

Alnwick Wildlife Group

Promoting awareness of the countryside and its flora and fauna



REVIEW OF SEPTEMBER 2012

NEWSLETTER 133

www.alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

email: redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

NEXT MEETING - 28TH NOVEMBER 2012 7.30.P.M.

TRAVELLING LIGHT - BUTTERFLY MIGRATION - DAVE STEBBINGS

Our speaker for the November meeting is Dave Stebbings. Dave is the Northumberland Conservation Officer for the North East branch of Butterfly Conservation – a national organisation. As well as his conservation work Dave also leads walks and projects. A measure of his interest and persistence is that in 2010 after three years of searching, he found six Pearl-bordered Fritillaries in a NWT reserve near Elsdon.

WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR IN NOVEMBER

This is a month of arrivals from the north. After the full-moon in the month there tends to be an influx of species such as woodcock, common snipe and jack snipe from Scandinavian and Russia. The full-moon theory comes from a chat that I had with a wildfowler on the Fenham shore. I had never thought about the migration of woodcock. These woodland waders are often one of the last to arrive on our shores and they can arrive in huge numbers. I have seen over 100 in a day in the Ross Links area. Many of the birds arrive in poor condition and can be found anywhere. Two or three years ago there was an influx of woodcock. At least two of these birds took up residence in my allotment in Glanton. There are also several photographs in the birding press of woodcock hiding under cars and other strange locations. Other winter arrivals can be short and long-eared owls, little auks, shore larks as well as snow and Lapland buntings and if we are lucky waxwings.

Any wet area can see huge influxes of snipe and the occasional jack snipe. So far this year, I have already had two counts of over 40 snipe feeding in wet holes in arable fields. It is always worth looking for the smaller cousin the jack snipe; shorter bill, curved flight pattern and pale braces on the mantle. This little wader can be very elusive but their bobbing feeding behaviour is well worth looking for. At times this small snipe can resemble zebedee from the Magic Roundabout when feeding!

Most of our bats have migrated to their winter roosts where the air temperature remains relatively stable. Most of the roost sites are in caves, old mine shafts and the equivalent features. The roost sites can be in extremely inhospitable places. One of the largest winter roosts in Britain, is in a cave on the moors in Lancashire which is only accessible by a small (bat sized) crack in the surface. Many species of bats will roost together but within different niches within the roost site. It has always been thought that the bats hibernated through the winter. But recent evidence would suggest that the bats become active and move between different roost sites during suitable weather.

Keep warm and I hope that the weather becomes a bit drier. *Jack Daw.*

Please send sightings reports for October, no later than 6th November 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.

*Do check out our 'updated' web site www.alnwickwildlife_group and view the recent sightings on its blog!

Meeting of Wednesday 26th September 2012

We started with the AGM. It lasted all of four minutes. The accounts for 2011 were accepted and the existing committee and officers were confirmed in office for a further year. The meeting also agreed to the potential purchase of a portable Public Address system that we can use at St Michael's to improve the audibility of all our speakers.

46 members and visitors attended this first meeting of our 2012/2013 season. George Dodds produced a shell of a fresh water mussel (still found in the North Tyne, but at risk) and a wing of a Brown Hawker Dragonfly.

We then welcomed our speaker, Roger Manning, AWG's founder and sole honorary life member, to talk about "*Haunts of the Highlands*". The talk was based on Roger's detailed knowledge of the Scottish Highlands and was illustrated with his own slides and some from the celebrated wildlife photographer, Laurie Campbell.

Roger covered, in sequence, Coasts; Farming and Crofting land; Wetlands; Woodland; Moors; Mountains. For each he talked about the nature of the landscapes and habitats and picked out those special species – both plants and animals – which add to the particular wildlife interest. He also picked out other topics of interest. On the coasts the issue of marine flotsam caught in commercial fishing nets. The trawlers are now encouraged to bring such litter ashore for disposal rather than just re-dumping it in the sea. In farming, the fact that only 10% of Scottish land area is suitable for arable farming and much of that is in the North Eastern 'Golden Triangle' which specialises in growing malting barley. In woodlands it was all about percentages – only 1% remains of the old Caledonian Pine Forest. Pre-1945 4% of Scotland was wooded and now that is 18% but this compares poorly with an average of 30% in the EU as a whole. In the moorland environment there is the Munsary Peatland NNR in Caithness, near Lybster, where the natural peat moor and its vegetation is being preserved on the 3000+ acre site.



