steadily, with sightings throughout the season. The first butterfly was recorded at Scotton on 2 May, and one or two were found quite widely across the district in the following few weeks. The year's peak sighting of twenty butterflies was found at Staveley NR on 24 June and on 5 July there were fourteen at Galphay and ten at Ripon Quarry Moor. In the first week of September the records included fourteen butterflies at Brimham, thirteen at Dacre and ten at Knaresborough: Somersby. Two larvae were found on nettles at Blazefield on 1 September. Numbers of butterflies then reduced, ending with four November sightings of singles: at Sharow, Staveley NR, Nosterfield NR and finally Kirby Hill on 23 November.

59.024 (1591) **Painted Lady** *Vanessa cardui* The butterfly was generally scarce in the district this year. A small influx of single migrants was reported from just six locations, from the first on 27 May at Kettlelesing until the last, two butterflies, at High Batts: Pennycroft on 25 June. Offspring were seen at six sites between 17 August and 15 September, with maxima of three insects at Staveley NR and two at both Glasshouses and Sharow.

59.026 (1597) **Peacock** *Aglais io* Brave butterflies temporarily out of hibernation were noted from 6 to 21 January at Ripon, Staveley NR, Lumley Moor: New Plantation (two specimens) and Ripon: Little Studley. The main Spring emergence was seen from 4 March at Harrogate: Plompton Drive until 15 June at Azerley, giving maximum sightings in April of 35 butterflies at Skell Gill, 30 in the Nidd Gorge at Scotton, seventeen at Copgrove and fifteen at High Batts NR. The butterfly was widely seen, as usual, and subsequent larvae on nettles were noted at twenty-seven sites between 30 May and 25 July. The new generation of fresh butterflies appeared at Hutton Conyers on 8 July, an early date, and insects were on the wing until the last at Sharow on 1 November. Good records in this showing included the Wormald Green old tip (107 butterflies, many nectaring on Teasels), High Batts NR area (80), Farnham GP (51), Staveley NR (30+), Knaresborough: Somersby (26) and Wetherby A1 Services (22).

59.027 (1593) **Small Tortoiseshell** *Aglais urticae* The first emerging butterfly was seen at Harrogate: Plompton Drive on 5 March, and good counts in this first showing included Goldsborough Woods (24 butterflies), Bellflask (19), Hutton Conyers (17), Grantley: Skelding Moor (13 feeding at Ground Ivy flowers), Ferrensby (13) and Knaresborough: Hopewell House (13). In Harrogate on 25 March a pair were settled on a wall, mating – a rare sight (WR). From 7 May until 25 June larvae were spotted on nettles at thirty-seven sites. The number of butterflies dipped in early June, but the new generation overlapped with fresh insects from the early date of 5 June. Numbers then increased before the end of the month to produce records such as Spofforth (81 insects), High Batts NR (80), Sicklinghall (59) and Scotton (43). A new brood of larvae was seen from 4 July at Wetherby: Sandbeck until 1 September at Glasshouses. In early September higher peaks were reported, such as at Glasshouses (85 butterflies on Creeping Thistle flowers), Brimham (79), the A1/A59 stormwater reservoir (70 nectaring on Purple Loosestrife and knapweeds) and Ripon Quarry Moor (60 on thistles, ragworts and buddleia). The final butterfly of the season was seen at Sharow on 1 November.

59.031 (1598) **Comma** *Polygonia c-album* An early specimen was seen out of hibernation on 16 January at Staveley NR, but the main Spring emergence was from 24 March. The butterfly was noted from twenty-seven locations at this time, with maxima of seven insects at Scotton Banks and four at Harrogate: Plompton Drive; the last two were seen at Ellington Banks MOD on 19 May. The later showing of butterflies was from 23 June (an early date) at Mickley: Piccadilly until 6 October at Follifoot: Brown Hill Wood. The peak sightings in late July and early August included eleven butterflies at Bellflask, seven at Spa Gill, five at High Batts NR and three each at Ripon Quarry Moor and Staveley NR. Larvae were found on hedgerow elm shoots at Brearton: Dockenbush in late August. The numbers of adults usually peak here in the autumn, but this year they were disappointing.

## Lycaenidae

61.001 (1561) **Small Copper** *Lycaena phleas* Butterflies in the first showing were on the wing at Grantley: Skelding Moor and Upper Skell Gill on 24 April, and the last of this brood were noted at Haverah Park: John o' Gaunts and Warsill High Moor on 1 June. Counts were in low single figures at most of the twenty-one sites recorded, but the May peaks were of nine butterflies at Ilton Moor: Cat Gill and eight on the moorland track above Middlesmoor. Second showing insects were seen from 12 July at High Batts: Pennycroft until the last at Hutton Conyers on 17 September. Although the insect was found at more than twenty sites at this time, none showed more than three butterflies.

61.004 (1557) **Purple Hairstreak** *Favonius quercus* An egg was found on oak at Copgrove: Crow House in January. Reports of butterflies from 25 sites dated from 24 June at Staveley NR (two insects) until 1 September at Summerbridge, where six insects were still seen flying around the boughs of oak in the evening at woodland edge above the village and down at the riverside. As usual, Harrogate: Cardale oak woods showed the maximum count, with a showing of 64 butterflies on 2 August; there was a count of fourteen butterflies in the trees at Bilton Banks on 16 July.

61.005 (1555) **Green Hairstreak** *Callophrys rubi* This pretty butterfly was seen at nineteen sites this year in moorland and moorland edge terrain where the bilberry grows, from 24 April until 30 May. The best sightings included Upper Skell Gill (70 insects), Grantley: High Grey Stones (52), Ilton: Druids Plantation (46), Greenhow (20), Kirkby Malzeard: Stock Beck Moor (17), Ilton: Cat Gill (11) and Eavestone: Topham Close (11).

61.006 (1558) **White-letter Hairstreak** *Satyrrium w-album* Eggs were found on the twigs of Wych Elm at five sites in the autumn and winter-time, and a fully-grown larva was found on elm at Brearton: Rakes Lane on 17 May. The flight period this year extended from the early date of 16 June at Staveley NR to 9 August at Killinghall Bridge. Reports of the adults came from 26 sites and, as is usually the case, numbers were small. Sightings included Staveley NR (7 insects), Mickley: Piccadilly (6), Ellington Banks: Birkby meadow (6) and five each at West Tanfield: Sleningford Mill, Scotton, Galphay and Nosterfield: Flasks (including a mating tandem pair there). At Littlethorpe on 5 July, a very windy day, there were five butterflies sheltering and nectaring on Creeping Thistle in a roadside ditch below the elms.

61.010 (1569) **Small Blue** *Cupido mininus* After a very dry Spring, our small colony on its sunny, south-west-facing slope continued to flourish, with records from the early date of 7 May. Peak counts of ten insects were made towards the end of the month and the last of the brood was seen on 2 June. On 3 August a single butterfly of an offspring generation was recorded there. No wandering butterflies were found in the surrounding countryside this year.

61.012 (1580) **Holly Blue** *Celastrina argiolus* In its first showing the butterfly was seen widely in ones and twos, mainly in suburban or garden settings, between 6 April and 29 May. Within twenty reported locations the maximum count at this time was of three butterflies at both Bilton Hall (around holly trees) and Knaresborough: Somersby. The second appearance was from 19 July at Goldsborough Great Wood until 13 September at Knaresborough: Somersby. There were only six reported sites in this showing, and the

maximum count was again three insects at Knaresborough. Most observers considered this to be a rather weak year for the species.

61.015 (1572) **Brown Argus** *Aricia agestis* Records of the first brood spanned from Ellington Banks MOD on 19 May until 16 June at Staveley NR. The butterfly was found at eight sites at this time, with a maximum count of three insects at both Marton-cum-Grafton hilltop and Ripon City Wetlands NR. The second showing was stronger, from 31 July at Farnham GP and Staveley NR until 1 September at the latter site. Counts from twelve positions in August included 15 butterflies at Bellflask, 14 at Farnham GP and four at both High Batts: Pennycroft and Nosterfield: Flasks.

61.018 (1574) **Common Blue** *Polyommatus icarus* Sightings in the first brood dated from an early 18 May, when eight butterflies were recorded at Ellington banks MOD, to the last four insects at Staveley NR on 24 June. Eleven positions were noted for the butterfly at this time, ranging from Haverah Park and Flaxby up to Thornborough: Centre Hill and Nosterfield NR. Numbers were all within single figures except at Warsill High Moor, where 74 insects were counted along the forestry tracks on 1 June. At the high-altitude site of Greenhow: Duck Street Quarry the butterflies emerge later, and a count of 193 was made there on 12 July; though the number is notable, it is lower than usual for the site on account of heavy grazing. The second showing was from 21 July at Low Grantley until 15 September at Staveley NR, and the best counts in early August were of 14 butterflies at the A1 / A59 stormwater reservoir and ten at Farnham GP.

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# Moths

**Recorders: Macro Moths – Mrs Jill Warwick;  
Micro Moths – Dr CH Fletcher**

## Introduction

2020 was an exceptional year in many ways. Lockdown meant that many people looked for ways to fill their time whilst cooped up at home, and moth trapping was an ideal way to keep boredom at bay. In fact, so many people across the country became interested in moths that many entomological suppliers were unable to satisfy demand and moth traps became difficult to get hold of. In our area, the result was 18,706 records received, beating the previous high spot of 2018, with 818 species recorded; far and away the biggest total ever received. These comprised 441 micros and 377 macros, meaning that the rise was due to a major increase in the number of microlepidoptera recorded. A huge total of 17 new species was found for the Society's area – all but one being microlepidoptera. The HDNS list now stands at 1202 species: 690 micros and 512 macros. A handful of these new species are ones moving into the area, probably due to climate change. The majority however, are micros which appear to have been undetected in the area until now. Many species of microlepidoptera are not attracted to light traps and have to be actively searched for, often by looking for larval stages. It appears that we are getting better at doing this. It is possible that there are still more species unrecorded, especially in upland areas, so we will keep searching!

Rather than list all species recorded in 2020, as we have done in previous years, here is a smaller list of species which represents the year's highlights. New species for our area are marked with a \*:

### 3.004 **Gold Swift** *Phymatopus hecta*

The only record this year was of four at light at Smelthouses on 24 June.

### \*4.006 *Stigmella sakhalinella*

There are several *Stigmella* species which mine birch leaves. This species was first found in the county as recently as 2010 though it may have been always resident. A mine on silver birch at Hutton Conyers on 29 October was new for our area and for VC65.

### 4.014 *S. catharticella*

This buckthorn-mining species has been found at High Batts and Nosterfield NRs in previous years, but mines at Staveley NR on 18 October were the first for VC64.

### \*4.053 *S. incognitella*

This rare miner of apple leaves is rarely reported in the county, with 17 records all of leaf mines. An adult to light at Hutton Conyers on 5 July had to be confirmed by dissection and was the first record of an adult in Yorkshire. Another new species for our area.

### 6.003 *Heliozela sericiella*

This species mines the petiole of oak leaves before forming an oval cut-out. Mines at Hutton Conyers on 24 October were the first for VC65 and the second for our recording area.

\*8.001 *Incurvaria pectinea*

It is surprising that *pectinea* has never been seen in our area as it occurs widely across the county; the larvae “peppering” leaves of birch or hazel with round holes. There were three records of typical cut-outs in birch leaves from Ilton and Smelthouses in June and October.

12.048 *Psychoides filicivora*

Larvae of this species feed on various species of fern, particularly Hart’s-tongue Fern. It was first found in our area at Brearton in 2018. We now have more records from Newby Hall and from Hutton Conyers, where adults at light on 19 May and 7 September were the first for VC65.

\*15.024 *Parornix loganella*

The only Yorkshire records of this species are three in the 19th century and one from Allertorpe Common in 1998. Most British records are from Scotland. One came to light at Smelthouses on 24 June and identification was confirmed by dissection as this genus is not identifiable by wing markings.

\*28.008 *Metalampra italica*

This adventive species is thought to be native to Italy. It was first found in the UK in Devon in 2003 and has slowly spread. Moths came to light at Langthorpe on 14 and 20 August. The larvae feed on decaying wood and could have been imported on hardwood logs.

\*28.024 *Tachystola acroxantha*

Another adventive species, native to Australia and first seen in the UK in 1908. It reached Yorkshire in 2012 and is now quite common in the area around Leeds. Our first record came to light at Boroughbridge on 21 September.

\*35.042 *Bryotropha boreella*

One was netted at dusk at Guisecliffe on 7 August. This is the most easterly record in Yorkshire, all previous records are from the very west of the county. The larvae feed on upland mosses.

\*35.154 *Xenolechia aethiops*

There has only been one record of this scarce moth of heather moorland in Yorkshire since 1950. We now have two more - one at Healey on 18 April 2018 which was identified after two years, and one at Hutton Conyers on 11 April which must have been a wandering individual.

37.029 *Coleophora orbitella*

Only the eighth Yorkshire record and the second for our area. A larval case on birch at Ilton on 15 October.

\*37.032 *C. albitarsella*

One at High Batts NR on 31 July. Virtually all county records are from the extreme south-east of Yorkshire. The larvae feed on marjoram and related plants.



\*37.090 *C. artemisicolella*

One at Hutton Conyers 25 June. All county records are from the very south. The larvae feed on mugwort.

\*38.022 *Elachista gleichenella*

There were only four county records of this scarce species before 2020, though three turned up in various parts of the county this year. One at Ellington Banks on 3 July was new for our area. The larvae feed on various *Carex* species.

\*49.076 *Acleris cristana*

This species has been slowly spreading across the county in the last few years. One at Hutton Conyers on 20 October was the first for our area.

49.084 *A. notana*

This species must be dissected to separate it from *A. ferrugana*. One at High Batts NR on 31 July was the first for VC65.

49.096 *Hysterophora maculosana*

This day-flying moth of bluebell woods is uncommon with only one previous record in our area. Two were swept at Hutton Conyers on 3 July.

\*49.136 *Neocoehylis hybridella*

One at Burton Leonard Lime Quarries on 11 July was the first for our area and for VC64. This species has been moving north-west across the county in the last five years.

\*49.191 *Endothenia nigricostana*

One at Hutton Conyers on 22 June. Another species which we have been expecting as it is spreading in the county. The larvae feed on hedge woundwort.

49.283 *Gypsonoma aceriana*

One at High Batts NR on 31 July, was also the first record for VC65. This is a poplar-feeding species, despite the name, and is uncommon in our area.

\*49.293 *Notocelia tetragonana*

One at High Batts NR on 31 July. Only the eighth county record of this very local rose-feeding species.

\*62.023 *Pempelia palumbella*

One at Hutton Conyers on 20 June. This is a moth of lowland heaths such as Strensall, Allerthorpe and Skipwith Commons so this was well out of area. It arrived after a period of easterly winds.

63.054 **Box-tree Moth** *Cydalima perspectalis*

Records from Pannal on 12 August and Spofforth on 19 August. This pest of box hedges appears to be well established now in the county and can turn up anywhere.

65.003 **Barred Hook-tip** *Watsonalla cultraria*

One at High Batts NR on 31 July was only the seventh record for our area.

66.002 **Pale Eggar** *Trichiura crataegi*

One at Staveley on 18 August. This is now quite an uncommon moth in Yorkshire.

69.007 **Pine Hawk-moth** *Sphinx pinastri*

We only have seven previous records of this species, last seen in 2016. It had a much better year across the county and was seen in Ripon on 15 June and Bellflask on 17 and 24 July.

69.010 **Humming-bird Hawk-moth** *Macroglossum stellatarum*

An average year for this day-flying migrant with 11 records in our area from April to August.

70.026 **Smoky Wave** *Scopula ternata*

Two flying by day at Ellingstring on 17 June

70.036 **Maiden's Blush** *Cyclophora punctaria*

Numbers of this moth of oak woodland have rocketed in Yorkshire in the last few years. Before this year we had only four previous records. In 2020 there were records from Hutton Conyers in May and four record from Spofforth in June and August.

