

Alnwick Wildlife Group

Promoting awareness of the countryside and its flora and fauna



REVIEW OF MAY 2012 NEWSLETTER 129

www.alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

email: redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

JUNE NATURE NOTES

Mid summer! Recent temperatures would suggest that it is early spring. The breeding season is almost over, although the main breeding season for Yellowhammers, Reed Buntings and any remaining Corn Buntings is now in full swing to take advantage of large insects such as grasshoppers. Many of our plants are now in the process of producing seeds.

This is the time when it's worth looking for specialist forms of a number of taxa. In the bird world, unusual singers are in full voice e.g. Quail and Nightjar. Quail is a summer visitor from sub-Saharan Africa in that it is smaller than a Grey Partridge and rarely seen. The giveaway call of the Quail is very distinctive – 'kwic-we-wic' often throwing its voice. In warm summers reasonable numbers can turn up and there are parts of the County when this species appears annually. In a good Quail year, birds can turn up almost anywhere – even on the outskirts of Glanton!

The other bird that is worth looking for at this time of year is the Nightjar. This secretive night feeder does breed in our patch but it takes a bit of looking for. Conifer plantations that have been felled on the edge of moorland can be an ideal spot for a 'churring' male Nightjar. This long-winged migrant from Africa, is about the size of a Mistle Thrush, and feeds on large night flying insects especially moths. I suspect that there are more of these birds, in our area, than we know about.

This is a very important time for another night feeder – bats. All of our species of bats will have young in their maternity roosts. Although, the night time weather has been so cold in May and June that adult weights have been lower than the norm. This would suggest that the bat breeding season may be poor. Many of our bats are only identifiable either in the hand or by locating their feeding calls using a bat detector. Looking out of your kitchen window in an urban setting the most likely species are Pipistrelles and brown Long-eared Bats. River corridors often attract a wide range of species but one of the specialists is the Daubenton's Bat which feeds low over the water. Our largest bat, the Noctule can be seen feeding with Swift and hirundines in the evening. A good place to see this is at Branton Ponds. To me the Noctule bat looks like a small flying teddy bear!

The dune slacks of Lindisfarne will be carpeted with orchids but there is another plant that often catches my attention; Grass of Parnassus. Also known as the 'bog star', it isn't actually a grass at all, belonging to a genus of flowering plants. The white petals with translucent green stripes, on relatively long stalks with oval leaves at the base are distinctive. The name comes from ancient Greece. The cattle on Mount Parnassus developed a taste for the plant; hence it was an 'honorary grass'.

Hopefully the sun will shine and temperatures will rise. Good watching.

Jack Daw.

REPORT OF MEETING WEDNESDAY MAY 30TH 2012

‘**MOTHS - HOWICK’S DARK SECRETS.....**’ Stewart Sexton gave a fantastic over-view of trapping moths at Howick. This included his garden with its array of native weeds and flowering plants that attract his prey. He also provided excellent tips on how to attract and trap moths in your garden. Stewart then went onto summarise the moths that he catches through the seasons. His photograph and knowledge on the subject were second to none. Thank you again Stewart and happy mothing! – *Jack Daw*.

SWARLAND SNAPSHOTS MAY 2012

During the first half of May significant numbers of Goldfinches continued to visit the feeders daily. This surge of activity, with 13 caught on the 3rd followed by a dozen on the 5th, appears to continue a springtime trend seen here in recent years. Latterly a pair or two have continued coming to the feeder daily. There was also a similar but slightly less pronounced boost in the numbers of Siskins, more often an event seen in past years in April, with one carrying a Belgian ring suggesting some were still on passage. That others were clearly well into the breeding cycle last month was confirmed by the appearance of further juveniles from the 1st. Recovery details have been received of one of the birds ringed here, in the September/October emigration last autumn, having been caught at a ringing station near Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk at the beginning of January. Single Lesser Redpolls have continued to come to the feeder sporadically and one or two Tree Sparrows began visiting towards the end of the month, whilst a male Brambling was caught on the 4th. Bullfinches continued appearing daily, males more often than females, and whilst Chaffinch activity dropped sharply a steady flow of Greenfinches continued all month, with first juveniles being seen on the 16th.