BEYOND THE BORDER

Number 11: September 2012

The arrival of September led to an awareness that the first few signs of Autumn had begun to appear. It is generally accepted that 'Climate Change' is resulting in many trees changing colour (and eventually losing their leaves) on dates which are nudging that little bit later. Of equal concern is the realisation that despite annual variations the overall trend is leading towards ever-earlier times on the calendar when the first leaves emerge in Spring. My own observations seemed to suggest that some species such as our **Sessile Oak** (*Quercus petraea*) had undergone no real change but, from the middle of the month onwards, a number of **Silver Birch** (*Betula pendula*) and **Horse Chestnut** (*Aesculus hippocastanum*) trees bore Autumn foliage that was much-tinted.

September was also a month when many of our trees and bushes revealed bumper crops of colourful Autumn berries. **Hawthorn** (*Crataegus monogyna*) is usually the principal constituent of our hedges and thickets and it was good to see boughs groaning under the weight of all the plump haws. I can well remember collecting Rose hips as a young boy – one old penny per pound for myself and a few pence for the school funds. Hessian sacks were filled and dispatched at regular intervals by the Headmistress – the contents to be crushed and converted into Delrosa Syrup. I viewed the **Common Dog Rose** (*Rosa canina*) bushes with admiration last year but fear that the 2012 crop of Rose hips is markedly less. Having examined bushes in many parts of Berwickshire, Roxburghshire and beyond I've come to the conclusion that it has been the **Elder** (*Sambucus nigra*) berries which have suffered the most. Some local variations are inevitable but the volumes of available Elderberries appear to have been well short of a typical year. (It might be the result of ongoing cool and very wet weather at the time of pollination???) The fruits I have mentioned provide vital sustenance for many birds and mammals with **Woodpigeons, Starlings, Thrushes, Waxwings** and **Wood Mice** being just a few of the creatures which are heavily dependent upon a bountiful harvest being available.

The large, near-flat and highly attractive blue-lilac flower-heads of **Field Scabious** (*Knautia arvensis*) stood tall along some stretches of disused railway line and dry roadside verges. The composite heads contain roughly 40-50 individual flowers with each of those having four unequal petals – the outer structures being rather larger than those within. **Sheepsbit Scabious** (*Jasione montana*) is more likely to be found in moist grassland that is somewhat acidic and is a plant often encountered amongst the Lammermuir Hills. It has violet (very rarely white) flowers with a slightly more ragged appearance to the heads despite all the petals being of an equal size. I thought it interesting to note that both of these species were growing quite close to one another on the cliffs at Burnmouth and so providing a useful comparison (Sept 1). Scabious plants were once crushed and the juices drunk or smeared on the skin, as an ointment, to supposedly cure Scabies.

Hemp Agrimony (*Eupatorium cannabinum*) is a plant that I've sometimes encountered alongside woodland margins or within wooded clearings but in this part of the country it is almost always a coastal plant. Tall sprays of pink-mauve blooms produce a fluffy appearance due to the large number of tiny individual flowers. Some specimens had gone to seed but many remained at their best during early September and could be admired between Berwick-upon-Tweed north to St. Abbs. Most plants occupied moist recesses along the cliffs but there were also several big clumps alongside the London to Edinburgh railway line.

Weather conditions have certainly not helped many of our insects with numbers of many, often very familiar, species well down. I heard of one theory that our Butterflies were smaller this year – caused by poor growth-rates (+less body fat) in caterpillars and so resulting in proportionately smaller adults. As with any creature there can be variations in size and so I can neither confirm nor deny this argument. September was another month when few butterfly species were seen and numbers remained scarce. **Small Whites, Green-veined Whites, Small Tortoiseshells, Peacocks** and **Red Admirals** covered almost all of the sightings. One of the few memorable occasions occurred on September 17 when I roamed along Nun's Walk in Coldstream. This high vantage point – looking across the River Tweed to England – is backed by a south-facing wall. Approximately 20 Red Admirals were gathered there – happy to soak up the warmth of the stonework. They are a most striking species with a near-black background upon which are broad red bands and, towards the wing-tips, bold white spots. All of these butterflies were in pristine condition and when clustered in small groups produced a kaleidoscope of bright colours.