70.037 **Clay Triple-lines** *C. linearia*

One at Hackfall Woods on 17 June.

70.069 **Dark Spinach** *Pelurga comitata*

This species has declined in the county, so it was good to get records from Hutton Conyers on 20 and 29 July and Grewelthorpe on 31 July.

70.086 **Broken-barred Carpet** *Electrophaes corylata*

This is another declining species, which has become less common in our area. One at Spofforth on 23 June.

70.104 **Devon Carpet** *Lampropteryx otregiata*

Hot on the heels of our first record in 2019, one was found this year at Hackfall Woods on 28 May. This moth of damp woodland is slowly spreading in the county.

70.112 **Dingy Shell** *Euchoeca nebulata*

One at Smelthouses on 24 June. A moth of alder woodland.

70.116 **Blomer's Rivulet** *Venusia blomeri*

This rather local moth of wych elm woodland was found at the usual sites of Hackfall Woods and Ellington Banks in good numbers from late May to early August.

70.119 **Dark Umber** *Philereme transversata*

A buckthorn-feeding species which is doing well in our area, with several records from both High Batts and Nosterfield NRs, where a count of 11 on 12 August was exceptional.

70.121 **Scallop Shell** *Rheumaptera undulata*

This attractive moth of damp woodland was found at Smelthouses on 24 July. The eighth record for our area.

70.143 **Sloe Pug** *Pasiphila chloerata*

We receive few records of this species. One at Nosterfield NR on 25 June.

70.146 **Haworth's Pug** *Eupithecia haworthiata*

A rare species in Yorkshire; the larvae feeding on Traveller's Joy. Three at High Batts NR on 31 July – the ninth record for our area.

\*70.164 **Fletcher's Pug** or **Pauper Pug** *E. egenaria*

Not just new to our area but new to Yorkshire. This rare moth of old lime woodland was first found in the Wye Valley in 1962 and has been slowly moving north; the nearest known colonies being in Lincolnshire and north Nottinghamshire. One was found at Hackfall Woods on 17 June.

70.188 **Bordered Pug** *E. succenturiata*

One of the more easily-identifiable Pugs but rather local. One at Hutton Conyers on 29 July.

70.206 **Clouded Magpie** *Abraxas sylvata*

Just one at Hackfall Woods on 28 May. This is the most reliable site in the area for this rather attractive moth of elm-rich woodland.

70.208 **Scorched Carpet** *Ligdia adustata*

Rather local because of the scarcity of its food plant, spindle. One at Ellington Banks on 5 August.

70.215 **V-Moth** *Macaria wauaria*

One of the most rapidly-declining moths in the country, we are lucky to still have a population in our area. The trap at Grewelthorpe produced an amazing 17 records of 26 moths. Moths were also recorded at Healey and Nosterfield NR.

70.223 **Barred Umber** *Plagodis pulveraria*

This moth of broad-leaved woodland in semi-upland areas is infrequently reported. It was seen at Guisecliffe and Pateley Bridge in May.

70.229 **Speckled Yellow** *Pseudopanthera macularia*

Six flying by day near How Stean Beck on 27 May. This is just the second record for our area, the first being nearby in 1986. It is surprising that 34 years have gone past with no records, but it does require warm sunny days in late May and June in order to see it.

70.238 **Lunar Thorn** *Selenia lunularia*

This declining species has abandoned lowland areas and now inhabits wooded areas at higher altitudes. Records this year from Hackfall Woods on 28 May and Healey on 1 June.

70.292 **Grey Scalloped Bar** *Dyscia fagaria*

A moth of heather moorland which has been seen in lowland areas more in recent years. Records from Hutton Conyers on 21 May and Healey on 1st and 13 June.

71.003 **Puss Moth** *Cerura vinula*

Records of this large spectacular species came from Bellflask on 27 April, Spofforth on 20 May, plus a larval record from Goldsborough on 21 June.

71.007 **Poplar Kitten** *Furcula bifida*

Much less common than the rather similar Sallow Kitten. One at Hutton Conyers on 31 May.

72.007 **Beautiful Snout** *Hypena crassalis*

One at Bellflask on 23 June was the sixth for our area. Numbers have increased across the county.

72.025 **Wood Tiger** *Parasemia plantaginis*

One at Warsill High Moor on 1 June.

72.046 **Scarce Footman** *Eilema complana*

Records of this species are increasing every year and there were six this year, from Ellington Banks, Hutton Conyers and Spofforth in July and August. Its spread to the north and west continues.

72.049 **Orange Footman** *Eilema sororcula*

Another Footman species which is a recent arrival in our area and is doing well. Records from Hutton Conyers on 21 May and Hackfall Woods on 28 May.

72.063 **Blackneck** *Lygephila pastinum*

Records this year from Smelthouses, Grewelthorpe and Bellflask. This species used to be a rarity but has become much more common.

72.083 **Burnet Companion** *Euclidia glyphica*

One was seen at Nosterfield NR on 13 June.

72.084 **Mother Shipton** *Euclidia mi*

Another fairly uncommon day-flying species. Records from How Stean Gorge on 27 May and Warsill on 1 June.

73.014 **Golden Plusia** *Polychrysis moneta*

This delphinium-feeding species has become quite uncommon in the county in recent years. One at Sharow on 30 July.

73.033 **Figure of Eight** *Diloba caeruleocephala*

This is now a rare and declining moth in Yorkshire, but still occurs in our area. Three records from Bellflask in September and October and one at Hutton Conyers in October.

73.039 **Sycamore** *Acronicta aceris*

A relative newcomer to our area, this moth is spreading slowly north and west. One at Spofforth on 20 May and one at Hutton Conyers on 17 July, which was the first for VC65. These were the fourth and fifth records for the HDNS.

73.048 **Small Yellow Underwing** *Panemeria tenebrata*

This day-flying spring moth is local in hay meadows. There were several records from Hutton Conyers this year with a maximum of 13 on 19 May.

73.052 **Shark** *Cucullia umbratica*

One at Hutton Conyers on 17 July was the only one this year.

73.109 **Straw Underwing** *Thalophila matura*

One at Ripon on 25 July was the first in our area since 2008. It tends to be commoner in the eastern half of the county.

73.124 **Butterbur** *Hydraecia petasitis*

This species has declined across the country for no apparent reason as its food plant is common. It is very local in Yorkshire, but was seen regularly at Hutton Conyers with four records of five moths in July, August and September.

73.139 **Twin-spotted Wainscot** *Lenisa geminipuncta*

This reed-feeding species has become quite regular in our area. Seven records of eight moths this year from Bellflask, Hutton Conyers, Nosterfield NR and Sharow.

73.179 **Orange Sallow** *Tiliacea citrigo*

There were seven records of this moth of lime woodland which is a healthy total. One at Sharow on 9 November was the latest-ever seen in the county.

73.183 **Dusky-lemon Sallow** *Cirrhia gilvago*

This declining species of elm woodland appeared in encouraging numbers this year, with seven records of single moths from Bellflask, Ellington Banks, Healey, Hutton Conyers and Sharow.

73.188 **Flounced Chestnut** *Agrochola helvola*

We receive few records of this moth of upland woodland. One at Guisecliffe on 14 September.

73.211 **Angle-striped Sallow** *Enargia paleacea*

Our population of this birch-feeding species is important as it has a restricted distribution in the country. We are at the edge of its range, so it was good to get records of single moths from five separate sites this year – Bellflask, High Batts NR, Hutton Conyers, Langthorpe and Sharow.

73.212 **Double Kidney** *Ipimorpha retusa*

Our area is home to the only population of this species in the north of England, where the centre of population is at Bellflask and across the river at High Batts NR. Moths

occasionally wander a few miles to neighbouring sites but rarely travel far. Moths were recorded from Bellflask (21 records of 179 moths), High Batts NR (nine on 31 July) and at Hutton Conyers on 14 August.

73.215 **Lesser-spotted Pinion** *Cosmia affinis*

A rare moth in Yorkshire where scattered records come from elm-rich areas along the magnesian limestone belt down the centre of the county. One at Bellflask on 15 August.

73.220 **Minor Shoulder-knot** *Brachylomia viminalis*

This is another species which has become rare in the county. There is still a good population however at Ellington Banks where 25 were trapped on 3 July.

73.221 **Suspected** *Parastichtis suspecta*

We receive few records of this species of scrubby birch woodland. One at Guisecliffe on 7 August.

73.228 **Grey Chi** *Antitype chi*

Grey Chi has become very uncommon in lowland areas and most records now come from more upland areas. Two were at Healey on 11 August.

73.234 **Brindled Ochre** *Dasypolia templi*

One at Spofforth on 24 September was a long way from its usual upland haunts. Our only other recent records have come from Duck Street Quarry.

73.235 **Feathered Ranunculus** *Polymixis lichenea*

This is predominantly a coastal species, although there are some unusual inland populations in Yorkshire, the most regular being at Knaresborough where one was trapped on 14 September.

73.246 **Lead-coloured Drab** *Orthosia populeti*

This species is uncommon away from aspens and poplars. Records from Bellflask and Hutton Conyers in March.

73.252 **Hedge Rustic** *Tholera cespitis*

There is evidence of long-term decline across the country, but it is good to see it still occurs in our area. One at Pateley Bridge on 15 September.

73.272 **Glaucous Shears** *Papestra biren*

This upland species tends to wander to the lowlands at times. One at Guiseclifee on 20 May and at Ripon the following day.

73.282 **Varied Coronet** *Hadena compta*

The slow movement north and west continues and it has now reached VC65, with one at Hutton Conyers on 13 July. There were also three records from Ripon, one from Knaresborough and one from Spofforth. With only six previous HDNS records, the total has now doubled.

73.302 **Obscure Wainscot** *Leucania obsoleta*

This reed bed specialist had a bad year across the county. One was trapped at Bellflask on 15 June and two at Nosterfield NR on 25 June.

73.307 **Pearly Underwing** *Peridroma saucia*

This sporadic migrant is not seen regularly in our area. One was trapped at Hutton Conyers on 29 October, one of just six in the county this year.

73.331 **Barred Chestnut** *Diarsia dahlii*

This moth is commonest in upland woodland. There were records from Guisecliffe on 7 August and Ellington Banks on 15 September.

73.335 **Fen Square-spot** *Diarsia florida*

The upland, single-brooded cousin of Small Square-spot. It was found this year at Smelthouses on 24 June and Healey on 21 July.

73.354 **Square-spotted Clay** *Xestia stigmatica*

All records were from Bellflask where it was trapped on three dates in August.

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# Odonata – Damselflies and Dragonflies

## Recorder: SP Worwood

2020 was dominated by Covid 19 and the restrictions this placed on everyone's activity; therefore, it is difficult to draw any conclusions on species status etc due to these limitations.

However, 21 species were reported for the year, two more than 2019, this included another new addition to the HDNS recording area Red Eyed Damselfly found on two separate sites. In addition, the Small Red Eyed Damselfly was reported for the second year running, plus the Hairy Dragonfly is now well established at Staveley NR. For full details of these and the other species see the comprehensive list that follows.

The order and nomenclature follow that of Askew RR, *The Dragonflies of Europe*. 1988.

## Zygoptera

### 2. **Banded Demoiselle** *Calopteryx splendens*

High Batts had the first of the year on 23 May when three were present, then regular until the site's last was two on 24 July with a maximum of 17 on 25 June. Staveley NR had six on 25 May, numbers increased to a peak of 40 on 28 May with other notable counts were on 25 on 1 June and 21 on 24, the last was a single on 30 July. Goldsborough Woods had eight on 21 June and four on 11th July. All other sites had one or two insects on single dates in the flight period and were as follows: A1 at Kirk Deighton Whin, Farnham Village, Great Ouseburn, Hay-a-Park, River Nidd Killinghall Bridge, Knaresborough, Laver Banks, River Ure Slenningford, Ripon City Wetlands, Sharow Mires, Shaw Mills and Sicklinghall

### 9. **Emerald Damselfly** *Lestes sponsa*

The first of the year were two on 17 July at Staveley NR, then recorded at this site with the main period from early August to 1 September but counts were low with ten being the maximum, the site's last was four on 15 September. Farnham GP had one on 22, two on 24 and four on 31 July. Ellington Banks (MOD) had the year's maximum of 100+ on 31 August, with 20 the year's last record on 19 September, Nosterfield NR had its first confirmed record of this species with a male on 1 September (KG)

### 16. **Large Red Damselfly** *Pyrrosoma nymphula*

A surprising increase in sites with 11 compared to four in 2019. Ripon Parks had the year's first one in Fox Covert on 26 April. Staveley NR had a freshly emerged insect on 2 May, numbers had increased to 20 by late May the sites last record was 12 on 1 June. One was at Garden Pond on 8 and 25 May. Two in tandem were seen at Ellington Banks on 20 May. Eight were in Druids Plantation on 25 May. Warsill High Moor held 20 at Pickerston pond on 1 June. High Batts NR had 15 on 1 June and a single on 25. The year's last was a single at A1 settling pond Kirk Deighton on 30 June. Singles were at a garden pond in Harrogate, Ilton Moor Cat Gill, Stock Beck Moor.

### 17. **Red-Eyed Damselfly** *Erythromma najas*

Two males were found on White Water Lilies on 25 and 28 May the first record for the HDNS area (PTT). Singles were at Hay-a-Park on 13th and 14 June, however two or



three were seen on two separate areas on different dates the preceding week no exact dates supplied (SR &MW)

### 18. **Small Red-eyed Damselfly** *Erythromma viridulum*

Two sites recorded this species after the first records in 2019, Nosterfield NR had two males on 9 August then seen sporadically until the last record of ten including ovipositing on 1 September (SW, KG *et al*). Staveley NR had an identical flight period between 9 August and 1 September, with a maximum of four pairs and three males on 10 August (RE, MGM, PTT *et al*).

### 28. **Azure Damselfly** *Coenagrion puella*

First reported at Staveley NR with six on 8 May, numbers slowly built-up reaching counts of 100+ in late May early June then no further records. Recorded as present at High Batts between 23 May and 16 June but no actual counts submitted. Elsewhere two on the Bankside Farnham Village on 18 May, while Farnham Stang Grange ponds was reported as numerous on 14 June. A single on Appleby Estates Scotton on 21 May. Reported as numerous at Ripon City Wetlands YWT Res on 27 May many as ten. Farnham Mires held eight on 29 May. Hay-a-Park reported two on 13 June and again as numerous on 24 June, given the latter record was this species over looked and counted as Common Blue Damselflies? The A1 Kirk Deaton settling ponds were again reported as present in large numbers on 30 June. Farnham GP reported 30 on 14 June, with numerous on 2 August and plentiful on 6 August, the last recorded date for this species. On High Ground 12 were reported from Pickerstone plantation pond Warsill High Moor.

### 31. **Common Blue Damselfly** *Enallagma cyathigerum*

The first report came from Hay-a-Park on 7 June when it was numerous, counts at this site peaked at 770 on 30 May and 640 on 20 June with the last ten on 22 August, see above species. Reported at High Batts between 23 May and 31 July with the only notable count of 52 in the Nosterfield NR and 24 on Pennycroft on 25 June. Staveley NR had records between 20 May and 20 August, but numbers were disappointing with no counts greater than 50. Farnham GP first were 30 on 14 June present until 29 August the only notable count was 1000 on 24 July. Nosterfield NR had insects between 25 May and 1 September but no counts were above single figures, it was a similar picture at Flasks Lake, however 1000 were reported on Ladybridge on 24 July (TS). Elsewhere, Ripon City Wetlands this species was numerous on 27 May; one at Hellwath Ripon on 9 June; Five were at Mickley on 23 June; Stang Grange Ponds Farnham this species was numerous on 14 June; Sunny Bank Wood High Grantly 15 were reported on 21 July.

