

Alnwick Wildlife Group

Promoting awareness of the countryside and its flora and fauna



www.alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

Email: redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

NEWSLETTER 214 JULY 2019

Review of June 2019

**WEDNESDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 2019 - PINE MARTENS IN NORTHUMBERLAND
(THE VINCENT WILDLIFE TRUST).**

SPEAKER: KEVIN O'HARA

Speaker information to follow.



WALKS

We're close to the end of our scheduled walks programme, but please note the request at the end of this brief list. Make decisions on suitable clothes and footwear based on the walk description and the weather. Please, no dogs.

SATURDAY 3rd August Moth night at Middleton North Stewart

Meet by The Ox in Middleton Village (OS Explorer OL42 - Grid Ref NZ 061 851) at **9.00pm**. We can play it by ear from then. Bring torch and midge repellent, no dogs.

SATURDAY 17th August St Cuthbert's Cave and Holborn Moss. Richard

A circular walk taking in Holburn Lake and Moss, the southern edge of Kyloe Wood, part of St Cuthbert's Way and Cuthbert's Cave. High summer vegetation; birds on the lake and on the moorland; butterflies etc. Total distance 4-5 miles. Moorland walking, so stout footwear. Meet at **10.30** in the small free NT car park for St Cuthbert's Cave at Holborn Grange which is marked on the current OS Explorer 340 map at NU 052 353. Although this is intended as a morning walk, it may well be after 1.00 that we get back to the cars, so you may wish to bring lunch.

Any offers for one or two extra excursions later in August or in September? Please contact Richard if you think you could suggest/lead one (rich.titlington@outlook.com).

Please send sightings reports for July, no later than 6th August 2019 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.

AWG welcomes contributions for the newsletter and items for inclusion should be submitted by the **12th of the month** to redsquirrel@alnwickwildlifegroup.co.uk

JUNE 2019: June saw the last ringing of a brood of young tawny owls on the 11th. This year I had around 50% occupancy (breeding attempts) that's at 10 sites. However, two failed so we have to downgrade to 40% successful. The failures were of a bird that is relatively old (over 10 yrs.) and another who we only glimpsed in a new box and so we can only guess might be a youngster who might do better next year. The others had broods of 1, 1, 2, 1, 3, 1, 3 and 2; not large numbers but quite normal in this area. Tawnys are too aggressively territorial to nest close to other tawny owls but several nested very close to our rare goldeneye ducks who they clearly have no problems with as neighbours. We had had to move one long established box in a coastal wood early in March because the uphill path to it was becoming a hazard to all concerned but the clever pair of owls quickly found the new box, moved in in April and raised young in May. Another very new owl moved into a box that was only put up in March and also raised young in May in the middle of a busy caravan site. A barrel box only a couple of meters off the ground near Longhorsley saw a brood of 3 in June and another barrel (actually intended for Barn Owls) rather higher up a tree (in quite an unusually open position to attract tawny's) produced another 2. We had suspected these owls had taken-over the barrel last year because the youngest's were seen 'branching and skipping' their way along the local hedgerows!

The bird that straddles the tawny and barn owl nesting season is the Kestrel; although they don't seem to have late summer broods. Some years I have several in purpose-built boxes and/or barn owl boxes. Like Barn Owls they like to see their way clearly 'in and out' so they don't use tawny boxes hidden in trees. This year only one used a rather large owl box (not my design) looking out over a field of crops. We were able to catch and ring the female back on the 11th May when she had 5 eggs; returning on the 17th June she flew overhead while we ringed her 4 successfully hatched pulli. It has to be said that young kestrels can be very feisty not to say barmy – lying on their backs trying to strike you with their sharp talons but this brood was actually quite laid-back and calm (see pict.). I am generally concerned about the Kestrel population in Northumberland which does seem to be in decline.

At this point can I just take the opportunity to remind folks that not everything you can see and buy on the internet is a good thing! If you would like a design for an owl or kestrel box (that works in this area) or to have one made for a donation please get in touch.

We started ringing this year Barn Owls on the 17th June when two pulli were found in a box near Fallodon. The female here was particularly interesting as she was herself ringed near Rochester, far to the west; on the 6/8/13. I controlled her near her present location in March 2013 but no one had seen her since until this year; when she had 5 eggs in May. A second call that day near the coast found a large brood of 5 which we were able to ring (see pict.). There was a very large 'larder' of 12 dead voles/mice in this box! We checked on another box which generally produces very early young and found only two small young so I noted that down for another visit. An interesting feature of this years checking has been the number of pairs of owls (not just the female bird) being present in boxes with eggs; this enables interesting comparisons of the plumage with the female birds usually showing their conspicuous brown spots (see pict.)

Finally have you noticed young juvenile birds in your gardens recently? Often quite confusing with their different shades of colouration – very green looking juvenile Great Tits; very yellowish Blue Tits. I recently caught and ringed a juvenile Siskin coming to Niger seed at home that is a soft beige colour (see pict.) I particularly like to ring these young small finches because they have the potential to travel hundreds of miles away – and then return to their natal area.