Little Grebes – now with well-grown young regularly appeared on lakes at the Hen Poo (Duns Castle Estate) and The Hirsell (Coldstream) but the occasional single bird also frequented major waterways such as

the Bowmont Water and River Tweed. Some people have suggested that the first geese arrived “about two weeks earlier than usual this year” but having studied some previous records I would suggest that they were “right on time”. Small skeins of **Pink-footed Geese** passed SW over Kelso and Hare Moss (nr. Ashkirk/Sept 11) but by the month-end there were many opportunities to witness this species with flocks of 400+-800+ being not uncommon. Small rafts of **Common Scoters** appeared close to shore at Fast Castle and St. Abb’s (Sept 25) and I was told that on that same day a **Velvet Scoter** was amongst a group at Eyemouth.

I was working at my desk (Sept 2) when I had the good fortune to look up and see an **Osprey** flying along the River Tweed. Some of these birds would have started their long journey to West Africa soon after this where they will spend the winter in such places as coastal Senegal. Wild weather from the north (25th) brought a very special bird to the area and I was told of **Grey Phalaropes** which occupied the rock-pools at Eyemouth that day. With them came **Arctic Skuas**, **Great Skuas** (Bonxies) and a scarce **Long-tailed Skua**. These are all fierce piratical birds which aggressively pursue Gulls and Terns until they disgorge their catch. An illuminated console at Eyemouth (Sept 1) read “Please do not feed the Gulls” yet **Herring Gulls** stood at regular intervals along the railings of the promenade. Every so often a visitor threw a handful of chips or a child dropped its ice-cream cone and they would immediately pounce to snatch an easily acquired (but most unsuitable) meal.

Small groups of fluttering **Skylarks** remained on arable farmland and even at the late date of September 28 some snatches of song were audible above the Barley stubbles at Kerchesters. Movements of **Swallows** continued throughout the month with many chattering flocks assembling along the electric wires. A sizeable exodus must have already taken place early in September, however, because from the 12th onwards I noted far fewer around the area. **House Martins** continued to feed their young in nests with good examples of cliff colonies at haunts such as Berwick-upon-Tweed, Lamberton and Burnmouth. I was greatly saddened to see so many **Sand Martin** colonies completely destroyed along the banks of the River Tweed and elsewhere. Their earthen nesting chambers were time after time completely engulfed by powerful surges of flood-water.

Robins became extremely vocal once more but despite their dainty appearance can be decidedly hostile towards any related intruders which might stray into “their patch”. I watched two adults in Sprouston (24th) standing facing each other at close quarter with their crimson breasts puffed up and thrust forward – a classic threat posture. They occupied an unlikely site in the middle of the road and were so preoccupied with each other that my presence beside the pair seemed to go unnoticed. It was just as well that the village was devoid of any traffic at the time!

My first **Redwing** was spotted on the fringe of Sprouston (21st) but I failed to see any more before the close of September. Word reached me, however, of small parties appearing in some coastal districts (25th-30th). **Chiffchaffs** continued to sing on occasions and roving flocks of **Long-tailed Tits** were regularly met. The grouping of farmland birds into mixed flocks has also begun with different combinations of **Tree Sparrows/Linnets/Chaffinches** and **Yellowhammers** sometimes found together.

Bats seemed to venture out on rather few evenings but one of the occasions when **Pipistrelle** (???) Bats took to flight was the 19th when these tiny mammals could be observed within the grounds of Floors Castle (near Kelso). I was lucky enough to spot **Hedgehogs** out on their nightly wanders near Gavinton, Hume, Ladykirk and Paxton. If only they could adopt some road sense! At least one **Red Squirrel** was living close to Ladykirk where I’m told it even entered a farm-cottage.