Towards the end of the month a few instances here of a possible recurrence of the respiratory disease trichomonosis, which attracted considerable attention nationally last year, were observed. In particular several Greenfinches were seen to be lethargic and slow to fly when approached, two juvenile Siskins were seen in similar condition and a female Bullfinch was found moribund. Since these three species all feed their young in the nest by regurgitation, if this condition is indeed currently active it could be having a serious effect on local breeding success. Has anyone else noticed sickly-looking individuals of these species recently?

Great Tit and Blue Tit activity at the feeders has been very much reduced with only Coal Tit using the black sunflower seed regularly throughout the day. Blackbirds seem to be suffering badly from corvid predation with no juveniles seen this month; the singleton which survived until mid-April being the only one seen so far this season. The few Song Thrushes present in April have all disappeared this month with just a single sighting on the 6th.

There appears to be a dearth of the four warbler species normally well represented locally. During a two and a half hour observation in a sector of woodland, which from past records would usually yield four or more of Blackcap, Willow Warbler and Chiffchaff along with one or two Garden Warblers, just one of each of the former were found and none of the latter at all. Several pairs of Swallows have eggs by the end of the month, but numbers around the village seem to be down and to date no House Martins have been seen. A replacement for the female Sparrowhawk killed in a window accident in March appeared on the 19th.

There has been very little sign of butterfly activity with sightings limited to singles of Small Tortoiseshell on 20th and Peacock on the 22nd and the moth trap set overnight on the 27th also only yielded a small catch of 1 Broken-barred Carpet, 1 Pebble Prominent, 2 Hebrew Character, 2 Early Thorn and a Cockchafer beetle (along with masses of tiny black midges). The colony of Broad-leaved Helleborine are showing well although there seem to be fewer than last year at this stage; the single Twayblade, which appeared among them two years ago has emerged again, looking much more robust with a flower stem showing for the first time. The colony of Twayblade in the nearby woodland continues to look strong and although it wasn't possible to carry out an extensive count, in three discrete sections over 300 crowns were found, many with well developed flower stems.

Dave Makepeace.

Please send sightings reports for June, no later than 6th July to:

Ian & Keith Davison, The Bungalow, Branton, Powburn, NE66 4LW or Tel: 01665 578 357

or email to redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk Copies of the monthly Newsletter and sightings will be made available on the web site one month after the paper publication.

BEYOND THE BORDER

Number 7: MAY 2012

Years of searching recently came to an end when I discovered my first **Rustyback Fern** (*Ceterach officinarum*). It was smaller than I'd expected but certainly no less interesting. The lone evergreen plant was growing on the side of a stone wall and consisted of a tuft of fronds with greatly exaggerated lobes. The underside of each leaf was thoroughly encrusted with rust-coloured scales. I understand that this fern was once used to treat patients who were suffering from disorders of the liver and/or spleen. Distribution maps show it to be reasonably common in parts of the south and west of Britain but little is known in the north. Botanists have advised me of a site in eastern Berwickshire and there's a little more in the extreme SW of Roxburghshire. My Rustyback Fern find was halfway between the two.

We are fortunate to have many different examples of the **Boraginaceae** (*Borage+Forgetmenot*) family around our area. One of these is **Bugloss** (*Anchusa arvensis*) which has wavy-edged + coarsely hairy leaves whilst the bright blue flowers typically occur in forked clusters. Examples were first noted on May 5 – within an arable field near the Ednam monument to James Thomson (of 'Rule Britannia' fame). Invasive aliens have included **Tuberous Comfrey** (*Symphytum tuberosum*) with creamy-coloured flowers and the frequently abundant **Russian Comfrey** (*Symphytum x uplandicum*) which flaunts blue/purple flowers and has leaves which only begin to run down onto the stem. Both of these species appear beside roads, on waste ground and, in particular along the riverbanks, and pose a threat by choking out native species. I must add, however, that they do seem to possess one virtue and many is the time that I've paused to watch numbers of **Bumblebees** (*Bombus sp.*) making good use of the tubular flowers.