### 33. **Blue-tailed Damselfly** *Ischnura elegans*

Nosterfield NR had the first for the year a single on 9 May, low counts to a maximum of ten until the years last on 1 September. A single was at Sunny Bank Wood, High Grantly on 21 May, with another single at Ripon City Wetlands YWT Res on 27 May. Recorded in low numbers at Staveley NR: two on 28 May with 10+ on 31 May, numbers remain at this low level throughout June and July, with final record of six on 10 August. Four were in High Batts on 13 June with the same count at Pennycroft on 16 June, with five at Bellflask on 23 June. Farnham GP had 50 the years maximum count on 14 June,

then reported in low figures until the months end. Two were at Mickley on 23 June and 18 at A1 Kirk Deaton Whin on 30 June.

## Anisoptera

### 39. Common Hawker *Aeshna juncea*

One on early date of 1 June at Fox Wood Bishop Thornton (MB). Singles were reported from Scotton on 20 June, A1 Kirk Deaton Whin on 30; singles at Winksley and Laver Banks on 6 July, Farnham GP had four on 24 July: this and the High Batts records the year's highest count. One was at High Batts NR on 31 July with four over Pennycroft on 3 September. A single was at Staveley NR on 1 September. Nosterfield wetlands areas had one at Flasks Lake on 25 July, another at Nosterfield NR on 1 September and the year's last two at Flasks Lake on 15 September.

### 43. Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*

The first was a single at Sharow on 5 August, another was at Sharow Mires on 24 August and at Sharow on 12 September. Two at Farnham GP on 6 August with four on 29. Hay-a-Park had two on 22 August and a single on 22 September with eight on 26 September. Nosterfield wetlands areas first was one on 24 August at Flasks Lake, with 60+ many *in cop* at Flasks Lake and reedbed on the 15 September, a single on 10 and 20 October with two on 22 October. Nosterfield NR had a single record of two on 1 September. Two at Quarry Moor on 31 August, with 14 at Goldsborough Wood patrolling the woodland edge on the same date. Five at Wormald Green Tip on woodland edge; with one at Bishopton on 14 September. First record at Staveley NR on 18 August then regularly reported reaching an amazing maximum of 250+ on 1 September (PTT), by October numbers greatly reduced to single figures, however records continued into November on suitable sunny days until the last on 10 November.

### 45. Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea*

The year's first was at Staveley NR on 18 June then again on 20 June; present regularly from 7 August until 15 September with counts of up to six insects; late records were singles on 1 and 22 October the years last. Nosterfield NR had singles on 11 and 21 July with at Flasks two on 25 July and 1 August. Hay-a-Park also had singles on 11 and 25 July with six on 8 August. Ellington Banks (MOD) had records of five on 31 August and ten on 19 September, the years maximum count. Sharow area had two on 3 September with singles on 12 and 13. Three were reported from Little Studley Meadows Ripon on 14 September. Single records of one or two insect came from Bilton Hall. Farnham GP, Goldsborough Wood, High Batts, Knaresborough Garden Pond, Low Grantley, Quarry Moor, Gater Wood Scotton Banks. On high ground a single was at Brimham Rocks on 1 September.

### 47. Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis*

Two at High Batts, Pennycroft on 16 June, then recorded in the Nosterfield NR and Pennycroft throughout June and July, with a maximum of 16 on 24 July, with 14 on the last submitted date of 31 July. Staveley NR first was also on 16 June the main flight period was late June to beginning of September, the peak period was late July with counts of 30+ the last for the site was one on 25 September. Hay-a-Park had three on 24 June then reported until two on 22 August with a maximum of 14 on 8 August.

Nosterfield wetlands areas primarily the Nosterfield NR and Flask Lake had one or two insects from 23 July to 1 September. Farnham GP the species was present from 22 July to 29 August with a peak count of eight on 2 and 6 August. Away from these key sites the only count of note was four at Bilton Hall on 24 July. Single records of one or two insects in the main flight period came from A1/A59 balancing pond, Galphay Studley Moor, Goldsborough Wood, a garden pond in Knaresborough, Ripon Parks and Sharow. The last for the year was a late record of one at Flasks Lake on 20 October (SPW).

#### 49. **Emperor Dragonfly** *Anax imperator*

An early emerged insect was reported at Staveley NR on 25 May (MGM). By 2 June 10 were present, then good number then present until 30 July peaking with 19 on 24 June. The last was one on 20 August. A freshly emerged insect was seen at High Batts NR on 2 June, one was observed flying past with butterfly in its grasp on 1 July, a single was at Pennycroft on 6 July. Hay-a-Park has two on 20 June and again on 8 August. Farnham GP had a single on 24 July, two on 31 July with four including an ovipositing female on 6 August. Nosterfield wetlands areas reported two on 2 June at the Nosterfield Res with two on 1 July with an ovipositing female at Flasks on the same date; two again at the Res on 11 July, 6 at Flasks/reedbed on 16 July; with two again at the Res on 9 and 10 August; the year's last were two on 1 September at the Nosterfield NR.

#### 52. **Hairy Dragonfly** *Brachytron pratense*

This new colonist really established its presence at Staveley NR: a female on 20 May, two males and a female on 25; males and females then seen on a further eight dates (MGM, PTT RE), with a maximum of nine on 2 June (PTT), until a single on 24 June. Ovipositing was observed for the first time in the ditch on 31 May (SW).

#### 67. **Golden Ringed Dragonfly** *Cordulagaster boltoni*

Nosterfield wetlands area's third record was a male at Flasks Lake on 7 August (MH)

#### 81. **Four-spotted Chaser** *Libellula quadrimaculata*

Staveley NR had the year's first on 8 May it was then recorded regularly until 20 August; the main period was between 25 May and 20 June with a maximum of 30 on 31 May. Nosterfield wetlands areas had its first on 17 May with a single at Flasks Lake, one was at Nosterfield NR on 25 May and two on 27 June. Four over Pennycroft, High Batts on 2 June. Farnham GP reported four on 14 June, three on 31 July and two on 2 August.

#### 83. **Broad-bodied Chaser** *Libellula depressa*

The year's first were singles at Ellington Banks (MOD) and Staveley NR on 20 May. The latter site then had records through to the last, a worn male on 23 June; with a peak count of 8+ on 1 June, ovipositing females were also reported. One was at Stainburn Forest, Beckwithshaw on 30 May; a male was at High Batts NR on 1 June; one was also at Nosterfield NR on that date, the last for the year was also at Nosterfield NR on 19 July

#### 86. **Black-tailed Skimmer** *Orthetrum cancellatum*

Staveley NR had eight freshly emerged on 28 May recorded up to the last three on 24 August, the peak was between the beginning of June and mid-July, with maxima of 25 on 24 June. A single was over Pennycroft, High Batts NR on 29 May, two pair and four

males on 1 June, with singles in the Nosterfield NR on 1 June, 19 and 31 July. Four at Ripon City Wetlands on 27 May; with six at Pickerstones, Warsill High Moor on 1 June. One was at Stang Grange Ponds, Farnham on 14 June; Farnham GP had up to ten between 22 July and 6 August. A single was at Laver Banks on 15 June. Nosterfield wetlands area's first was two on the Nosterfield NR on 20 June, with 50 by 27 June, also on that date 100+ were on Ladybridge lake (SW), The Nosterfield NR than recorded single and low double figures counts up to the last record of 10 on 19 July. Lingham Lake held 30+ 27 June, while Flasks Lake had up to 10 between 1 and 31 July. Singles were at Hay-a-Park on 24 June, Slennigford Water Mill on 23 June and at S-bend Ripon Parks on 16 July.

**95. Common Darter** *Sympetrum striolatum*

Staveley NR had the first for the year two on 24 June, numbers thereafter increased with the main flight period between mid-July and end of August with a maximum of 100+ on 30 July, with ovipositing regularly reported. Thereafter numbers declined reaching single or low double figures with the last for the site and year a single on 11 November. One at High Batts on 25 June, two on 24 July and 16 on 31 July, with three on 3 September the last for the site. The Nosterfield Wetlands Area first was on the Nosterfield NR on 26 June, then reported from all waters in increasing numbers with a maximum of 200+ on Flasks Lake and the reed bed on 15 September, most other lakes only reaching counts of low double figures; the last was on Lingham Lake on 1 November. Ellington Banks (MOD) had one on 6 July, 38 on 31 August and 20 on 19 September. Farnham GP first was a single on 15 July the peak at this site was 30+ throughout August, counts then decreased and the last was three on 1 November. Hay-a-Park reported two on regular basis between 8 August and 26 September. Sharow Area had up to three between 24 August and 21 September. The following sites had low single day counts, Dacre, Duck Street Quarry, Fellbeck Woodland, Goldsborough Pikeshaw Wood, Grantley Hall, Guisecliffe, Hayshaw Moor, a Knaresborough Garden Pond, Low Grantley, Quarry Moor, Ribston Big Wood, Ripon Parks QM Dubbs, Appleby Estates Scotton, Spa Gill. The exception was 30 at A1 / A59 balancing pond on 24 August, with 15 at Walshford on the same date.

**102. Ruddy Darter** *Sympetrum sanguineum*

Staveley NR had reports of a male on 19 July, another on 1 August, with two on 7 August and four on 12 August. Farnham GP had three males on 6 August. Ellington Banks (MOD) a male was present on 31 August.

**104. Black Darter** *Sympetrum danae*

Staveley NR had a male on 24 August and two males on 1 September. Ellington Banks (MOD) had three males on 31 August.

**Contributors:-** Miss J.E. Atkinson. Mike Barnham (MB), R. Evison (RE), Keith Gittens (KG), Martin Henstock (MH), Mike Metcalf, (MGM) Stephen Root (SR), Tim Scott, Colin Slator, PT Treloar (PTT), SP & Mrs JC Warwick (SPW/JCW), Mark Whorley (MW), S. Worwood (SW) and the logs from Farnham GP, High Batts NR, Staveley NR and Nosterfield LNR, with apologies for any omissions.

## Other Insects And Invertebrates

### Retiring Recorder: JB Jobe

**Nb = Uncommon species thought to occur in between 31 and 100 squares of the National Grid or between 8 and 20 Vice-Counties.**

**NS = Species new to HDNS recording area this year**

**MV = Species taken at Mercury Vapour light**

**WW = Willow Walk, Ripon**

**CHF = Dr C.H. Fletcher**

**HC = Hutton Conyers**

**JB = JB Jobe**

It would seem that 2020 has had at least one bright spot to take our minds off the Pandemic: more Invertebrate records and beautiful photos to accompany them than ever before!

### Coleoptera: Beetles

Nomenclature is from Duff, *Beetles of Britain & Ireland*.

#### Carabidae: Ground Beetles

*Carabus nemoralis* MV, HC, CHF, 17 & 25 April.

*Anchomenus dorsalis* MV, HC, CHF, 14 May. This beautiful beetle was formerly known as *Agonum dorsale*.



*Bembidion stomoides* (JB)

*Bembidion stomoides* NS, Notable B. 22nd Yorkshire Record. This was in a tube of specimens sent to me for identification from Pennycroft, next to High Batts NR, 20 May by Colin Slator. This scarce beetle is found almost exclusively by upland rivers and streams, usually with shingle margins. Colin's description of the location sounds ideal:

"I took this beetle from the banks of the new Pennycroft Quarry adjacent the High Batts. The (90 acre ) site stretches from the HBs south towards the confluence of the Lightwater, near the (old) Top Island. The beetle was in the quarry but in a large area of shingle (winter washed shingle after 3 periods of floods) and only 50yds from the shingle river banks. The habitat is, I would suggest, perfect for such a beetle."

This is the first Yorkshire record since 1988.

With thanks to Bob Marsh for much of the above information

## Hydrophiliidae



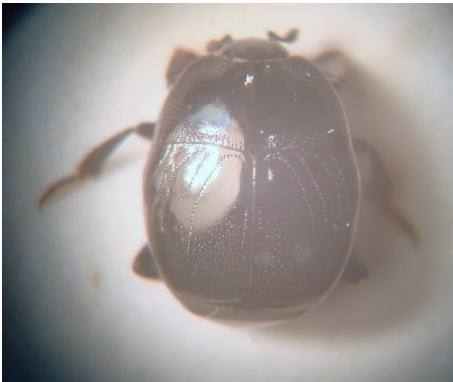
*Sphaeridium lunatum* NS Bishop Monkton, 21 April in waterlogged field next to house, Kathryn Parrish. This widespread species has a strong association with farmland, being found in dung, sometimes carrion and grass tussocks.

*Sphaeridium lunatum* (RT Parrish)

## Histeridae: Clown Beetles

*Saprinus semistriatus* NS Colin Slator sent me a specimen of this species that he found beneath a fox carcass at Pennycroft, High Batts, 20 June.

*Hister unicolor* NS Robert Marshall found this podgy predator at home in Bilton, 20 May.



*Saprinus semistriatus* (JB)



*Hister unicolor* (JB)

## Silphidae: Sexton Beetles

*Nicrophorus humator* Barry Carter found this fine beetle in his moth trap at Killinghall Bridge in the evening of 9/10 May and noticed it was carrying a load of phoretic mites on its underside. This species is very similar to another Silphid, *Nicrodes littoralis* but can

easily be separated from it by looking at the antennal club which is elongate in *Necrodes* but club-like in *Nicrophorus*. MV

Also found by Charlie Fletcher at his Moth trap during May to October in Hutton Conyers, Smelthouses and Ellington Banks.



*Nicrophorus humator* (B Carter)

*Necrodes littoralis* MV, HC, CHF, 9 & 21 May; 14 & 17 June. Also at Smelthouses, 2 September and Ellington Banks, 5 August, MV, CHF.

*N. investigator* MV, CHF, JCW Nosterfield NR, Smelthouses, Ellington Banks, June to September and at High Batts, 31 July.

### Lucanidae: Stag Beetles



*Sinodendron cylindricum* (K Birch)

*Sinodendron cylindricum* A fine male of this species was found by Kevin Birch at the Tower at Azerley, 23 June.



Cockchafer *Melolontha melolontha* (A Draper)

## Scarabaeidae: Chafers, Dung Beetles, etc.

**Cockchafer, May Bug, June Bug** *Melolontha melolontha* Barry Carter had eight of these impressive beetles in his moth trap at Killinghall Bridge on the night of 9/10 May.

Alan Draper also had one of these in his moth trap on the same night in Spofforth.

Charlie Fletcher had them come to MV as well, often in numbers at various locations; Hutton Conyers, Yorke's Folly, Smelthouses and Nosterfield NR

**Brown Chafer** *Serica brunnea* This is another frequent visitor to **MV** Moth traps and Charlie Fletcher found it this year at Smelthouses, 24 July; High Batts NR, 31 July and Hutton Conyers, 4,17 & 18 July.

**Welsh Chafer** *Hoplia philanthus* Found in a patch of nettles at Nosterfield NR by Ken Limb on 30 June and at Bellflask by Brian Morland on 25 June. This species has become much more common throughout the HDNS Area in recent years and now appears annually at Quarry Moor and surrounds in Ripon, including Willow Walk on 24 June, JBJ.



**Welsh Chafer** *Hoplia philanthus* (K Limb)



**Hairy Click Beetle** *Hemicrepidius hirtus* (R Parrish)

## *Elateridae: Click Beetles*

**Hairy Click Beetle** *Hemicrepidius hirtus* Roger Parrish photographed this fine beetle at Staveley NR, 26 June. Note: *hirtus* is Latin for "hairy" and the elytra of this specimen can be seen to be covered in fine white hairs. Older books refer to this species as *Athous hirtus* which may cause confusion!

## *Cantharidae: Soldier Beetles*

*Cantharis rustica* Alwin and Tony Knowles found this in their Wilsill garden, 17 June. There are 14 *Cantharis* species in Britain some of which can be difficult to identify.



*Cantharis flavilabris* In the past this species was called *nigra* which you'll find it listed as in old records. It comes in two flavours, one with a black thorax and the other orange but the tibia are always orange. Ken Limb found this one on nettles at Nosterfield NR, 30 June.