A pod of 26 **Pilot Whales** beached between Anstruther and Pittenweem on September 2. These marine mammals can attain individual weights of up to 2.5 tonnes and are normally living well out to sea from the NW coast of Scotland. For some unknown reason they arrived in Fife where about fifty people assisted in trying to revive and refloat the floundering animals. Unfortunately 16 died on land and there was another casualty amongst those returned to the sea. 9 apparently remained in the Firth of Forth during subsequent days but I was upset to hear that during that time the already stressed survivors were subjected to further abuse. People set out in boats and regularly surrounded the Pilot Whales – “in order to view them at close range”!

I was privileged to watch a well-grown juvenile **Badger** exploring and feeding within a Paxton garden (7th). It appeared twice that night remaining for roughly ten and twenty minutes respectively – ample opportunity to examine its bold markings – and behaviour. The same animal returned another evening when no food had been made available and that led to an area of the lawn being dug up! On another occasion an intruder also appeared – possibly from a neighbouring territory. Not only did a fight break out but the new animal was apparently followed (in torchlight) as it was hotly pursued by the original Badger – well across the fields and beyond...

ROGER MANNING.

Howick September 2012 Highlights.

Autumn. A mix of pleasant mild days and ferocious storms from the east.

At the start of the month good numbers of hirundines were around the village – **200+Swallows, 100+House Martins, 30+ Sand Martins** and **1 Swift**. More unusually on the 1st, **4 Jays** were in the village, probably scouting for acorns.

On the 2nd a **Yellow Wagtail** flew S over the garden in the morning, while on a sunny afternoon a good show of butterflies consisted of **5+ Large White, 3+ Small White, 2 Small Tortoiseshell, 2 Wall** and singles of **Small Copper, Speckled Wood, Peacock** and **Green veined White**.



5 Buzzards were overhead along with a **Sparrowhawk** and in the evening a **Green Sandpiper** was a garden list addition as it flew overhead, calling.

A very unexpected sight in the garden was 2 **Water Shrews** battling on open soil where I had just cleared a narrow border next to the wall. Very nice in their charcoal and white tuxedos!

On 7th a late **Swift** was seen while **3 Wheatears** were along the coast path. Again lots of butterflies gathered on two small Sedum plants in the garden – **3+ Small Tortoiseshells, 2 Wall, 5+ Red Admiral, 2 Peacock and 3+ Small White**. More were on the coast path including **6+ Small Torts**, and **9+ Wall**.

Looking from the kitchen window on the 14th gave sightings of a **Bank Vole** raiding bird food from the safety of the garden wall. **150+ Pink Footed Geese** flew south over the house.

On 15th on the garden sedums, Small Tortoiseshells had increased to 9, while 6 each of **Peacock** and **Red Admiral** added to the show.

Seawatching for an hour on the evening of the 21st from the coast path was quite good with **1 Bonxie (Great Skua), 1 Arctic Skua, 1 Sooty Shearwater, 7 Manx Shearwater, 1 Roseate Tern, 2 Common Scoter and 2 Red breasted Merganser** all North while in the bay **5 Grey Seals** were 'bottling' - dozing upright in the water, heads pointing skyward.

The 22nd was a red-letter day when I discovered a **Barred Warbler** in shrubs along our garden wall. It only stayed for 15 minutes or so and was not seen again.



Barred Warbler.

5 Swallows were still around the village and **123+ Goldfinches** fed on knapweed seeds on the coast path.

Another good bird for Howick was found on the **23rd** when an adult winter and a second winter **Mediterranean Gulls** fed together with Black headed Gulls in stubble.

After two days of heavy rain and force 8 north easterly gales, I took a day off work on the **26th** to check out the patch for migrant birds.

Although the numbers were low, some nice birds were found, for the Howick area. **1 fw female Ring Ouzel** was in rowans along our garden wall, **6+ Song Thrush**, **4 Chiffchaff**, **1 Willow Warbler**, **6 Redpoll**, **2 Wheatear**, **1 Lesser Whitethroat**, **1 Redstart** and **1 Blackcap** were all new arrivals.

At dawn a nice **Noctule Bat** was circling over our garden in daylight, maybe a migrant also?