April 25 is St. Mark's Day but it was not until May 4 that I noticed the first **St. Mark's Flies** (*Bibio marci*). Swarms of males appeared to hang in the air with their long, hairy legs dangling beneath them. They chose the rank vegetation between lowland woods and the river near Tweedbank and Galashiels and were, in effect, conducting a courtship ritual – hoping to attract females, who until ready, remained settled on the ground below. With cool wet conditions persisting there were few good 'Butterfly days' but when they did appear then counts were generally low. **Orange Tips/Green-veined Whites** and **Small Whites** were the usual species to be found on the wing and the only other ones I noticed were the Vanessaids: **Small Tortoiseshells** and **Peacocks**.

Little Grebes sometimes occupied the tiniest of ponds and amongst these were sightings of pairs at Easter Softlaw (nr. Kelso/1st) and close to Carfraemill (9th). Instances of feral **Greylag Geese** which remain to breed within the Borders are commonplace whereas their truly wild relatives will currently be nesting in Iceland. I came upon the first goslings of the year at a series of wetland haunts along Kelhope Burn (nr. Oxton/May 9) and soon discovered more beside the River Tweed but it was at Watch Water Reservoir in the Lammermuir Hills (24th) where the biggest number of family groups were gathered. **Canada Geese** were also making use of the last two haunts and they too had young. One memorable scene (24th) was of a ♀ Canada leading a long and evenly-spaced line of ten tiny and very yellow goslings across the shimmering surface of a sheltered Watch Water inlet. Local studies have confirmed that **Tufted Duck** are on the decline – the reasons for which are largely unexplained. 31 (on the 14th) was the best tally for daily gatherings downstream from Sprouston but alas, if last year is an indication, then the rate of survival for their young will be abysmal. **Goosanders** seem to fare much better and (May 4) I studied a ♀ steering a brood of 10 very newly-hatched ducklings on the River Tweed at Darnick near Melrose.

As I passed the nesting site of an **Osprey** (overlooking the Tweed Valley/15th) one of the pair flew low across my line of travel with aggressive **Carrion Crows** in attendance. Another was mobbed by **Oystercatchers** when it visited Hen Poo (Duns/23rd) but the most exciting behaviour was witnessed in the Lammermuir Hills (24th) where an Osprey sat ...and sat motionless on a post, closely resembling a decoy. A **Short-eared Owl** appeared and flew directly towards the perched raptor which it lunged at several times. The owl was a big, powerful bird and yet the Osprey merely responded by ducking its head a little. Having failed in its attack the Short-eared Owl continued on and a little later the Osprey made a half-hearted attempt to fish. It was whilst doing this that it came under further assault from two quite different species. Jottings which I made at the time confirmed that within a period of just eleven minutes the Osprey had come under attack from a Short-eared Owl, an Oystercatcher and then a **Lapwing!**



Picture by Laurie Campbell

Red Grouse were plentiful in the Longformacus area of the Lammermuir Hills and although most were amongst the rank **Heather** (*Calluna vulgaris*) a few occupied an adjoining meadow and one bold male stood atop the main dam wall. I returned to the stony field I mentioned last month and found (May 6) that although numbers were down 14 **Golden Plovers** remained. Adult Lapwings kept close to their decidedly wobbly-legged young on the Lammermuirs (24th) and elsewhere whilst **Snipe** continued with their 'chipping' and 'drumming' over Lauder Common and beside Watch Water. Upland habitats such as these were also the summering grounds for **Curlews**, **Redshank** and **Common Sandpipers**.

May 4 found me upstream of Darnick and whilst there a mixed flock of 1000+ gulls arrived and settled on the River Tweed close to me. **Lesser Black-backed** and **Black-headed Gulls** were present but it was

Herring Gulls that made most of the number. They were there to bathe and if my hunch is correct they would have come from the Tweedbank Municipal Rubbish Tip. I received a most reliable record of a **Great Skua** (*Bonxie*) at Redheugh (between Coldingham and Cockburnspath/23rd); it should have been far to the north.