*Cantharis rustica* (A Knowles)



*Cantharis flavilabris* (K Limb)

*C. cryptica* MV, HC, CHF, 9 May, 20 June.

*C. nigricans* MV, HC, CHF, 25 May.

*C. pellucida* MV, HC, CHF, 9 May, 25 May.

### Melyridae:



**Common Malachite Beetle** *Malachius bipustulatus* This spectacular beetle was found in his sweep net in Sharow Churchyard by Simon Warwick on 14 May.

**Common Malachite Beetle** *Malachius bipustulatus* (S Warwick)

## Ptinidae: Anobiid & Spider Beetles

*Ptinus sexpunctatus* NS HC, MV, CHF, 24 & 26 April.

**Woodworm Beetle** *Anobium punctatum* HC, CHF. Charlie found several dead adults indoors on 28 May.

## Coccinellidae: Ladybirds

**Harlequin Ladybird** *Harmonia axyridis* Alan Draper reported the first beetle record this year with this photograph of form '*spectabilis*' of the species in his garden fresh from hibernation on 4 March. Note the *large* white patch at each side of the thorax which distinguishes the species. Another form, '*succinea*' was in JBJ's garden in Willow Walk, Ripon on 20 October ready for hibernation (both of us!).

Also recorded at MV by CHF at Hutton Conyers, 8 individuals between 14 June and 8 September; at Nosterfield NR with JCW, 12 August; and with JCW & Diane Smiley, *et al*, at High Batts NR.



**Harlequin Ladybird** *Harmonia axyridis spectabilis*  
(A Draper)



*H. axyridis succinea* (JBJ)



**Orange Ladybird** *Halyzia sedecimguttata* Recorded at MV by CHF at HC, 25 March, at Ellington Banks, 3 July and also at Nosterfield NR with JCW & Diane Smiley on 12 August.

**CREAM SPOT LADYBIRD** *Calvia quattuordecimguttata* MV, HC, CHF, 22 June & 8 September.

**14-SPOT LADYBIRD** *Propylea quattuordecimpunctata* MV, HC, CHF, 13 September. One in house at Willow Walk, 9 May, JBJ.

**7-SPOT LADYBIRD** *Coccinella septempunctata* (via JC Warwick)

**7-SPOT LADYBIRD** *Coccinella septempunctata* A friend of Jill Warwick sent this photo taken near Sharow at the end of March.

## *Tenebrionidae: Darkling Beetles*



*Lagria hirta* This was found in a nettle patch in Nosterfield NR by Ken Limb, 30 June. (It is also a frequent visitor to moth traps) It is also another "hairy" beetle -*hirta*! Also found in his Moth trap by CHF at these locations: Ellington Banks, 5 August; HC, 15 July.

*Lagria hirta* (K Limb)

## *Cerambycidae: Long-Horned Beetles*

**Two-banded Long-horned Beetle** *Rhagium bifasciatum* Kevin Birch found one of these spectacular beetles at Azerley, 8 May. The larvae burrow in the trunks of Spruces and other conifers and occasionally in deciduous trees.

**Black & Yellow Long-horned Beetle** *Rutpela maculate* Roger Parrish came across this fine beetle at Staveley, 26 June and also found at HC by CHF, 21 June.



**Two-banded Long-horned Beetle** *Rhagium bifasciatum* (K Birch)



**Black & Yellow Long-horned Beetle** *Rutpela maculate* (RT Parrish)

## *Chrysomelidae: Leaf Beetles*



**Heather Beetle** *Lochmaea suturalis* (JB)

**Heather Beetle** *Lochmaea suturalis* NS On 15 April Charlie Fletcher alerted members of the HDNS Forum that there was an eruption of Heather beetles being reported from the Yorkshire Moors with millions being blown by strong winds onto the coast and also inland. He had counted 17 specimens in his garden at Hutton Conyers and also in his moth trap. I looked around the garden of Willow Walk and found a small number of them on vegetation and in flight and also a drowned body in the bird bath (illustrated). There were still odd ones about over the next week or so but newspapers in August were reporting "a Plague of Biblical proportions!" which was wiping out the Heather on

the moors! Coming back down to earth, such eruptions of *Lochmaea* are not unprecedented and our moors still seem to bear a healthy covering of Heather!

**Alder Leaf Beetle** *Agelastica alni* Barry Carter found masses of this recent addition to our fauna eating leaves at Farnham Gravel Pits on 27 May and photographed this pregnant female. It was still present in the old carpark on an Alder sapling on 29 August when Mike Smithson visited.



**Alder Leaf Beetle** *Agelastica alni* (B Carter)

**Alder Leaf Beetle** *Agelastica alni* (M Smithson)

**Viburnum Beetle** *Pyrrhalta viburni* "Swarming" in the garden of Willow Walk, Ripon, 15 April, JBJ.



**Viburnum Beetle** *Pyrrhalta viburni* (JBJ)

**Rosemary Beetle** *Chrysolina americana* (S Kitchling)

**Green Nettle Weevil** *Phyllobius pomaceus* (R Parrish)

**Rosemary Beetle** *Chrysolina americana* **NS First VC64 record**, This beautiful recent addition to the British fauna was found in her Knaresborough garden feeding on Rosemary by Sue Kitching on 20 June. (It also has a liking for Lavender!)

## Curculionidae: Weevils

**Green Nettle Weevil** *Phyllobius pomaceus* Roger Parrish found this colourful insect in Bishop Monkton 3 May.

## Orthoptera: Grasshoppers & Crickets

### Acrididae: Grasshoppers

**Field Grasshopper** *Chorthippus brunneus* MV, CHF, 20 June

**Meadow Grasshopper** *Chorthippus parallelus* Nosterfield NR, 4 July, Roger Parrish.

**Common Green Grasshopper** *Omocestus viridulus* This fine specimen was found at Farnham GP by Barry Carter, 12 July. Also observed at HC, 22 June, CHF.



**Meadow Grasshopper** *Chorthippus parallelus* (R Parrish)



**Common Green Grasshopper** *Omocestus viridulus* (B Carter)

### Dermaptera: Earwigs



**Common Earwig** *Forficula auricularia* (R Marshall)

**Common Earwig** *Forficula auricularia* NS  
Robert Marshall found this superb specimen of the macrolabic form (having extra large forceps) of this well-known species in his Bilton garden on 22 April.

## Homoptera: Bugs

### Heteroptera

**Pied Shieldbug** *Tritomegas* (aka *Sehirus*) *bicolor* Jill & Simon Warwick found this attractive bug in their Sharow orchard in late April. It is usually found on labiates, particularly White Dead-Nettle. Ken Limb found a trio of nymphs of this species at Nosterfield on 22 June,

There is another *Tritomegas*, *T. sexmaculatus*, Rambur's Pied Shieldbug, which has been in Britain since first being found in Kent in 2011. Since then it has been spreading rapidly and now inhabits London and most of the Home Counties and will probably be in Yorkshire before too long. Photographs of it and further information can be found on the British Bugs website.



**Pied Shieldbug** *Tritomegas bicolor* nymphs (K Limb)



**Pied Shieldbug** *Tritomegas bicolor* (S Warwick)



**Blue Shieldbug** *Zicrona caerulea* final instar (K Limb)

**Blue Shieldbug** *Zicrona caerulea* Ken also found this final instar nymph enjoying a snack (a Sawfly larva) at Nosterfield on 23 June.



**Hairy Shieldbug** *Dolycoris baccarum* (S Warwick)



**Green Shieldbug** *Palomena prasina* (S Kitching)

**Hairy Shieldbug** *Dolycoris baccarum* Simon Warwick found this well-camouflaged bug by sweeping in Sharow Churchyard.

**Green Shieldbug** *Palomena prasina* Sue Kitching found this fine bug on her washing line in early June. HC, CHF, 8 April.

**Red-Legged Shieldbug** *Pentatome rufipes* On nettles at Nosterfield NR, 30 June, K. Limb. NS HC, CHF, 7 August. Charlie also encountered this common bug at Ellington Banks, 5 August & 15 September and also at Nosterfield NR, accompanied by Jill Warwick & Diane Smiley *et al*, 12 August.

**Bronze Shieldbug** *Troilus luridus* NS Roger Parrish found a 4 instar nymph of this predacious species at Nosterfield NR on the 10 July feasting on an innocent earwig!



**Bronze Shieldbug** *Troilus luridus* (R Parrish)



**Nettle Bug** *Heterogaster urticae* (A Draper)

**Birch Shieldbug** *Elasmotethus interstinctus* Several specimens were found at HC by CHF between 17 March and 16 September. Charlie also found 8 adults at Smelthouses on 2 September and 4 at Ellington Banks with JCW on 15 September.

## Lygaeidae: Groundbugs

**Nettle Bug** *Heterogaster urticae* Alan Draper found this specimen in his Spofforth Moth trap.

## Aphrophoridae: Spittle Bugs

**Alder Spittle Bug** *Aphrophora alni* NS Nosterfield NR, 12 August, CHF, JCW, Diane Smiley *et al.*, Ellington Banks (MOD), 15 September, CHF, JCW.

**Willow Spittle Bug** *A. salicina* NS Ellington Banks (MOD), 5 August, CHF, JCW, Alan Wheeldon.

Red And Black Frog hopper *Cercopis vulnerate* HC, CHF, 19 May.

## Miridae: Capsid Bugs

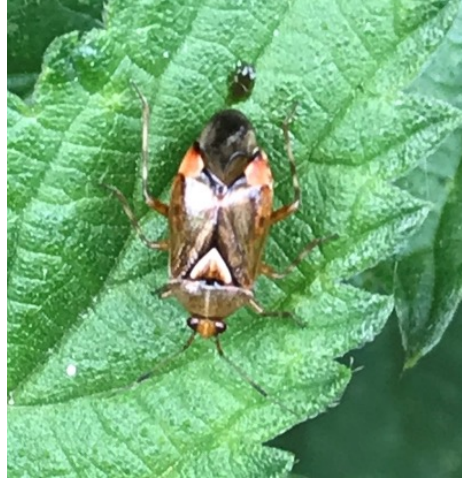
*Pantillus tunicatus* NS HC, CHF, 8 September.

**Common Green Plant Bug** *Lygocoris pabulinus* HC, CHF, 8 September.

**Meadow Plant Bug** *Leptopterna dolabrata* NS Kevin Birch found this handsome species at Hauxwell, 7 August. It feeds on several types of grass and is common, not surprisingly, in grasslands!

**Tarnished Plant Bug** *Lygus rugulipennis* NS HC, CHF, 8 September.

*Deraeocoris flavilinea* NS Ken Limb found a group of these, male, female and final instar on nettles at Nosterfield NR, 30 June.



**Meadow Plant Bug** *Leptopterna dolabrata* (K Birch)

*Deraeocoris flavilinea* female (K Limb)



*Deraeocoris flavilinea* nymph (K Limb)

*Deraeocoris flavilinea* male (K Limb)





*Grypocoris stysi* (K Limb)



*Harpocera thoracica* (A Draper)

*Grypocoris stysi* Ken found this species on the same nettle patch as the last species.

*Harpocera thoracica* **NS** This attractive bug, a male, was found in Alan Draper's moth trap on 20 May. It is more at home on Oaks!

**Streaked Plant Bug** *Miris striatus* This species was found by Ken Limb by the River Ure, on his way to the Ripon Wetland.

*Pantilius tunicatus* **NS** This spectacular large autumnal bug is usually found in the lower branches of Hazel, Alder or Birch but this one was found in Alan Draper's Moth trap in Spofforth, 23 October.



**Streaked Plant Bug** *Miris striatus* (K Limb)



*Pantilius tunicatus* (A Draper)

## Phytocoridae

*Phytocoris tiliae* NS HC, CHF, 8 September.

*P. varipes* NS HC, CHF, April.

## Cicadellidae: Leafhoppers

*Cicadella viridis* NS Barry Carter found this exquisite creature at Farnham GP, 12 July.

*Eupteryx aurata* NS Charlie found one of these attractive bugs on two occasions in his Hutton Conyers garden, 23 August and 8 September.

**OAK LEAFHOPPER** *Iassus lanio* NS HC, CHF, 17 July.

*Lamprotettix nitidulus* NS HC, CHF, 23 August.



*Cicadella viridis* (B Carter)



*Cixius nervosus* (CHF)

## Cixiidae: Lacehoppers

*Cixius nervosus* NR Charlie Fletcher had this beautiful creature in his moth trap at Hutton Conyers, 4 August and three more at Ellington Banks on the following night, CHF, JCW, Alan Wheeldon. 3 more were found at Smelthouses 2 September, also by Charlie.

NB: Its Latin name does not refer to a nervous disposition but to the lace-like pattern on its wings!

## Aphididae: Aphids

**Giant Willow Aphid** *Tuberolachnus salignus* Colin Slator sent me the following information and photo from Kirby Hill of this fascinating species on 24 November:

'I found a small colony of Giant Willow Aphid in my garden about two weeks ago, and took some mobile photographs. These insects are still in situ as of yesterday after an overnight frost. I have done a little research into these things, which I had never seen before, and two things are really quite interesting - 1) no one knows where they go for the winter (after mid-November) and 2) no one knows why they have that little spike on the backs of the adults. They also give birth to live young.

I will keep a watch on them and try and find where they eventually make for!



**Giant Willow Aphid** *Tuberolachnus salignus*  
(C Slator)

## Psyllidae: Jumping Plant Lice

*Psyllopsis fraxini* NS Found by CHF in two locations on 10 June as galls on Ash: Nosterfield Village and HC.

## Neuroptera: Lacewings And Their Allies



### Chrysopidae: Green Lacewings

*Chrysoperla carnea* agg. This Lacewing was found in Ruth Neary's home, 21 October. There are 16 British species in the family and they can be very difficult to identify from a photograph as identification relies to a large extent on very small details in the complex wing venation as well as subtle markings on the head and thorax. This one belongs to the *Chrysoperla carnea* aggregation of 3 or more closely related species which are very difficult to separate.

### Hemerobiidae: Brown Lacewings

*Micromus paganus* NS HC, MV, CHF, 30 May.

*Wesmaelius nervosus* NS HC, MV, CHF, 31 March.

*Chrysoperla carnea* agg. (R Neary)

## Trichoptera: Caddis Flies

**The Speckled Peter** *Agrypnia varia* NS Alan Draper found this specimen in his garden at Spofforth, 10 May. It is one of the more easily identifiable caddises.

**Hairy Caddis** *Lepidostoma hirtum* NS Another hairy insect found by Brian Morland at Bellflask, 27 June.



**The Speckled Peter** *Agrypnia varia* (A Draper)

**Hairy Caddis** *Lepidostoma hirtum* (B Morland)

*Linnephilus flavicornis* This species has translucent wings which allows the colourful body to show through. This one was in Alan Draper's moth trap on the night of 7 August and probably originated in his garden pond as it is associated with small water bodies, even small temporary pools.



*Linnephilus flavicornis*

(A Draper)



**Streaked Caperer** *Halesus radiatus* NS Jim Neary found this specimen in his Ripon hallway, 26 October and brought it to me for identification.

The following Caddis species were found in Charlie Fletcher's Moth trap in Hutton Conyers:

*Rhyacophila dorsalis* 6 June

*Oxyethira flavicornis* 9 May

*Phrygaenea bipunctata* 20 May

*Glyptotaelius pellucidus* 25 April, 15 May

*Linnephilus affinis* 2 May    *Linnephilus auricula* 25, 27, 30 April, 16, 19 May, 11 June.

*Linnephilus flavicornis* 9 June

*Stenophylax permistus* 20 March, 15 April

*Mystacides azurea* 14 June

*Oecetis ochracea* 2 June

*Agraylea multipunctata* 9 June

*Tinodes waeneri* 18 May

*Brachycentrus subnubilus* 10 April

*Grammotaulius nigropunctatus* 3 May

*Linnephilus sparsus* 25 April

*Athripsodes albifrons* 23 June

*Mystacides longicornis* 6 August, 23 June

## Diptera: True Flies

### Culicidae: Mosquitoes



*Culex pipiens* (JB)

*Culex pipiens* **NS** The first of these regular visitors to our house in Willow Walk, Ripon appeared on 30 October. This species, unlike most mosquitoes, does not attack Humans although individuals may sometimes closely inspect us to see if we are on their menu!