Later in the day, a **Raven** flew from Cullernose Point mobbed by a tiny Jackdaw!

The month ended well on the **29th / 30th** with some residue migrants still hanging around – **1 Yellow browed Warbler** showed well in the pond field, **1 Spotted Flycatcher**, **6+ Goldcrest** and **80+ Barnacle Geese** flew north.



Yellow browed Warbler

Possibly the best month of 2012 so far.

Stewart Sexton, Howick.

PLANT CORNER

At the end of September we were on the Isle of Arran in the Firth of Clyde. Arran is at almost the same latitude as North Northumberland, but oh what a difference a few degrees of longitude make. At the south end of the island there are some botanically interesting shores and I've picked out three species we found there – for no better reason than that I rather like them. The first used to be in Northumberland, but isn't any more. The second may have been here – there was an unconfirmed report from Holy Island in 1970. The third has never been here. So if you want to see them next year you should heed that famous journalistic phrase from 1850s America, "Go West Young Man".

Oysterplant (*Mertensia maritima*) has smooth grey-green fleshy leaves and its name comes from the fact that apparently if you chew them they taste like oysters. Rather you than me, looking at some of the less-than-savoury debris on the shingle shores where it grows. It is the same plant family as the forget-me-nots and although its flowers open pink they soon turn forget-me-not blue. We were delighted to find it still in flower so late in the season.



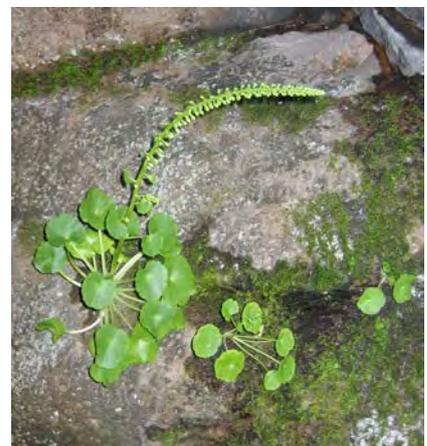
Sea Radish (*Raphanus raphanistrum* ssp. *maritimus*) is a spectacular plant that grows, often in dense clumps, on bare ground by the sea. Sorry about the mouthful of a botanical name but the other subspecies is Wild Radish, a commercial variety of which is sometimes grown



now as a fodder and game crop in our area and has white or pinkish flowers. Our plant has four-petaled yellow flowers and it superficially looks like various other yellow-flowered Crucifers, but as soon as it produces its amazing seed pods like short strings of beads it is immediately recognizable.

Finally we have the wonderfully named **Navelwort** (*Umbilicus rupestris*). You may be familiar with a quite common small plant of boggy areas in Northumberland called Marsh Pennywort whose name comes from the fact that the round leaves have a stalk attached underneath in the middle of the leaf. Well, looking at the leaves of Navelwort in the photo and knowing it grows in clefts on vertical sea cliffs where conditions are rather acidic, you wouldn't be surprised to hear that its other common name is Wall Pennywort.

In fact the generic name *Umbilicus* and its more usual common name come from the dimple in the top of each leaf where the stalk is attached underneath. The long upright flower spike (the specimen I photographed is drooping somewhat) has greenish white tubular flowers.