Cuckoos are becoming increasingly difficult to find but one was at Carfrae Farm (Lauderdale/9th) and two were audible from Watch Water (24th). Another bird which has experienced a recent struggle has been the **Barn Owl** but sightings were possible during the course of late-evening haunts around the Sprouston Village Green. Single **Tawny Owls** were recorded at Windywalls (Kelso/1st) and Paxton House (Paxton/7th) whilst another landed on a telegraph pole outside my home (midnight/20th). A now scarce **Green Woodpecker** appeared within the wooded grounds of Hopetoun House (West Lothian/19th).

Wheatears had chosen a drystone wall as their nesting site – close to the Iron Age Hillus Fort (Oxton/9th). Meanwhile some of our winter visitors remained with singing flocks of late **Fieldfares** at Easter Softlaw (80+/1st) and near Ednam (40+/5th) together with a group of 3 beside Kelhope Burn (9th). **Sedge Warblers** and **Whitethroats** began to arrive in very early May and a **Wood Warbler** remained to the south of Jedburgh (2nd+28th). I was most fortunate to have a **Spotted Flycatcher** remain in my garden throughout May 21st +22nd. It showed a marked preference for certain slender branches amongst the **Cherry** (*Prunus avium*) trees and from those flew out, snatched a flying insect and returned. I have since wondered as to whether it was an acute shortage of flies (during the chilly conditions) which led to its sudden disappearance.



Picture by Nigel Case

A **Treecreeper** ignored bustling crowds attending the Scottish Birdfair at Hopetoun House (19th) and continued to carry beakfuls of grubs to its young who were being raised within the heart of the event. Another pair had also positioned their nest behind the part-shed bark of a tree-trunk and moved back and forth with food to an old **Alder** (*Alnus glutinosa*) which leaned over the Jed Water.

It was whilst I was at Hillus Fort (9th) that a **Raven** drifted past. **Magpies** are relatively scarce in this area but (6th) one made a determined search for eggs and/or young in nests along a stretch of former railway-line. The deafening alarm produced by **Woodpigeon**, **Collared Doves**, **Blackbirds** and more was completely ignored. Quite remarkable to see a ♂ **Brambling** making use of seed-dispensers in a Paxton garden on the late date of May 7. I discovered 3 **Lesser Redpolls** – in breeding territories – on a farm near Camptown (28th). 20+ Chaffinches were intermingled amongst 60+ **Yellowhammers** and remained as a farmland flock on ‘set-aside’ land at Oxnam (Roxs/2nd). **Reed Buntings** are regularly seen at some coastal haunts but there were also small numbers at inland sites which included the Kelhope Burn and Watch Water.

There’s nothing unusual about **Rabbits** announcing the presence of an intruder but (near to Jedburgh/28th) on a still morning with the ground hard and dry the stamping of their hind legs produced some surprisingly loud thuds. Last month I referred to my encounter with 20+ **Brown Hares** at a location in Berwickshire. I next returned on May 25 and that day was able to watch a total of 36. The reason for the increase was immediately apparent because about a third of the animals I was studying were leverets. News from much further north refers to Strathnairn in Inverness-shire where a herd of **Wild Boar** have escaped and are now “roaming freely”!



Picture by Nigel Case

I had an exciting early-morning encounter with a **Badger** near Carter Bar (28th). Having spotted it some distance away my failed attempt to locate **Adders** was forgotten and the animal approached to within four yards of me. It branched off into a thicket and, despite the proximity, remained completely unaware of any human presence. A **Red Fox** has been encountered shortly before when I found it hunting Rabbits. On that occasion, however, my scent was detected almost immediately and it all but leapt down a steep-sided gorge.

ROGER MANNING.