### Tipulidae: Crane Flies



*Nephrotoma crocata* (JC Warwick)

*Nephrotoma crocata* Jill Warwick sent me a photo of a female of this fine species which was found at Nosterfield NR in May.

*N. appendiculata* **NS** This is the earliest and most common of the genus (Tiger Craneflies) with a predilection for the springtime. HC, MV, CHF, 17 May & 20 June.

**The Primrose Tiger** *N. flavescens* **NS** This species is the most brightly coloured of the Tiger Craneflies. HC, MV, CHF, 18 May.

*Tipula vitripennis* **NS** Bishop Monkton, 3 May, Roger Parrish.



*Tipula vitripennis* (R Parrish)



*T. vernalis* (B Carter)

*T. vernalis* Barry Carter photographed this specimen at Farnham Gravel Pits on 27 May. Its bulbous green eyes distinguish it from other *Tipula* species.

*T. fascipennis* HC, MV, CHF, 17 July.

*T. oleracea* HC, MV, CHF, 25 April & 2 May.

*T. paludosa* HC, MV, CHF, 27 June. And also at Smelthouses, 2 September.

*T. pagana* Jim Neary sent me a photo of a clear-winged *Tipula* that was in his Ripon House on 1 November. I subsequently sent it on to Pete Beardman who runs the UK Crane fly Recording scheme and he was of the opinion that it was *pagana* which is noted for being about in late Autumn.

*T. rufina* NS Alan Draper took this brilliant photo in his Spofforth garden of this pair of attractive Crane flies on 11 November. There is another very similar species, *T. scripta* which is found in woodland, but no later than October whereas *rufina* prefers suburban gardens in which it has a penchant for laying its eggs in mossy gutters!

*Pedicia rivosa* MV, CHF, Smelthouses, 2 September.

*Ilisia occoecata* NS This is one of the “Spotty-winged” Crane flies. MV, HC, CHF, 11 June.

*Dicranomyia chorea* NS HC, MV, CHF, 23 April. This species behaves like some spiders when it is disturbed: it “dances” up and down which doubtless is a way of alarming predators. Some tropical Crane flies take this action one step further – they hang from spider webs from their claws and dance from there when the web is approached.

*Limonia* spp. Charlie had three species in his moth trap at HC; *macrostigma*, *nubeculosa* and *phragmitid*, all NS; the first two on 20 April and the last on 21 May. Like other *Limonia* species these are all woodland species that appear in springtime.



*Tipula pagana* (J Neary)



*T. rufina* (A Draper)

*Rhipidia maculate* NS HC, MV, CHF, 9 May & 27 June. This common species is more often encountered in woods and hedgerows where it can be recognized by its peppered wings and pectinate antennae.

*Trichocera regeletionis* NS NS HC, MV, CHF, 17 April. This is a small (10mm) brown winter cranefly when it will often be spotted in gardens.

## Bibionidae

*Bibio pomonae* This common relative of St. Mark's Fly differs from it in having deep, crimson-red femorae. CHF had one in his Moth trap at Hackfall Woods, 17 June.

## Bombyliidae: Bee-flies



**Dark-edged Bee-fly** *Bombylius major* (RT Parrish)

**Dark-edged Bee-fly** *Bombylius major* These are very common in early spring, usually seen hovering at flowers. Despite their long, fearsome looking feeding proboscis they are quite harmless to humans but not to the grubs of solitary bees and wasps which their larvae attack in their underground nests. Common in the garden at Willow Walk, Ripon from early April onwards (JBJ) and also in Roger Parrish's Bishop Monkton garden where this one was found nectaring on 7 April. CHF also had one in the garden in Hutton Conyers, 8 April. There were "lots", i.e. more than 6, in the garden here at Willow Walk, 19 April, and also in Whitcliffe Wood NR on the 20, JBJ.

## Rhagionidae: Snipeflies

**Marsh Snipefly** *Rhagio tringarius* CHF had one of this species in his garden at HC, 3 July.

## Stratiomyidae Soldierflies

*Sargus bipunctulatus* This brightly coloured fly is often an autumnal visitor in houses where it is most often seen. CHF found a female in his moth trap, 12 September.

## Syrphidae: Hoverflies



*Meligramma trianguliferum* (CHF)



*Epistrophe elegans* (R Parrish)

*Meligramma trianguliferum* **2<sup>nd</sup> HDNS Record; 1<sup>st</sup> VC65 record.** Charlie Fletcher had this species in his moth trap at HC, 29 June. Thanks to Andy Grayson, the YNU Diptera Recorder for confirming the identity.

*Epistrophe elegans* **NS** Bishop Monkton, 28 April, Roger Parrish. This elegant species has been shown to be highly responsive to warmer Springs and it now emerges much earlier than it did only 20 years go.

*Melanostoma scalare* Roger found this common spring Hoverfly having a feed in the old railway cutting nature reserve at Bishop Monkton on 30 May. HC, CHF, 19 April.



*Melanostoma scalare* (R Parrish)



*Syrritta pipiens* (R Parrish)



*Platycheirus clypeatus* HC, CHF, 8 June.

*Eupeodes corollae* HC, CHF, 3 July.

*Syrpitta pipiens* Bishop Monkton, 24 April, Roger Parrish. Roger also found this species at Flask Lane, Nosterfield, 6 July.

*Sphaerophoria scripta* HC, CHF, 3 July



**Drone Fly** *Eristalis pertinax* (R Parrish)



*E. arbustorum* (R Parrish)

**Drone Fly** *Eristalis pertinax* Harrogate, 7 April, Rex Bradshaw. There are 10 British species of *Eristalis*, some of which are not easy to identify in the hand, let alone from photographs. However, 2 of them, the Drone Flies, are much bigger than their cousins and this one, *pertinax*, differs from the other, *tenax*, in having all yellow tarsi, (the small end bits!) on their middle and fore legs; a feature which shows up well in Rex's photograph. The male Drone Flies are often commonly found in gardens hovering in their territories and chasing off all intruders. Another feature of male *pertinax* is the tapered abdomen which again shows up well in the photograph. Also found at Bishop Monkton by Roger Parrish, 10 April and HC, CHF, 19 April.

*E. arbustorum* NS Bishop Monkton 30 April, R.Parrish. At first glance this species could be confused with the latter one but closer inspection shows no sign of all-yellow tarsi and that together with the lack of a dark facial stripe show it to be *arbustorum*. The same species was also present in Willow Walk, Ripon, during June and July.

*E. nemorum* NS Roger Parrish found this attractive *Eristalis* in Bishop Monkton, 10 April. Older books refer to it as *E. interruptus*.

*E.tenax* This well-known Honeybee mimic was present in numbers in Willow Walk throughout the Summer and into the Autumn. The males are a common sight, hovering in the shadier parts of the garden with their hind legs dangling like the pollen sacs of bees. Also HC, CHF, 8 August.



*E. nemorum* (R Parrish)



*E. tenax* (JB)



*Myathropa florea* (R Parrish)



*Helophilus pendulus* (R Parrish)



*Merodon equestris* (JB)

*Myathropa florea* Bishop Monkton, 24 April, Roger Parrish, who also found it on Flask Lane, Nosterfield, 4 July. This species is sometimes confused with the next one - *Helophilus pendulus*. - but the thoracic "Batman" markings on *florea* are quite different.

*Helophilus pendulus* Bishop Monkton, 24 April, Roger Parrish. Note striped thorax.



*Volucella pellucens* (R Parrish)

*Merodon equestris* This is another Bumblebee mimic, the larvae of which develop in bulbs. Roger found it in his garden, 22 April. It can be distinguished from most other hoverfly bee mimics by the downward loop in the wing vein which can be seen more easily in the enlarged photo. Form *narcissi* was present on my Geraniums in the garden at Willow Walk, 14 June.

*Volucella pellucens* Roger photographed this stunning fly on 3 May at Bishop Monkton.

**Charlie Fletcher found the following Hoverflies in his Moth trap at Hutton Conyers:**

*Melanostoma mellinum* 25 August

*Platycheirus albimanus* 19 April

*Dasysyrphus albostrigatus* 4 April

*Eupeodes luniger* 8 September

*Episyrphus balteatus* 12 & 27 June, 18 September, 18 December.

*Melangyna cincta* 27 April

*Meligramma trianguliferum* 28 June

*Meliscaeva auricollis* 17 September & 1 October

*Sphaerophoria scripta* 3 July

*Syrphus ribesii* 9 May

*Helophilus hybridus* 20 May & 10 August

*Helophilus pendulus* 3 July & 14 September

*Myathropa florea* 9 August

*Volucella pellucens* 17 & 27 July

**Tephritidae: Fruit Flies**



*Terellia* probably *tussilaginis* (J Warwick)

*Terellia* probably *tussilaginis* Jill found this species on Tansy just outside Sharow by the Ure in August.

*Tephritis hyoscyami* One landed on Suzanne in the garden of WW, 17 August, JBJ.

*Anomoia purmunda* HC, CHF, 8 September MV and also observed by Charlie in Ripon, 13 September. The females of this most attractive species lay their eggs in Hawthorn berries.



### Agromyzidae: Leaf-Mining Flies

*Amauromyza* sp. Leaf mines in Woundwort, Whitcliffe Wood NR, Ripon, JBJ, 30 July.

*Amauromyza* sp. Leaf mines (JB)

### Hippoboscidae: Flat Flies

*Ornithomya chloropus* Jill Warwick left me a few specimens of this species which she and Simon found on Curlew chicks at Nosterfield NR 6 June.



*Ornithomya chloropus* (JB)

### Scathophagidae: Dung Flies

*Scathophagus* sp. Roger Parrish photographed this voracious predator on 5 June in Bishop Monkton. Unfortunately flies of this family are notoriously difficult to identify without use of a microscope. This one is very possibly *inquinata* which has plumose antennae which unfortunately cannot be seen clearly enough on the photo.



*Scathophagus* sp. (R Parrish)



*Tachina fera* (JB)

### Tachinidae:

*Tachina fera* HC, CHF, 30 April. Willow Walk, Ripon, 12 September JBJ.

### Symphyta: Sawflies

### Cimbicidae

*Cimbex connatus* 1 adult, HC, CHF, 15 July

*Fenusella nana* NS This species mines Birch and is most often discovered by the presence of its frass outside the mine. Colsterdale-Agra, 8 June, CHF.

*Heterarthrus nemoratus* NS This is another Birch leafminer. Smelthouses, 2 September, CHF.

**Elm Leafminer** *Kallofenusa ulmi* NS CHF found mines at the following 3 locations: R. Ure, nr. Sharow, 7 June; West Tanfield, 13 June; Nor Stainley, 13 June.

*Euura bridgmanii* NS This species mines Willow leaves . CHF spotted a gall in Hutton Conyers, 28 July.



*Abia sericea* (R Evison)



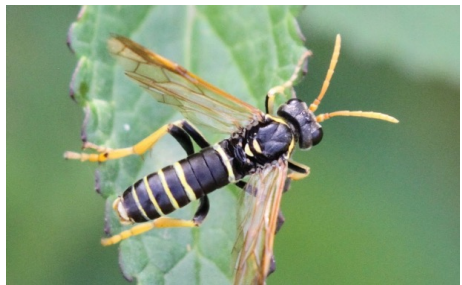
**Giant Alder Sawfly** *Cimbex connatus* (CHF)

*Abia sericea* NS Bob Evison found this male of the species at Staveley NR at the end of June. It is often found fast flying in grassy places and the larvae feed openly on scabious leaves.

**Giant Alder Sawfly** *Cimbex connatus* NS **1st VC65 Record; 4<sup>th</sup> Yorkshire Record (the other 3 are all in VC61)** Charlie Fletcher found this impressive monster in a field at Hutton Conyers ca. 10 July



**Bramble Sawfly** *Arge cyanocrocea* (J Warwick)



**Figwort Sawfly** *Tenthredo scrophulariae* (B Morland)

## Argidae

**Bramble Sawfly** *Arge cyanocrocea* NS Jill Warwick found a couple of this species on Cow Parsley in Sharow, 27 May.

## Tenthredinidae

**Figwort Sawfly** *Tenthredo scrophulariae* Brian Morland took this fine photo of a fine insect on 7 August at Bellflask. Note yellow antennae which distinguishes this species from the very similar, and common, *Tenthredo arcuata* aggregate species which have black antennae.

**Solomon's Seal Leafminer** *Phymatocera aterrima* NS HC, CHF, MV, 30 May, 1 larva.

## Gasteruertiidae: Gasteruertiid Wasps



**Javelin Wasp** *Gasteruption jaculator* (M Smithson)

**Javelin Wasp** *Gasteruption jaculator* Poss. 2<sup>nd</sup> VC64 Record. Mike Smithson found this impressive beast at Farnham GP on 18 July.



**Black-headed Mason Wasp** *Odynerus spinipes* (JB)

## Vespidae: Mason Wasps

**Black-headed Mason Wasp** *Odynerus spinipes* NS Dan McAndrew sent me a specimen of this species that came into his house in Park Drive, Masham on 1 June.

**Small-notched Mason Wasp** *Ancistrocerus gazella* NS A male of this common species was in the garden on 22 July at WW, JBJ.

## Social Wasps



**Hornet** *Vespa crabro* (M Oates)

**Hornet** *Vespa crabro* Mark Oates found this Queen, doubtless just out of hibernation, sunning herself on his patio in Farnham before flying off, 11 March. This is more evidence for the establishment of this species in our area.

**The Saxon Wasp** *Dolichovespula saxonica* Charlie Fletcher found this handsome wasp buzzing angrily in his Moth Trap in Hutton Conyers on 8 May. It is quite a rarity in Yorkshire and has only been recorded once before in our area, by Audrey Summersgill in Glasshouses in 2013.



**The Saxon Wasp** *Dolichovespula saxonica* (CHF)



**German Wasp** *Vespula germanica* NS This common wasp does not seem to have been recorded from our area before, so it was a nice surprise to find a dead male on the patio at WW, 7 August. It can be recognized by the markings on the abdomen or, often more

easily, by looking at the clypeus, the large plate in the centre of the face. This is yellow, with black markings in all the social wasps and in this species these consist of three black dots, the middle one often vertically elongated. The only other wasp with three dots is the Cuckoo Wasp, *Vespa austriaca* which has different markings on the abdomen.

**Bees:** A mixed bunch of vegetarian wasps is probably the best definition of this hodge-podge of families!

### **Andrenidae: Mining Bees**

**Gwynne's Mining Bee** *Andrena bicolor* Roger Parrish photographed this male in his Bishop Monkton garden, 7 April.

**Chocolate Mining Bee** *A. scotica* Roger also found this male in his Bishop Monkton garden, 7 April. A good Harrogate location for it is on the crag tops at Birk Crag where I first found it nesting in 1984.

**Orange-tailed Mining Bee** *A. haemorrhhoa* Roger Parrish found this species in his Bishop Monkton garden, 20 April. It is one of the easier species to identify out of 67 British

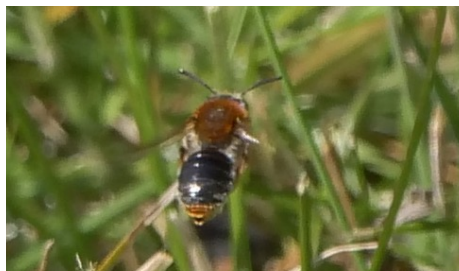


**Gwynne's Mining Bee** *Andrena bicolor* (R Parrish)



**Chocolate Mining Bee** *A. scotica* (R Parrish)

species!