	SIGHTINGS SEPTEMBER 2012
BIRDS	
Black-throated Diver	1 flew past Newton Point (9 th), 1 off Holy Island (22 nd), 1 off Holy Island (26 th)
Red-throated Diver	1 at Guile Point (16 th), 4 off Holy Island (22 nd), 2 at Annstead (25 th), 6 off Holy Island (26 th)
Little Grebe	2 at Branton Ponds (4 th), 1 on Holy Island (8 th), 3 on Hedgeley Pond (11 th), 2 on Lilburn Pond (11 th)
Black-necked Grebe	1 at East Chevington (19 th)
Great Crested Grebe	2 at Branton Ponds all month
Manx Shearwater	1 at Annstead (25 th), several off Holy Island (26 th)
Sooty Shearwater	6 off Newton Point (9 th), 1 off Holy Island (26 th)
Cormorant	7 at Branton Ponds (19 th)
Mute Swan	9 on Lilburn Pond (11 th)
Barnacle Goose	1 (2 nd & 30 th) at Branton Ponds
Pink-footed Goose	100+ at Newton Point (9 th), 30 at Branton (12 th)
Brent Goose	550 at Fenham Flats (16 th), 300 on Fenham Flats (14 th)
Pintail	1 at Branton Ponds (4 th), 4 at Fenham Flats (16 th)
Eider Duck	360 at Fenham Flats (16 th)
Red-breasted Merganser	8 at Guile Point (16 th)
Goosander	40 (4 th), 69 (12 th), 93 (18 th), 115 (27 th) rising to an impressive 220 (26 th) at Branton Ponds
Goldeneye	1 at Annstead (25 th)
Pochard	3 at Branton Ponds (28 th)
Wigeon	1000 on Fenham Flats (14 th)
Common Scoter	120 at Annstead (25 th)
Velvet Scoter	1 at Annstead (25 th)
Long-tailed Duck	1 at Cresswell Pond (9 th)
Buzzard	1 at Swarland (1 st), 3 at Smeafield (22 nd), 1 nr. Felton (27 th)
Hen Harrier	1 in North Northumberland (14 th)
Sparrowhawk	1 ♀ (26 th) and (29 th) at Swarland
Goshawk	1 in North Northumberland (14 th)
Kestrel	Singles at Swarland (12/16/18/30 th), 1 (16 th) Newton on the Moor
Merlin	1 at Holy Island (22 nd)
Peregrine	2 juveniles at Fenham Flats (16 th), 1 at Elwick (23 rd), 2 near Old Bewick (18 th)
Water Rail	1 (11 th), 1 (30 th) at Branton Ponds
Curlew Sandpiper	1 at Elwick Flash (1 st), 5 at Elwick Flash (16 th)
Golden Plover	200 at Newton Point (27 th), 130 at the Football Hole (2 nd)
Knot	2 on Holy Island (8 th)
Black-tailed Godwit	1 at Elwick Flash (1 st), 12 on Holy Island (8 th), 3 on Newton Scrape (9 th), 13 at East Chevington (19 th), 1 at Hauxley (24 th),
Bar-tailed Godwit	7 at Elwick Flash (12 th)
Ruff	12 at Elwick Flash (1 st), 3 at Newton Scrape (9 th)
Common Sandpiper	1 (4 th) and 2 (25 th) at Branton Ponds
Turnstone	4 at the Football Hole (2 nd), 24 on Holy Island (8 th)
Sanderling	20 at Newton Point (9 th), 3 at the Football Hole (2 nd)