Plant Corner

One group of plants that for some reason has escaped my newsletter attention for the last twelve years (!) is the Wood-rushes in the genus *Luzula*. I can't think why I've not drawn them or written about them because they are common enough and they start to be visible early in the year. I'd bet that most AWG members will have noticed them without necessarily knowing what they were. Perhaps I've avoided them because good quality identification can be a bit of a pain. They are not grasses or sedges, for which specialist field guides exist, but nor do they really qualify as 'wild flowers', so they are not covered properly or at all in some of the usual wild flower guides.

They all have flat grass-like leaves which vary in width in different species, but which have quite conspicuous long white hairs. The flowers are in rush-like clusters – either tightly packed or loosely branched – and they need rather drier habitats than the true rushes.

The biggest, showiest and most spectacular when in good-sized populations in woodland is the **Great Wood-rush** (*Luzula sylvatica*). It has wide bright green glossy leaves and this is not a species that is easy to miss in many broadleaf and mixed woods on acid soils. The flower stalks are tall – to about 80cm – and are best seen in May to June.



Also in woods you may spot the smaller **Hairy Wood-rush** (*L. pilosa*). It is another species with a widely-spread forked cluster of small brown flowers, but the whole plant is more delicate than *L. sylvatica* and the flowering stalks reach only about 25cm.

Coming out of the woods on to grassy areas in rough grazing fields or open moorland, or even in road verges, there are two common species. The earlier flowerer is the **Field Wood-rush** (*L. campestris*). The leaves are narrower than in the two woodland species, but they still have the sparsely woolly white hairs. The flowering stems can reach 30cm, but they are often shorter. At the top is one flower cluster that is un-stalked and on either side there are two stalked clusters which, if you pull them sideways, create a characteristic cross-shaped effect.



Finally there is **Heath Wood-rush** (*L. multiflora*). The more common subspecies (*ssp. multiflora*) is superficially rather similar to the Field Wood-rush, but it flowers rather later (April to June), often has rather taller flowering stems, and has a different arrangement in the flower clusters. If you look closely you find that all the parts of the clusters (3 to 10 of them) are separately stalked. Then, to confuse you, there is a second subspecies (*ssp. congesta*). Some books still have it as a species in its own right, *L. congesta*, but current wisdom has it that it is only a subspecies of *L. multiflora*. It doesn't help that one of the most commonly used field guides –



Wild Flowers of Britain & Ireland by Fitter, Fitter & Blamey – has *L. multiflora* and *L. congesta* 16 pages apart. In this plant the flower clusters have the separate mini-clusters with such short stalks that they appear to be almost un-stalked and the whole has a very compact appearance. The photographs show *ssp. multiflora* on the left and *ssp. congesta* on the right.

Howick May 2012 Highlights.

May continued the unseasonably cool theme, making it difficult for wildlife and wildlife watchers!

On 3rd a stroll up to Cullernose Point had an autumn feel as if frost was in the air. There were no signs of any Spring Squill coming in to flower, though **Thrift** was starting to bloom.

The **Kittiwake** colony was in full voice accompanied by 6 **Feral 'Rock Doves'**.

Three well grown **Leverets** were in Howick Scar field and 9 **Swallows** flew south along the cliffs, maybe to avoid the cold weather.

Out with the dog first thing on 5th, a flock of a dozen or so **Jackdaws** were behaving strangely along the village road. A closer look found that they were chasing a **Stoat**. It was panicking and fleeing for its life with black tipped tail spinning behind as it ran. Luckily it made cover before the corvids could attack.

Down the Long Walk, 2 male **Orange Tips** and a Peacock butterfly were on the wing. 4+ **Blackcaps** and a **Willow Warbler** were singing and a **Whimbrel** was on the rocks along the shore.

Our first singing **Whitethroat** returned on 6th.

On 14th 2 **Speckled Wood** were together in the Village Wood.

Along the coast 1 **House Martin** flew north, a male **Greenland Wheatear** was near the farm and 2 **Ringed Plover** were on the shore. Nearby an **Oystercatcher** was incubating not far from the main path. Let's hope that, like last year, it is successful.



Greenland Wheatear.

A **Roe** doe and a yearling young was in Village Wood at dusk.