**Orange-tailed Mining Bee** *A. haemorrhhoa* (R Parrish)



**Tawny Mining Bee** *A. fulva* (R Parrish)



**Tawny Mining Bee** *A. fulva* Bishop Monkton, 26 April, Roger Parrish. This, the most distinctive of the *Andrena* mining bees is also the most commonly noticed by virtue of its handsome attire!

**Ashy Mining Bee** *A. cineraria* At Bee Hotel in Sharow Churchyard on 5 May was this male of the species (note long antennae), found by Simon Warwick. One wonders what it was doing there as any females would have already been impregnated? Unfortunately the colony founded last year at Willow Walk produced no imagoes this year. Roger Parrish photographed a female of the species in Bishop Monkton, 27 May.

**Wilke's Mining Bee** *A. wilkella* NS High Batts NR, Roger found this fine specimen of a decidedly local species, 5 June.



Ashy Mining Bee *A. cineraria* (R Parrish)



Wilke's Mining Bee *A. wilkella* (R Parrish)

## Sphecidae: Blood Bees



**Bare Saddled Blood Bee**  
*Sphecodes ephippius* (JBJ)

**Bare Saddled Blood Bee** *Sphecodes ephippius* NS 1<sup>st</sup> VC64 **Record.** This was one of the specimens found by Colin Slator in Pennycroft, adjacent to High Batts NR, 20 May Pennycroft. It is one of 17 British *Sphecodes*, a very difficult to identify group as they all tend to look very similar to each other. (Worldwide there are hundreds of them!) Many thanks to the YNU Recorder, Andy Millard for confirming the identity.

## Megachilidae: Mason Bees

**Red Mason Bee** *Osmia bicornis* Lots of these were active at the Bee Hotel in Sharow Churchyard on 7 May as reported by Simon Warwick. They were also in the garden of Willow Walk, Ripon on the same day and also on 13 June.

## Apidae: Bees

### Flower Bees

**Hairy-footed Flower Bee** *Anthophora plumipes* NS Rex Bradshaw photographed a female nectaring on Everlasting Wallflower, *Erysium*, in his Harrogate garden, 6 April. Most females of this species are very dark black but some, like this one, belong to a pale form.

Luckily, Bob Evison had a dark form female in his garden at Staveley on 11 April so we can see photos of both varieties.



**Hairy-footed Flower Bee**  
*Anthophora plumipes* (R  
Bradshaw)



(R Evison)



**Hairy-footed Flower Bee**  
*Anthophora plumipes* male (R  
Bradshaw)

Rex had a male in his garden on 12 April showing the long hairs on its mid legs which give the species its name (they only occur on the male; the female has a pollen basket on her hind legs).

### Nomad Bees

**Gooden's Nomad Bee** *Nomada goodeniana* NS, 10 April Roger Parrish found several females of this fine bee inspecting the nest holes of *Andrena scotica*, they being cleptoparasites of that species. The second photo shows the Nomad, having located a *scotica* nest, proceeding to excavate it in order to deposit her own eggs! A fine pair of pictures!

**Blunt-jawed Nomad Bee** *N. striata* NS This species, also from Roger's garden on 22 April is a cleptoparasite of *Andrena wilkella*.. It is distinguished by the widely separated yellow spots on the second segment of the abdomen.

**Marsham's Nomad Bee** *N. marshamella* This species is another cleptoparasite of *Andrena scotica*. The orange spots on the tegulae, where the wings meet the abdomen, help to separate it from several similar ones. This photograph was taken by Gareth Jones in a polytunnel at Nosterfield and forwarded to me by Jill Warwick.on April 27.



**Gooden's Nomad Bee** *Nomada goodeniana* (R Parrish)



**Blunt-jawed Nomad Bee** *N. striata* (R Parrish)



**Marsham's Nomad Bee** *N. marshamella* (G Jones)

## Social Bees



**Buff-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus terrestris* (R Parrish)

**Buff-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus terrestris*  
 Roger Parrish provided our first record of an emergent Queen Bumblebee this year with this photograph taken on 21 February. It is a dark variety of the species and looks like it is trying to get into his house in Bishop Monkton out of the cold! Jill Warwick found a Queen of this species nectaring on Crocuses in Sharow churchyard on 6 March and Will Rich also sent a record of it at Ellington Banks on 10 March. Later still, on 20 October Roger found another Queen, looking for a vacant disused mouse burrow in which to spend the winter! It was also recorded at MV at Hutton Conyers by CHF several on several occasions.

This species is often mis-identified as *B.lucorum* agg later in the year as, confusingly, most *terrestris* workers have white tails! This isn't really surprising as both species are descended from a common ancestor in relatively recent times. They may even be conspecific today as their male genitalia are virtually identical.

The second and third photos show a male *terrestris*, found dead in Willow Walk in early August. It was exceptionally light in colouration so I dissected out its genitalia to be sure of its identity – shown below.



**Buff-tailed Bumblebee** *Bombus terrestris* male and dissected genitalia (JB)

**White-tailed Bumblebee** *B. lucorum* agg, Ripon, Willow Walk, Queen in garden, 19 April, JB. The queens have the white-tail, and Buff-tailed Queens actually have the buff tail, unlike their workers!(See above!)

**Red-Tailed Bumblebee** *B. lapidaries* Male Red-tails were present in the garden at Willow Walk, Ripon on 3 July, JB. They differ from the Queens and workers in having an extensively yellow-haired head.



**Red-Tailed Bumblebee** *B. lapidaries* (JB)

**Early Bumblebee** *B. pratorum* (JB)

**Early Bumblebee** *B. pratorum* A not-so-early male of this species was in the garden at Willow Walk on 7 July, masquerading as a Heath Bumblebee and causing much head scratching! A dead male found in the garden was dissected to confirm the identity, JBJ.

**Garden Bumblebee** *B. hortorum* Roger Parrish's photos showed a Queen in his Bishop Monkton garden, 13 April, closely followed by another from Rex Bradshaw, in Harrogate, the following day. It's a pretty distinctive species, the main distinguishing features being the yellow bands on the base of the thorax and front of the abdomen, juxtaposed with each other. Also photographed by Will Rich's daughter, Gail, in his Harrogate garden, 30 May.



**Garden Bumblebee** *B. hortorum* (JBJ)



(R Parrish)

(R Bradshaw)

A melanic male (above) of this species turned up on my Geraniums in Willow Walk on June 13 and its identity was confirmed by dissecting out the genitalia. Normal males were also present at that time. (see photos) The males of this species have even longer antennae than those of other *Bombus* species.

**Tree Bumblebee** *B. hypnorum* Robert Marshall found a Queen of this species "searching the darker corners of our Bilton Garden in the sunshine", 22 March. The first workers appeared in Willow Walk, Ripon during May and were very small, but by the first week of June new Queens and males including a melanic male showed that mating flights were taking place; JBJ. Linda Spashett O'Connell reported having an active nest in a concrete bird box in her garden on 21 May. Matings were still taking place in Bishop Monkton on 17 June as was shown by the presence of males in Roger Parrish's paddock!



This was one of several species taken at **MV** at **HC** by **CHF**.

**Common Carder Bumblebee** *B. pascuorum* B. Monkton, 24 April, Roger Parrish. This was another species photographed by Will's daughter, 30 May. It was also numerous on the Willow Walk Geraniums where this one was photographed, 16 June. This was also one of several species taken at **MV** at **HC** by **CHF**

**Vestal Cuckoo Bee** *B. vestalis* This species was very numerous in my Willow Walk, Ripon garden in June and early July and Roger also had a male in his Bishop Monkton garden on 18

June. It is a social parasite of the Buff-tailed Bumblebee.

**Tree Bumblebee** *B. hypnorum* (R Parrish)



**Common Carder Bumblebee** *B. pascuorum* (JB)

**Vestal Cuckoo Bee** *B. vestalis* (JB)

**Mike Brown compiled this list of interesting *Bombus* first sightings in his Harrogate garden:**

Just a few records for you from 2020, nothing new for me and nothing needing an expert opinion! All records relate to my garden in Pannal Ash Drive, Harrogate.

My first Bumblebee was on the 19 March but sadly I couldn't decide if it was a Buff or White-tailed.

Tawny Mining Bee: A male settled on my timber whilst I was making raised beds in the garden.

Buff-tailed Bumblebee: First, a queen, 25 March.

Early Bumblebee: First, a queen, 27 March.

White-tailed Bumblebee: First not till 20 April, must have been an oversight of earlier emergence.

Tree Bumblebee: First, a queen on 6 April.

## Opiliones: Harvestmen

*Dicranopalpus ramosus* agg. Kevin Birch found this very interesting species on a wall in Hauxwell, 13 August. The species has spread across Europe from Morocco. As early as 1957, it was reported in Bournemouth in southern England, from where it spread reaching Scotland in 2000. Its mid-legs can stretch over 5cm and the pedipalps appear to be forked.



*Dicranopalpus ramosus* agg. (K Birch)

## Araneae: Spiders

### Salticidae: Jumping Spiders

**Zebra Spider** *Salticus scenicus* Barry Carter found this very appealing immature of the species in Killinghall Bridge, 14 April. I am convinced that jumping spiders are sentient as they can be easily induced to play with one!

Kevin Birch found another youngster on his back door in Azerley clutching an unidentified Baetid Mayfly on 11 April.



**Zebra Spider** *Salticus scenicus* (B Carter)



**Zebra Spider** *Salticus scenicus* (K Birch)

## Tetragnathidae: Long-jawed Orbweb Spiders

**Cave Spider** *Meta menardi* Fountains Abbey, Jill Warwick sent me the following very interesting note on this species which she encountered on 11 June:



**Cave Spider** *Meta menardi* (J Warwick)

'Took the above photo in a tiny little "cubby hole" at F. Abbey yesterday (not the best, on my mobile using flash). Geoff Oxford has confirmed that it is the Cave Spider, *Meta menardi*. There were at least a dozen of them in this completely dark "cell" near the main courtyard to the east of the Abbey itself and I'm sure that if I poked around more, I could find more! None of the distinctive egg sacs were visible.'

Geoff confirms there are some old 1990s records from Fountains Abbey for this species but none recently. It's one of those species which I think is overlooked because of its favoured habitat of completely dark, undisturbed areas.

## Amaurobiidae: Lace-Web Spiders

*Amaurobius similis* This female of the species turned up in the bedroom at WW on the late date of 9 November (JB).



*Amaurobius similis* (JB)



*Pardosa amentata* (W Rich)

## Lycosidae: Wolf Spiders

*Pardosa amentata* NS This family of spiders use their well-developed eyes to catch prey rather than depending on webs. Having no fixed base the females carry their egg-sac around with them for safety. *P. amentata* is usually very common in gardens which is where Will Rich found several in Harrogate, 24 June.

## Theridiidae: Comb-Footed Spiders

*Anelosimus vittatus* NS A singleton was present on the outside of our WW patio door on the morning of 7 September.





*Anelosimus vittatus* (JBJ)



*Steatoda bipunctata* (JBJ)

*Steatoda bipunctata* Our patio door seems to attract a whole host of species over time, including a couple of quite rare ones!

This one was present on the 29 September. WW, JBJ. Ripon. The four dark spots are a useful pointer for recognising this common species.

**Common Candy-Striped Spider** *Enoplognatha ovata* forms *lineata* & *redimita*. Roger Parrish sent me the first photo of the year of form *lineata*, (which lacks any red colouration) from Bishop Monkton on 28 July but it was not until 28 August that it made its appearance in WW when several were found with their egg sacs in our brown wheelie-bin! The WW individuals were all form *redimita*\* and the first spiderlings were noted emerging on 4 September. The latter entailed much activity as Suzanne and



**Common Candy-Striped Spider**  
*Enoplognatha ovata* forms *lineata*(R Parrish)



Form *redimita* with newly formed sac , 24 August. (JBJ)



Almost mature, 31 August...  
(JBJ)



... first 4 spiderlings have left the sac!  
4 September (JBJ)

myself hastened to collect about 6 or 7 mothers and offspring and place them in a safer place before the bin-men came!

\*Form *redimita* has two red longitudinal bands. Form *ovata* has a single broad red band covering most of the dorsal area of the abdomen but that form has not been recorded here yet.

Editors' note:

This is the last annual report of Coleoptera and other invertebrates to be compiled by our retiring Recorder, Jim Jobe. His detailed, informative and at times humorous text and the profusion of his and other contributors' photographs have made this section a delight to read.

# Vertebrate Section

## Lower Vertebrates

### Recorder: Richard Stobbs

**Brown Trout** *Salmo trutta*. Several were seen rising in Scar House reservoir on 6 November (RC). Crimple Beck unlike some of our other small waterways still holds good numbers (DT). Hundreds of trout fry were seen in the backwaters at Staveley on 27 May and trout were seen feeding on emerging Mayflies on 3 June (RE).

**Pike** *Esox lucius*. One was seen in the pond by Carr Hide, Staveley on 8 May (RE). Also present in the rivers Nidd and Ure (RS).

**Perch** *Perca fluviatilis* seen in an inlet ditch at Staveley on 3 June (RE).

**Bullhead** *Cottus gobio* Also known as the Millers Thumb due to its broad flattened head it is present in Crimple Beck (DT) and is common in most streams and rivers in our area.

**Stone Loach** *Barbatulus barbatula* Found in Crimple Beck (DT).

**Minnow** *Phoxinus phoxinus* Large shoals of this tiddler seen in many a child's jam jar (or was when I was a lad) is a common fish seen in Crimple Beck (DT) and also found in the rivers Nidd and Ure in large numbers (RS).

**Chub** *Squalius cephalus* Common in the Nidd and Ure (RS).

**Barbel** *Barbus barbus* Some large specimens of this fish are present in the river Nidd (RS).

**Rudd** *Scardinius erythrophthalmus* Three were seen in the pond at Rosset Nature Reserve on 20 May but have not been seen since. Probably introduced to the delight of the local Heron. (DT).

**Common Frog** *Rana temporaria* A number of reports received (DT) (MPR) (RE) with earliest report of spawn at Farnham Gravel Pits on the 8th of March (JEA). Lots of spawn in all four ponds at Fern Dene (MEM).

**Common Toad** *Bufo bufo* Reported from Fern Dene (MEM). At Staveley hundreds were seen in the backwaters (RE) and in Stainburn Forest several were noticed while looking for Nightjars (DT).

**Common Adder** *Vipera berus* A dead animal was seen on the road near Fern Dene (MEM) and a female adder was seen at Scar House on 9 May where another two had been seen previously (SR).

**Grass Snake** *Natrix natrix* A snake was seen swimming across a stream at a distance and for only a short time at Skell Gill Bridge on 21 September and identified by a competent observer as a Grass Snake. (TB) However due to the circumstances of the sighting and the location I am inclined to think it was more likely to have been an Adder. Hopefully I could be wrong!

My thanks to R Campbell, Miss J EAtkinson, D Tipping, R Evison, T Baker, ME Mercer and M & P Robinson with apologies for any omissions.

# Mammals

## Recorder: Richard Stobbs

Quite an interesting year to say the least. But despite the difficulties I have had a good number of reports.

**Hedgehog** *Erinaceus europaeus* One seen going into the recorder's garden early in the year (RS) with one seen at Plompton Drive on 17 February and a young one on 9 July (AM).

**Mole** *Talpa europaea* One was an unwelcome visitor to the recorder's garden (why do they always dig where you don't want them to?) (RS) A great deal of evidence in the form of molehills at Staveley with one animal found dead on 14 August (RE).

**Common Shrew** *Sorex araneus* The remains of fourteen animals were found in Barn Owl pellets and two animals found dead in July and September at Staveley (RE)

**Noctule Bat** *Nyctalus noctula* Up to ten animals were accounted for on a bat detector at Staveley (D. Watkins) (RE).

**Soprano Pipistrelle** *Pipistrellus pygmaeus* A very long name for small animal! It was detected In Willow Wood, Staveley by bat detector (D. Watkins) (RE).