Little Stint	1 at Cresswell Pond (30 th)
Redshank	A flock at Elwick Flash (12 th)
Greenshank	2 at Newton Scrape (9 th), 1 at Cresswell Pond (30 th)
Pectoral Sandpiper	1 juvenile at Cresswell Pond (9 th)
Long-billed Dowitcher	1 juvenile at Cresswell Pond (30 th)
Arctic Skua	2 at Newton Point (9 th), 1 at Annstead (25 th)
Long-tailed Skua	7 at Annstead (25 th), 2 over Holy Island (26 th)
Great Skua	1 at Cresswell Pond (9 th), 22 at Annstead (25 th), 1 off Holy Island (26 th)
Lesser Black-backed Gull	14 on Branton Ponds (23 rd)
Mediterranean Gull	1 on Holy Island (23 rd)
Common Tern	1 (juvenile) at Annstead (25 th)
Sandwich Tern	2 off Newton Point (27 th)
Black Tern	1 (juvenile) at Newton Point (9 th)
Kingfisher	2 on the River Breamish (11 th), 1 (18 th & 25 th) and 3 (27 th) at Branton Ponds
Wryneck	1 on Holy Island (26 th) and (29 th)
Sand Martin	20+ at Branton Ponds (13 th)
Swallow	15 at Branton Ponds (13 th); at Swarland – a few local breeders present daily until 23 rd , passage groups 23 (1 st), 20 (11 th), 20 (14 th), 40 (18 th), 10 (23 rd), 4 flying south (29 th)
House Martin	3 at Branton Ponds (13 th); at Swarland – morning gatherings of 15 -120 during first 3 weeks of month with largest 200 (19 th), party of 5 flying south (23 rd)
Wren	1 (30 th) Swarland
Wheatear	6 at the Football Hole (2 nd)
Redstart	1 at Low Newton (24 th) and many on Holy Island (26 th)
Blackbird	Many at Harehope Hillhead (25 th)
Song Thrush	100's on Holy Island (26 th), 5 at Harehope Hillhead (25 th)
Mistle Thrush	2 at Harehope Hillhead (25 th)
Fieldfare	15 on Holy Island (29 th)
Redwing	Several on Holy Island (26 th), 3 at Harehope Hillend (28 th)
Blackcap	Several around Branton Ponds all month, 1 at Harehope Hillhead (24 th)
Lesser Whitethroat	2 at Holy Island (22 nd)
Chiffchaff	1 at Belford (5 th)
Arctic Warbler	1 at Holy Island (26 th)
Yellow-browed Warbler	1 at Holy Island (26 th and 29 th)
Goldcrest	100's on Holy Island (26 th)
Coal Tit	Very numerous by the end of the month with up to 10 around one feeder at times - Swarland
Red-breasted Flycatcher	1 (1 st winter) on Holy Island (23 rd)
Spotted Flycatcher	1 at Low Newton (24 th), several on Holy Island (29 th)
Pied Flycatcher	1 at Low Newton (24 th), several on Holy Island (26 th)
Nuthatch	2 at Belford (5 th)
Starling	500+ at Smeafield (4 th)
Tree Sparrow	Singles (27 th , 28 th) Swarland
Raven	4 at Eglingham (6 th)
Lesser Redpoll	5 at Branton Ponds (28 th)

Siskin	11 (17 th), singles more or less daily Swarland
Brambling	1 at Beal (26 th), 1 on Holy Island (29 th), 1 at Branton Ponds (29 th)
Chaffinch	200 in fields beside the Elwick/Smeafield road
Crossbill	1 at East Lilburn (27 th)
MAMMALS	
Red Squirrel	1 in Branton (4 th), 1 at Eglingham (9 th), 1 in Branton (23 rd), 1 at Branton Ponds (24 th), 1 at Yearle (24 th), 1 in Eglingham (28 th – it ran over the observers foot), 2 at Belford (5 th)
Water Shrew	1 on Holy Island (23 rd) – on the vicar's lawn
Porpoise	2 off Ross Back Sands (16 th)
Roe Deer	6 on Holy Island (29 th)
Weasel	1 carrying a mouse at Warkworth Birling Links (29 th)
INVERTEBRATES	
Southern Hawker	1 at Gleadscleugh (4 th), 2 at Branton Ponds (11 th)
Brown Hawker	1 at Low Newton (9 th)
Common Darter	Several at Druridge Pools (30 th)
Comma	1 at Yearle (18 th & 19 th), 1 in Swarland (15 th , 16 th , 19 th)
Peacock	2 (4 th) and 3 (19 th) at Yearle, singles most days during 2 nd half of month Swarland
Wall Brown	1 at Yearle (4 th), 1 at Low Newton Scrape (17 th)
Small Copper	2 at Yearle (4 th)
Small Heath	1 at Yearle (4 th)
Red Admiral	2 at Yearle (4 th), singles most days during 2 nd half of month Swarland
Small White	Mostly singles early in the month, max 5 (4 th) Swarland
Large White	1 at Yearle (4 th), few singles during 1 st week at Swarland
Small Tortoiseshell	Single up to 4 th and in last week Swarland
Silver-Y moth	Several singles throughout month
Fox Moth	1 caterpillar on Simonside (22 nd)
Smooth Newt	2 found under a rockery stone -Swarland
PLANTS	
Grass of Parnassus	Large numbers on Holy Island (22 nd)
Trailing St Johns Wort	On Old Bewick Moor (18 th)
Golden-rod	On Old Bewick Moor (18 th)
RAINFALL	69.1mm
OBSERVERS	W.Banks, G.Bell, J.Clark, I&K Davison, J,Dean, A.Gibson, A.Keeble, D Makepeace, S.Reay.