A highlight at Howick Hall Garden Party on the 20th was an immature **Peregrine** soaring over the heads of guests, unaware of its presence. In the hall meadows, 2 **Small Copper** and 1 each of **Orange Tip**, **Green veined White** and **Small White** were seen.

3+ **Siskins** were on our garden feeders.

The only **Grasshopper Warbler** of the year so far was 'reeling' his song from the hedge behind our house on **21st**.

One of the month's highlights was on the **22nd** when 4 **Noctule Bats** were feeding in good light at dusk above the pond. Much bigger than Pipistrelles with an obvious 'neck' and ears. The local **Mute Swans** have 9 cygnets.

At 5am on **24th** a lone **Crossbill** flew north over our garden, calling.

A warm day on **26th** saw a few butterflies on the wing – **Orange Tip, Large White, Small White, Green veined White and Speckled Wood**.

By the end of the month, a few **Star of Bethlehem** were in flower along the coast path and in Village Wood.



Star of Bethlehem.

Blagdon Visit – Sunday 27th May

Despite the sad death of Lord Matthew Ridley, the Blagdon Estate had been kind enough to allow our planned visit to go ahead. A small, select group of us were accompanied and guided by Bob Gajdus and his wife Alison. They live on the Estate and Bob's birding expertise has led to him being colloquially referred to as 'the Blagdon Bird Man'! He both watches and rings birds on the Estate.

We gathered at 10.00 in warm and pleasant weather and walked to the wetland areas which are normally not available for the public to visit. We paused for some interesting plants and for woodland birds such as Blackcap and Whitethroat. The wetland areas are quite extensive and from the open water there were first hatchings of Common Blue and Large Red Damselflies. Wildfowl were not too numerous, but the highlight was the appearance of two Marsh Harriers – one female and one probably last year's juvenile over a large wet field which had a herd of Belted Galloways.



We then made our way back to the gardens and had a wander through the renowned Quarry Garden. Lord Ridley has built up extensive national collections of *Sorbus* (Whitebeams) and *Acer* (Maples). With thanks to Bob and Alison we then dispersed for our Sunday lunches by about 12.30.

Richard Poppleton.

	SIGHTINGS MAY 2012
BIRDS	
Red-throated Diver	1 off Stag Rock on the 6 th
Great Crested Grebe	2 at Branton Ponds all month
Spoonbill	1 at East Chevington on the 27 th
Common Crane	1 flew south over Swarland on the 5 th
White Stork	1 over Alnwick on the 2 nd
Bean Goose	1 on Holy Island on the 20 th
Gadwall	1 at Branton Ponds on the 19 th
Common Scoter	100 off Stag Rock on the 6 th
Buzzard	1 at West Cawledge and 1 at Newton on the Moor both on the 15 th
Osprey	1 over Fenham Flats on the 4 th
Grey Partridge	2 at Low Newton on the 3 rd
Water Rail	1 at Branton Ponds on the 29 th
Temmincks Stint	1 on Holy Island on the 29 th
Common Sandpiper	At least 3 pairs all month on Branton Ponds, 1 on the Carey Burn on the 5 th
Sanderling	6 at Low Newton on the 6 th , 60 on Ross Back Sands on the 20 th
Little Ringed Plover	1 on the River Breamish on the 1 st and the 6 th
Purple Sandpiper	30 at Stag Rock on the 6 th
Ringed Plover	1500+ Holy Island causeway on the 18 th
Wood Sandpiper	1 on Holy Island on the 29 th
Common Tern	4 at East Chevington on the 27 th
Little Tern	4 on Holy Island causeway on the 18 th
Cuckoo	1 at Beanley Plantation on the 2 nd , 1 at East Chevington on the 27 th , 1 calling near Branton on the 30 th , 3 at Cuthberts Cave on the 19 th and 1 at South Lynam on the 21 st
Short-eared Owl	2 near Alnwick on the 6 th 1 at Ingram on the 9 th , 1 at Dunstanburgh Golf Course on the 9 th
Barn Owl	1 at Branton throughout the month and 3 on the 26 th , 1 at Lilburn Glebe on the 12 th
Little Owl	1 at Branton on the 27 th , 1 near Glanton Pike on the 30 th
Swift	3 over Branton Ponds on the 7 th
Great Spotted Woodpecker	2 in Branton on the 16 th , 2 in Branton on the 29 th (1 a juvenile)
Tree Pipit	1 at Branton Ponds on the 19 th
Robin	Fledged brood of 3 in a garden at Titlington Mount on the 2 nd
Bluethroat	1 on Holy Island on the 27 th
Redstart	1 at Ford Moss on the 6 th , 1 on Holy Island on the 20 th
Whinchat	2 in the Harthope Valley on the 6 th , 1 on the Hawsen Burn on the 5 th
Ring Ouzel	3 in the Hawsen Burn on the 6 th , also 1 on the 5 th
Fieldfare	10 at Middleton Hall on the 6 th , 50 at Titlington Lane on the 4 th
Blackcap	Several at Branton Ponds on the 1 st , 5 at Vyner Park (Swarland) on the 2 nd
Sedge Warbler	1 at Branton Ponds on the 1 st
Reed Warbler	Several at East Chevington on the 27 th
Grasshopper Warbler	1 at Branton Ponds from the 5 th , 1 at East Chevington on the 27 th
Common Whitethroat	2 at Branton Ponds on the 7 th
Garden Warbler	1 at Ford Moss on the 6 th , 2 in Swarland Wood on the 27 th
Willow Tit	1 at Branton Ponds on the 5 th
Spotted Flycatcher	1 at Branton Ponds on the 24 th , 1 at Powburn on the 25 th , 2 at Swarland on 27 th