**Pipistrelle Bat** *Pipistrellus pipistrellus* Also recorded in Willow Wood, Staveley by D Watkins on his bat detector (RE).

**Rabbit** *Oryctolagus cuniculus* I am not known for my observational skills but it seems to me that there are less rabbits about than there were. They were however present all year at Farnham Gravel Pits (FGP)(JEA) and up to thirty being seen at Staveley (RE).

**Brown Hare** *Lepus europaeus* Another animal that is much less common than it used to be. It was reported from Staveley where one or two animals were seen in February, March, May, November and December. (RE)

**Bank Vole** *Myodes glareolus* The remains of sixteen animals were found in Barn Owl pellets at Staveley (RE) and single animals seen occasionally near bird feeders at Plompton Drive. (AM)

**Field Vole** *Microtus agrestis* Obviously a very common animal as the remains of fifty animals were found in Barn Owl pellets at Staveley (RE)

**Grey Squirrel** *Sciurus carolinensis* Up to five animals seen at Staveley during most months of the year. Also seen throughout the year at Plompton Drive, Harrogate (AM).

**Common Rat** *Rattus norvegicus* For such a common animal very few records were received. The remains of four animals were found in Barn Owl Pellets at Staveley and animals seen in November and December (RE). A young animal was seen at Plompton Drive, Harrogate near bird-feeders on 5 August (AM).

**Wood Mouse** *Apodemus sylvaticus* The remains of eight animals were found in Barn Owl pellets at Staveley (RE). Animals were also reported from Plompton Drive, Harrogate where they were seen under bird feeders January to August. Two animals were also found dead in the pond (AM).

**Fox** *Vulpes vulpes* One or two animals were seen at Staveley in January to March (RE). One animal was seen most months with two cubs being observed on 17 May at FGP (JEA).

**Stoat** *Mustela ermine* Animals reported in January and June at FGP (JEA). Also seen at Staveley in January to June and September with a family party of six seen on 5 June near Willow Wood.

**Weasel** *Mustela nivalis* This animal remains a rarity or is very elusive as only one record was received of an animal seen at FGP on 3 February (JEA).

**Polecat Ferret** *Mustela furo* Although not common, this animal seems to be reasonably widespread in our area. A road kill was noted near Greenhow village on 15 September (JM).

**Otter** *Lutra lutra* This animal is now well established in our area having a presence on most of the waterways. Seen regularly at FGP with two cubs present in October (JEA). One animal seen in Ripon Canal on 5 April and one near Newby Hall in the Ure on 2 May (PB). A pair were seen fishing in Oak Beck on 27 January (PT).

**Badger** *Meles meles* Becoming more common and not only in the rural areas as was proved when a garden near New Park, Harrogate was dug up and a holly bush uprooted and a neighbour's patio undermined by animals determined to get to a bumble bees' nest (WR). If you want your garden digging just bury some peanuts! Single animals were found dead on 28 March and 15 June at Staveley where fresh bedding was observed to have been collected on 27 November (RE).

**Fallow Deer** *Dama dama* A stag was seen at Bishop Monkton Ings on 8 April (PB). Three + stags and one all white animal were seen in the Staveley area on 6 December (RE).

**Roe Deer** *Capreolus capriolus* This must be the most common large mammal in our area. I regularly see one or more animals while out walking. Reports were received from FGP, Bishop Monkton and Staveley, where a maximum of five were seen on 20 December (JEA, PB, RE).

My thanks to everybody who sent in records with apologies for any omissions:- Miss J E Atkinson, R Evison, P Bowman, Miss A Mettam, Dr J Mather, P Thompson, W Rich

# Ornithological Summary

## Recorder: Stephen Root

Despite the restrictions of lockdown, 197 species were recorded in the district in 2020, an increase from the 189 of 2019. There were some very interesting reports. Best was a new species for the district, an American wader, a Lesser Yellowlegs that was first seen at Flasks Lake on 6 January and then stayed in the Nosterfield area for the rest of the year. It was seen by very many grateful observers. Other particularly notable sightings included our fourth ever Red-footed Falcon, a Honey Buzzard, two Hoopoes, a pair of Woodlarks, a Red-necked Grebe, a Firecrest and a Long-tailed Duck. There was much more besides as I set out below.

A **Brent Goose** at Carthorpe Mires in January was our first since 2017. Both **Canada Geese** and **Greylag Geese** remain plentiful, with flocks of up to 3000 at three sites in the autumn. There was just one report of **Barnacle Geese** in the first winter period, six at Ripon City Wetlands on 9 March. The second winter period was more productive though and included flocks of 36 at Nosterfield NR in October and 50 at Carthorpe Mires at the end of December. Up to two **Snow Geese** continue to be seen occasionally in the area (likely escapes / feral birds). Carthorpe Mires held over 1200 **Pink-footed Geese** during January and February though return passage over the district began from the middle of January. This continued through March though, like 2019, was somewhat subdued compared to previous years. Geese returned early, with the first arrivals seen on 6 September and was protracted to the end of November with some still moving in December. A small flock of six **Bean Goose** flew over Knaresborough on 6 March. Carthorpe Mires also held 12-14 **White-fronted Geese** in January and February, though numbers did vary. During this period others were seen at Marfield NR, in the Nosterfield complex and at Sharow. Late winter was much quieter for this species with just two individuals reported. An escaped **Lesser White-fronted Goose** caused some confusion and excitement being seen at Ladybridge Lake in June and July before surfacing again at Staveley NR for two days in September.

**Mute Swans** had a good breeding season with at least 18 pairs in the district. The Spring **Whooper Swan** passage was spectacular, indeed our best ever with in the region of 1270 swans being seen at various sites across the district between the end of February and 11 April, 385 being noted on 7 March alone. **Egyptian Geese** numbers are slowly increasing with birds being seen in every month of the year apart from August and December. Breeding **Shelduck** were at seven sites, Nosterfield NR being the most favoured location where there was a peak of 49 in late May. Two **Ruddy Shelduck** were seen, one at Marfield NR on 25 October and the other on Lingham Water on 22 November.

The colonisation by **Mandarin Ducks** continues apace with two main pockets, one around the R. Nidd and the other around High Batts NR. A minimum of 11 pairs bred successfully. It was a good year for **Garganey** as well with birds being recorded from five sites and observers believed that two pairs may have attempted to breed at Nosterfield NR. Sixty-four **Shoveler** were at Staveley NR in September, the largest flock in the district since 2010, and the species bred at both Bellflask Quarry and Nosterfield NR. At least eight pairs of **Gadwall** bred and this duck remains widespread. **Wigeon** numbers declined from the slight recovery in 2019 though 935 were at Nosterfield NR in

December. As ever, a few summered. **Pintail** records seem to be increasing with this graceful duck being seen between January to early April and again from late August to the end of the year. Numbers peaked at the beginning of March when 22 were in the Nosterfield Recording Area. **Teal** were seen at 20 sites but numbers are much lower than they were a few years ago. A **Red-crested Pochard** seen at the end of last year remained at Ripon City Wetlands until 24 January and was the only report in 2020. The decline in wintering **Pochard** continues apace with only Farnham GP seeing double figures, a peak of only 18 ducks. **Tufted Ducks**, however, are doing well with five sites seeing counts of over 100 and at least 17 pairs breeding. Wintering and/or passage **Scaup** were present in both winter periods some staying faithful to their chosen sites for some weeks. An unexpected bonus of lockdown was the ability in the spring to listen for the nocturnal migration of **Common Scoter** over the district. It probably happens every year but is impossible to pick up against the usual background of traffic noise. Mid-summer also saw reports of this species, another traditional time for it to migrate across country. A **Long-tailed Duck** at Farnham GP in February was the first since 2017. **Goldeneye** numbers seem to be steady. Female **Smew** book-ended the year with one in the first winter months at Lingham Water and another at Farnham GP in December. **Goosanders** are now well distributed over the district and 40 were at Hay-a-Park GP in January.

The numbers of **Black Grouse** though low are gradually increasing on the Nidderdale moors. **Grey Partridge** were reported from 12 different locations and included a flock 60 near Hutton Moor, probably newly released birds. **Quail** was heard in June at Little Ribston, Nosterfield NR and Topcliffe.

It was a good year for **Nightjars** with several records from the Brimham area and three other sites. **Swifts** were with us from 20 April to 12 September with the largest flock being a very impressive 1000 or so over Ripon City Wetlands on 23 May. **Cuckoos** remain more common on the higher ground and continue to decline elsewhere though Staveley NR saw a sequence of ten records between early May and mid-June. **Stock Doves** are widely but thinly distributed rarely reaching double figures. On the other hand, **Woodpigeons** are numerous with some counts in excess of 1500 birds. Sadly, there was just the one **Turtle Dove** at Nosterfield NR on 19 May. **Water Rails** were present at six sites and probably bred at both Staveley NR and Ripon City Wetlands. Farnham GP once again held the biggest concentration of **Coot**, with 310 there in December. The year saw the full set of five grebe species. **Little** and **Great Crested Grebes** were at all the usual waters. A **Red-necked Grebe**, the first since 2016, was seen at Bellflask Quarry on 25 November and a **Slavonian Grebe** arrived at Lingham Water also in November. Spring saw up to two **Black-necked Grebes** at Nosterfield NR in March/April and another was at the same site in July. A later bird was on Allerton Lake on 16 October.

**Oystercatchers** continue to thrive and once again the biggest flock was at Gouthwaite Res, 135 birds in March. **Avocet** were present between 6 March and 17 October with up to 13 in the Nosterfield Recording Area but breeding only took place at Nosterfield NR. Good numbers of **Lapwings** were seen with Carthorpe Mires, Nosterfield Recording Area and Staveley NR seeing counts of well over 1000. **Golden Plover** is also nearly as numerous with 2000 or over at times both at the Nosterfield Recording Area and Scargill Reservoir. Two other sites saw flocks over 1000 strong. It was a good year for **Grey Plover** with eight birds seen, all in the Nosterfield area, spread between May and November. There was a decent passage of **Ringed Plover** with a peak of 36 in May at Nosterfield NR where three pairs bred. The first **Little Ringed Plover** appeared on

19 March, a typical date, and bred or attempted to breed at Bellflask Quarry, Flasks Lake, Lingham Water and Pennycroft. As ever there was a light passage of **Whimbrel**, noted at seven locations including a flock of 14 at Lingham Water in July. Our district still holds good numbers of the nationally declining **Curlew** and over 570 were in the High Batts Recording Area during November. There was just one spring report of **Bar-tailed Godwit** at Flasks Lake on 1 May and two autumn birds – another at Flasks Lake in September and one at Lingham Water in October. The first **Black-tailed Godwit** was at Lingham Water on 9 March and the last a very late bird at Nosterfield NR on 21 December. They were seen at most of the wetland sites and an impressive flock of 50 flew over Lingham Water in mid-July. Five **Turnstones** comprised two in the spring and three in the autumn. A winter-plumaged **Knot** was at Nosterfield NR on 5 June. Another was at Ripon City Wetlands for three days in August and one at Staveley NR early September. October and November saw further singles. **Ruff** was present daily in the Nosterfield Recording Area in the first and second winter periods, with other well watched sites seeing small numbers during the autumn.

A winter-plumaged **Curlew Sandpiper** was at Nosterfield NR on 19 April and one more at Ripon City Wetlands on 22 August. **Sanderling** were seen at Nosterfield NR and Ripon City Wetlands in the spring and Langwith Lake and Ripon City Wetlands in the autumn. **Dunlin** was most numerous in the Nosterfield Recording Area (maximum of 22 in May) but reported from only three other sites – one hopes that is due to the species being overlooked though numbers have declined.

There was one spring record of **Little Stint** at Nosterfield NR but autumn was, as usual, more productive. There were sightings in September of two birds, but October saw the species at Nosterfield NR on most days with up to two on any one day. In reality it is impossible to tell the real number as it could have been the same birds or there could have been a daily turnover of migrating individuals. There were no observations of roding **Woodcock** but many were reported especially in the winter months, including one in a Harrogate garden on 25 November. There were just five **Jack Snipe**, one in the first winter period, the others in the last. **Snipe** remain very common with some impressive counts – 84 at Ripon City Wetlands in September and 91 at Staveley NR in February. An end-of-lockdown treat was a **Red-necked Phalarope** at Nosterfield NR on 30 May. The first **Common Sandpiper** was at Nosterfield NR on 11 April and the last at Flasks Lake on 22 September. High Batts Recording Area and Ripon City Wetlands are the main sites for **Green Sandpiper**, mainly in winter and autumn and the species appeared at four other locations. The **Lesser Yellowlegs** has already been mentioned in the introduction, best bird of the year! As ever good numbers of **Redshank** were in the Nosterfield area where it was seen in every month of the year, most of our other wetland sites also saw this species but in much lower numbers. In spring three **Wood Sandpiper** were at Nosterfield NR and an exceptional seven dropped onto the Reserve on 24 June. The species had a strong autumn passage being recorded at several sites involving perhaps 18 or so different birds. Breeding plumaged **Spotted Redshank** is a stunning bird and May saw individuals at both Nosterfield NR and Ripon City Wetlands with another at the first site at the end of June. Three autumn birds were noted including a very late one at Lingham Water on 22 November. There were just three spring **Greenshank** but as usual there was a much better autumn migration lasting from 13 July to 19 September – four were present on one day at Ripon City Wetlands.



Just as in 2019 there were three **Kittiwake** records – one at Nosterfield NR in June, a juvenile at Staveley NR in mid-October and one at Nosterfield NR/Lingham Water at the beginning of November. Several sites saw in excess of 1000 **Black-headed Gulls** during the winter months. A **Little Gull** flew over Dallowgill Moor on 14 May and two were at Hay-a-Park GP on 24 June. The five **Mediterranean Gull** reports were all between 6 May and 2 July, most of them coming from the Nosterfield recording area. Visible migration watches saw some large counts of **Common Gulls** over the district, especially in the spring, which peaked at 1756 moving over Harrogate on 3 April. Numbers of our larger gulls have declined, in the main due to the closure of a number of waste tips with no double figures seen of **Great Black-backed Gulls** and while **Herring Gulls** are not uncommon nowhere held more than 300. Two observations of **Yellow-legged Gulls** saw one at Nosterfield on 19 July and another over Stainburn Moor on 23 August. July to September brings us most **Lesser Black-backed Gulls** with nearly 300 during this period at both the Nosterfield Recording Area and Ripon City Wetlands. Our first **Little Tern** since 2018 was at Ripon City Wetlands on 14 June, staying for most of the day. **Common Terns** bred at Farnham GP and Staveley NR. It was a poor year for **Arctic Tern** passage with just four dates, two in the spring and two in the autumn, all of single birds. **Black Tern** too had a very bad year with just one report, a juvenile at Hay-a-Park GP on 6 September.

**Cormorants** can be seen on most water bodies in any month of the year but the first winter period is the best time to find one of the continental *sinensis* race – odd individuals noted at both Farnham GP and Staveley NR. **Bitterns** were seen or heard at four sites and bred again at Bellflask Quarry. High Batts Recording Area again had the biggest concentration of **Grey Herons** with 19 seen at the end of November. **Great White Egret** sightings continue to increase with birds present in the district from 22 August to the end of the year including two together at Nosterfield NR on the first date and a party of three at Staveley NR on 19 September. There were an astonishing 438 Birdtrack reports of **Little Egret** and it was present in the district throughout the year.

There were a mere three spring sightings of **Osprey** moving through the area but this gave no hint of what was to happen from 3 June to 29 September when there were at least 61 (!) further reports. Many of these came from the Nosterfield area where at least eight different individuals were identified but ten other sites also saw this impressive raptor. A **Honey Buzzard** soared over Knaresborough on 17 July, the first accepted record since 2008. **Marsh Harriers** were noted at five locations, the first at Staveley NR on 7 May and a pair took advantage of lockdown, attempting (unsuccessfully) to breed at Ripon City Wetlands. Several birds passed through our recording area during the autumn. One pair of **Hen Harriers** bred successfully and the well-known roost at Leighton reservoir attracted 11 birds in February and up to ten in December. **Red Kites** remain very visible and are still expanding. Observations this year included a wing tagged bird at Hay-a-Park GP on 28 March that had been tagged in Scotland in 2010. An unseen **White-tailed Eagle** from the Isle of Wight reintroduction scheme flew into the district on 1 September, roosting near Gouthwaite Reservoir before departing the following morning. **Buzzard** remains our most numerous raptor with 832 Birdtrack records and a further 140 from Nidderdale Birdwatchers, some 25 were over Staveley NR on 10 September. **Barn Owls** are going through a successful period with reports from across the area. The only breeding **Tawny Owls** reported were from Bishop Thornton and Staveley NR but there will have been many more pairs. **Little Owls**

appear to be in decline with the species disappearing from previous haunts. **Short-eared Owls** also had a poor 2020 with few reports submitted though a pair may have bred near Redlish.

Not seen in the area since 2015 two **Hoopoes** were discovered though neither available to the birding masses. The first had been and gone in Cattal in May before a photo was shown to an experienced birder. The second was in the grounds of Nidd Hall Hotel between 16 and 19 October. **Kingfishers** appear to be holding their own but there was just one **Lesser Spotted Woodpecker** seen at Low Batts in March. The other two woodpeckers, **Great Spotted Woodpecker** and **Green Woodpecker**, both seem to be doing well though. **Kestrels** are our commonest falcon and is still widespread. A **Red-footed Falcon** was videoed by a gamekeeper on Dallowgill Moor on 23 June and was only our fourth-ever. Most **Merlins** were seen in either the first three months or the last five months of the year and no breeding records were submitted. **Hobbies** were present between 3 May and 24 September, seen at many sites, and it seems possible that some pairs successfully bred. At least one pair of **Peregrines** did breed and birds were noted throughout the year from at least 20 different locations.

**Ringed-necked Parakeets** are now establishing themselves at both Roundhay Park and on Teesside and they are almost certainly the source of wanderers into the district. There were four this year and there may well be many more in years to come. Jays are increasingly being noted at garden feeding stations but can be quite elusive. A flock of 80 **Magpies** close to High Batts Nature Reserve on 28 September was the biggest ever total in our recording area. A slurry field near Sawley in February attracted some 2000 **Jackdaws**, an exceptional number of this small corvid. **Ravens** are increasing with more being seen on the low ground now than previously - a pair spent ten days in April in Harrogate itself. **Coal Tits** are widely if thinly spread and High Batts NR was the only site to achieve double figures. **Marsh Tit** is a low ground species and more noticeable in the winter months but **Willow Tits** continue their rapid descent into local extinction. There were just nine Birdtrack reports of the latter species, mainly in the winter months. **Blue Tits** had a good year with flocks up to 50 strong at the feeders in High Batts Nature Reserve. Two different **Bearded Tits** appeared, one at Staveley NR (the bird from 2019) remained through January and February; and the other at Flasks Lake on 30 December. Two **Woodlarks** at Ripon City Wetlands on 19 May were the first in the district since 2009. **Skylarks** remain scarce early in the year with few double figure counts. In the autumn, with the exception of Nosterfield NR, the same applied, the only other site achieving double digits was Staveley NR. In contrast Nosterfield NR had a peak of 222 birds through on 14 October and recorded over 100 on several other dates - a nearby stubble field held 150 birds in November.

The first **Sand Martin** arrived on the 10 March and the last departed on 29 September though most had gone by the first few days of that month. **Swallows** were with us between 20 March (a very early date) and 26 October but numbers were very low in the spring. Autumn passage was much better than the spring with Staveley NR attracting the biggest numbers, best being 500 on 10 September. Red-listed **House Martins** were also very slow to return in the spring and the species is very scarce in Nidderdale, Nidderdale Birdwatchers submitted just one report. Like Swallows, House Martins had a better autumn. **Cetti's Warbler** is well established at two sites with four pairs breeding at Bellflask Quarry and at least one pair at Staveley NR. There were a handful of **Wood Warblers** in the spring. The first **Willow Warbler** was on 1 April and the last on

30 September and 227 were ringed during the year in Ripon Parks by the East Dales Ringing Group. There were a few wintering **Chiffchaffs** at both ends of the year with spring migrants evident from 8 March. **Sedge Warblers** arrived on 12 April and remained with us until 1 September. The species particularly likes Staveley NR and ten were singing there in May. **Reed Warblers** were noted at eight locations, the same number as last year. The first **Grasshopper Warbler** was at Staveley NR on 19 April and heard at six other sites. More **Blackcap** wintered in the district than in previous years and is widespread in suitable habitat. The similar sounding **Garden Warbler** is less common and stayed with us from 15 April to 12 September. **Lesser Whitethroats** and **Whitethroats** seem to be holding their own and the latter especially can be recorded in good numbers – 15 were near both Ribston Hall and Tockwith in May. A **Firecrest** was a very good find on 9 November near Rocliffe, the first since 2017. **Goldcrest** numbers seemed subdued throughout the year.

**Nuthatches** continue to expand being recorded from 23 sites in increasing numbers. **Treecreepers** are common even appearing in some gardens. Early in the year there was a significant **Starling** roost at Bellflask Quarry with up to 100,000 birds and a smaller one in the nearby High Batts Recording Area with up to 20,000 in January. Towards the end of 2020 roosts with spectacular murmurations were again at Bellflask Quarry, Ripon City Wetlands and Staveley NR involving anything up to 100,000 birds though numbers could vary. **Song Thrush** numbers seem stable and East Dales Ringing Group ringed 40 birds in one week in October. **Mistle Thrush** is also doing well and 54 were counted in the High Batts Recording Area in early July. **Redwing** were reasonably common in the first winter and had departed by 24 April. There was however an early return with several reports of up to 50 during September. Mid-October saw the biggest arrival as usual with some high counts across the district. **Fieldfare** had a similar pattern to Redwing though there were no autumn birds until 4 October and November saw a protracted influx with 18 days seeing treble figure counts. The first **Ring Ouzel** was on 23 March and the last on 22 September both in the favoured Scar House Reservoir area. **Spotted Flycatchers** are certainly holding their own in our district, bucking the national trend and with too many reports this year to list them individually. All but one of the **Pied Flycatcher** reports came in the spring and the species bred in Hackfall Wood. For the fourth year in a row there were **Black Redstarts**, one in Knaresborough in November and one on Christmas Eve at Goldsborough. The first **Redstart** was seen on 10 April and they stayed until 11 September. A slightly better year for **Whinchats** saw a handful of reports in the spring and autumn but it remains a very scarce bird. **Stonechats** were confirmed as breeding for the first time since 2016, a reflection of their increasing presence in our district. The first **Wheatear** arrived on 19 March, and it was well “in” by early April. The last was at Nosterfield NR on 18 October, a late date. **Dippers** were seen on the usual rivers but included an intriguing sighting near RHS Harlow Carr in June.

**Tree Sparrows** did well, seen at all the core sites including flocks up to 50 strong in the winter months. Sightings of **Yellow Wagtails** encouragingly increased for the third year in a row, the first on 12 April and after a particularly numerous autumn the last was on 18 September. **Grey Wagtail** remains well if thinly distributed. With the exception of an autumn roost at Staveley NR which held up to 200 birds there were very few double figure counts of **Pied Wagtails**. There were four **White Wagtails** in the spring and one in the autumn. **Meadow Pipits** were scarcer early on in the year but March saw a

noticeable passage across the district which continued during lockdown but only witnessed from Harrogate. **Tree Pipits** can now only really be regarded as a passage bird and only a handful or two were seen. It was another good year for **Bramblings** with several reports in both winter periods. All but one **Hawfinch** sightings came from the Fountains Abbey area, the exception being one over Nosterfield NR on 25 October. **Bullfinch** is still widespread with the prime sites seeing counts of up to a dozen. One hundred and twenty **Greenfinch** roosted at Hollins Hall in December but that was by far the largest count and it is a concern that the main Report can list every double figure count for this once numerous species. **Linnets** are more common in the winter and the end of the year saw a massive flock of somewhere between 500-700 birds on farmland near Bishop Monkton part of a mixed gathering also including Tree Sparrows and buntings. There were three sightings of **Common Redpoll**, one record each in January, February and March. **Lesser Redpoll** was very scarce in the first half of 2020 with just six Birdtrack records. The rest of the year was much better with some substantial counts, East Dales Ringing Group caught 317 in Ripon Parks during the autumn, an indication of the numbers that were moving through the area. **Crossbills** were common in the autumn, seen at many locations, 15-20 not being rare and up to 35 in the Harrogate Pinewoods. **Goldfinch** is a successful species, seen almost everywhere – the biggest charm was of 250 birds near Kirk Deighton in February. It was generally a quiet year for **Siskin** though the species had a decent autumn passage during September. Two **Snow Bunting** were at Scargill Reservoir on 27 November, a nice surprise for the observer. There were no **Corn Buntings** until April and the only multi-bird sighting came with 20 at Nosterfield NR on 20 December. **Yellowhammers** had a better year with several flocks seen mainly in the winter and culminating in 100 or so in the mixed feeding flock at Bishop Monkton. A similar number of **Reed Buntings** appeared in the same flock and up to 50 were at Staveley NR in March.

More details on all these species plus all of the common ones not mentioned here are available in the 2020 Bird Report available from the Recorder for £7.15 including post and packing.

## Charitable Status

### Benefit To The Public

The Charities Act 2006 came into effect in 2008. In order to keep its charitable status, the Society must show that it offers an identifiable benefit to the public. We have an open membership (subject to ratification by Council). Our winter meetings are open to the public. Within our modest budget we do our best to make our activities known, via our website and through leaflets in all the public libraries in our area. We publish an Annual Report documenting the observations in natural history made by our members: these reports are publicly available in local and national libraries, and form a valuable public archive. The Society maintains Farnham GP, a Site of Importance for Nature Conservation (SINC). Although the site itself is only available to members, it forms part of a national chain of small sites which support national biodiversity.

# Accounts

## Harrogate & District Naturalists' Society Accounts Year ended 31 March 2021

2019/20	Receipts	2020/21	2019/20	Payments	2020/21
3975.8	Members' Subscriptions	3930.5	1240	Meeting Room Hire	0
65	Donations	380	595.55	Speakers' Fees/Expenses	120
72.32	Interest Received	7.56	0	Annual Report	622
580.86	Sale of Ornithological Report	419.92	956	Ornithological Report	298
508	Field Meetings	0	560	Field Meetings	0
300	Annual Report sponsorship/advertising	235	1045.94	Printing Postage Stationery	1522.39
90	Deposit on Farnham keys	150	4320	Website	1080
572	Visitor's fees	6	333.4	Farnham Keys	95.4
701.14	Gift Aid	0	271.32	Insurance	0
0	Health & Safety First Aid	0	10	Mapmate	0
4320	Funds Transfer from COIF Dep A/C	0	11.94	Tea and coffee	0
	Fraud monies recovery	3366.47	495.17	Farnham Management	394
	Zoom subscription refund	28.78	290	Affiliations and Donations	260
			104.61	Tools & Equipment	24.95
			16.32	Health & Safety/First Aid	0
			31.5	Gifts	0
			37.8	Officer expenses	0
				Fraud scam	3500
				Refund	77.5
				Zoom subscription	143.88
			861.57	Excess of Income over Expenditure	326.11
11,185.12		8,524.23	11185.12		8,524.23
			Current Account £	Deposit Account £	Total £
			2078.89	6001.87	8080.76
			2452.44	6009.36	8461.8
				Increase in funds	

I have examined the books and records made available to me by the Harrogate and District Naturalists' Society and, as far as I can ascertain, the above accounts are in order and in accordance with the provisions of the Charities Act 2006 regarding the independent examination of the accounts of smaller charities.

A Pease ACIB Date: 06.04.2021



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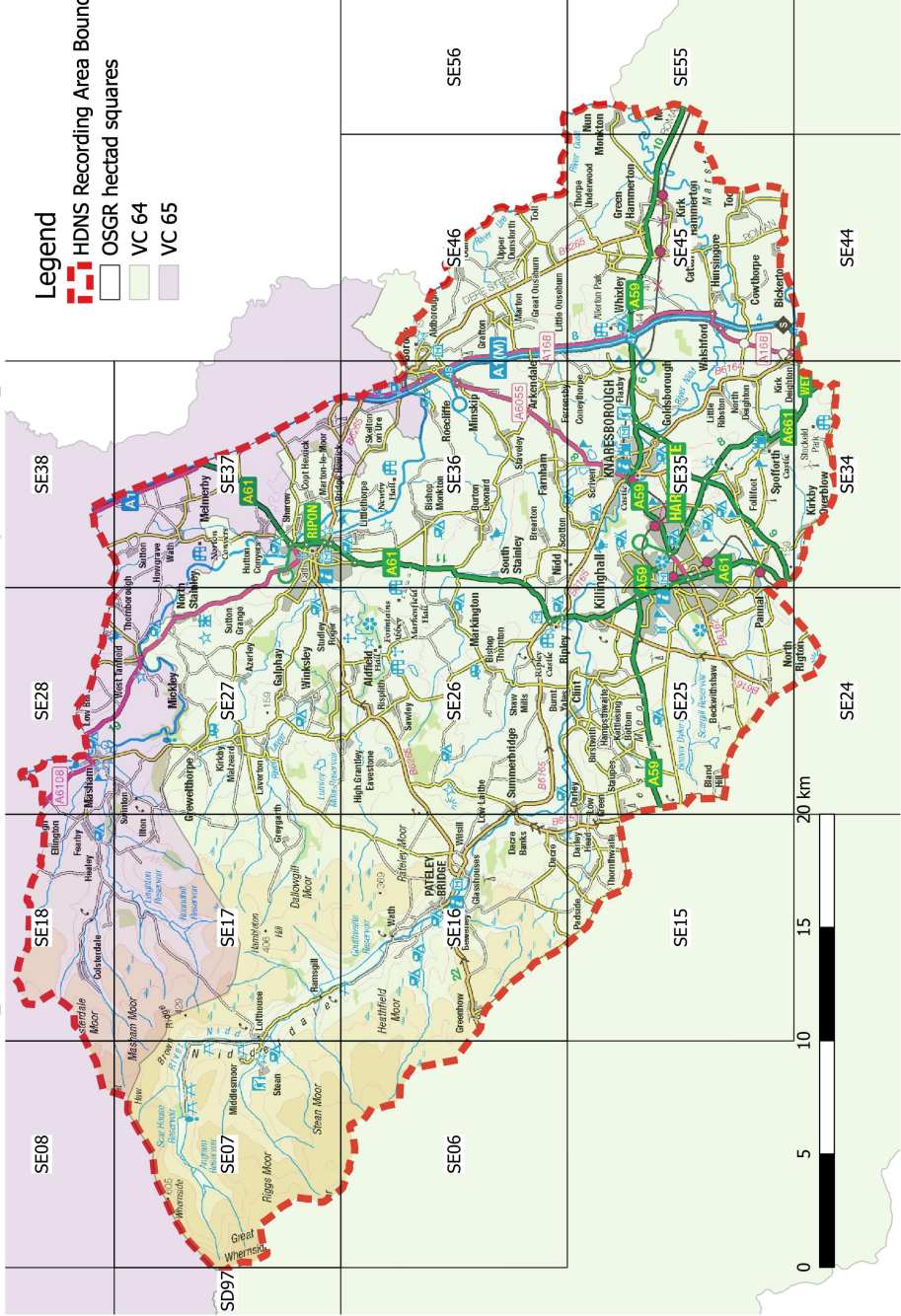
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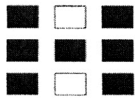


# Harrogate and District Naturalists' Society Recording Area



## Legend

- - - HDNS Recording Area Boundary
- OSGR hectad squares
- VC 64
- VC 65



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