Pied Flycatcher	1 on Holy Island on the 20 th
Coal Tit	3 juveniles on the 15 th at Smeafield
Red-backed Shrike	1 on Holy Island on the 20 th
Jay	1 at Felton on the 18 th
Tree Sparrow	Several juveniles at Smeafields on the 11 th
Greenfinch	1 juvenile at Swarland on the 16 th
Goldfinch	Up to 13 on various days in Swarland
Bullfinch	4 at Branton Ponds on the 2 nd
Brambling	1 in Swarland on the 4 th
Linnet	4 at Smeafield on the 9 th
Siskin	Up to 7 all month in Swarland including 1 with a Belgian ring
Lesser Redpoll	3 at Branton Ponds on the 2 nd , 1 in Swarland all month
Crossbill	15 at Ford Moss on the 6 th
Yellowhammer	4 near Smeafield on the 20 th
MAMMALS	
Fox	1 at Low Newton on the 6 th
Red Squirrel	1 at Branton on the 6 th
Porpoise	1 off Stag Rock on the 6 th
Hedgehog	2 in Branton garden on the 11 th , 1 at Branton Ponds on the 20 th
INVERTEBRATES	
Wall	2 on Fenham Flats on the 20 th
Orange Tip	1 on Fenham Flats on the 20 th , 1 at Swarland on the 28 th , several at Smeafield on the 17 th & 23 rd
Small Copper	1 at Branton Ponds on the 28 th
Broken Barred Carpet	1 on the 27 th in Swarland
Early Thorn	1 on the 27 th in Swarland
Pebble Prominent	1 on the 27 th in Swarland
Hebrew Character	1 on the 27 th in Swarland
Cinnabar Moth	Several on Holy Island on the 27 th
Large Red Damselfly	1 in Swarland on the 25 th
Cockchafer Beetle	1 in Swarland on the 27 th
Leach	1 large brown leach in Branton Ponds on the 24 th
REPTILES	
Slow Worm	1 at Branton Ponds on the 24 th
FISH	
Stickleback (3 Spine)	Several in Branton Ponds; the males with bright red bellies of breeding
PLANTS	
Broad Leaved Helleborine	Several in Swarland on the 25 th
Twayblade	1 in Swarland on the 25 th
OBSERVERS	L Capper, D Clark, I&K Davison, A Gibson, J Givens, A Keeble, D Makepeace, R&J Poppleton, S Reay, M Rolley, H Tindale, J Wilson