This leads me onto the Howick Ringing Station which I will start using on most Friday and Saturday mornings from around the 19th July into the Autumn. Bad weather will stop (or curtail) proceedings but otherwise we should be on site at the edge of the Howick Arboretum/Gardens from about 7:00 until lunchtime. If interested in ringing please get in touch or just turn-up. Photographers are allowed but please don't impede the science!

Anyone interesting in ringing is invited to get in touch.

*Phil Hanmer 'A' Ringer/Trainer; Natural History Society of Northumbria Ringing Group (Hancock Museum).
E-mail: tytoalbas@btinternet.com*



Juvenile Siskin



A Pair of Barn Owls



Pullus Kestrel



Pulli Barn Owls

ALNMOUTH STATION SURPRISE

Orchids are rather strange unpredictable things. Sometimes you'll find a good patch of a fairly common species beside the path on a favourite walk and then the following year, or possibly years, there's almost no sign of them. Certainly there seems little chance that specimens of wild orchids will suddenly appear in your flower beds. Or so I assumed. Then in mid-June I got this email from Elizabeth Jones, a long-time AWG member who has also been the leading light for many years in the Alnwick in Bloom initiative. I've cropped her photos a bit so there's room to enlarge and pick out the particular plants she's found.

Yesterday I was working down at Alnmouth Station on the herb plant containers that the Friends of Alnmouth Station have there. And came across the two plants I've highlighted below. Could they be wild orchids, pyramidal (the first) and spotted (the second with just the leaf)? It would make my day if so!!



In the first photo – onions, and bending towards them an interesting plant with a budding head. Container 20

In the second photo - a single spotted leaf of note, again associating with the onions' leaves. Container 16.

I replied:

My thoughts on the photos are that the spotted leaf does look like Common Spotted orchid. Of course it will be much easier to be sure if a flower stalk appears, but orchids can be very fickle, so there's no guarantee it will flower this year.

The visible leaf on the other one does look like a Pyramidal leaf and there's something about the shape of the developing flower head - quite short and tight - that could make it that species. But it will, again, be easier with a fully opened flower cluster and at least we know with that specimen that it ought to have a decent flower head.

Quite where either of these plants will have come from will probably remain a bit of a mystery.

To which Elizabeth then said:

In fact not a total wild card surprise as there are good colonies of both within a hundred yards on unused Network Rail land just behind the lift on the northbound platform. I always look out for them but they are just too early to show off to Northumbria in Bloom judges.

I've told the team to be very careful!

And a few days later she sent this photo of the one with the flower spike and I'm pretty sure that it is a Pyramidal Orchid.



For two different orchids to have appeared in planted-up containers, no matter that they are close to wild populations, is amazing, I think, and it will be fascinating to see what happens to these plants next year.

Thanks very much Elizabeth for the information and the photos. The fact that the orchids are in numbered containers may mean that other members can also keep an eye on their progress in the future.

Richard

When Jane and I were out the other day in the conifer plantation near our house we came across these two “things”, one on the bark of a living Scots Pine tree and the other on a long-dead conifer stump.



On the one hand they look rather like some of the fungal moulds, but when you touch them they are soft and slimy. Then there's the fact that if you postpone taking a photo until tomorrow there's a high likelihood they won't be there any more - and whoever heard of a fungus getting up and walking away? They are actually organisms called slime moulds (or molds if you are checking up on them on an American website). They are now increasingly understood to be in a kingdom of their own, separate from both fungi and from the simple animals called protozoa. The name most often used for this kingdom is Myxomycota and the ones Jane and I found are examples of the types called plasmodial slime moulds.

They start life when their spores hatch into free-living, free-moving amoeba-like cells. These move around their substrates feeding on bacteria. When two of these amoebae of the right types happen to meet they can mate by merging together. The zygote thus formed grows into a plasmodium which is a mass of protoplasm with multiple nuclei, but no internal cell membranes. The plasmodium continues to move around and feed until the food supply begins to run out. At this point the whole plasmodium moves to the surface of its substrate and changes into the often brightly-coloured fruiting bodies (or sporangia) which are the stage of the life cycle that we usually see.

Soon the sporangium releases spores which hatch into the amoeboid stage and the cycle repeats itself as these amoebae disperse to find food.

So they're not plants, nor animals, nor fungi, but myxomycota and it seems to us that you would need to be a particularly dedicated biologist to decide on these organisms as your subjects to study, particularly as they don't seem to have any commercial relevance or even any key biological importance.

As for identification, you won't be surprised to hear that it's far from easy. Much seems to depend on microscopic examination of the spores. I've convinced myself, without resorting to the microscope, that the bright yellow one is *Fuligo septica* (sometimes called 'scrambled-egg slime' or even 'dog's-vomit slime mould') and the whitish one with the Y-shaped vertical structures, which you can just about make out in my photo, is a species called *Ceratiomyxa fruticulosa*. But I may be quite wrong, especially about the second of these.



Two years ago in a similar part of this plantation we found a rather fetching pink species – well a fetching colour at least. It may be the one commonly called 'bubble-gum slime mould', although on-line images seem to suggest that the bubble-gum one more often forms rather tighter spheres than this. Personally I think it is more likely to be a pinkish version of the white slime mould, *Reticularia lycoperdon*, but again I may well be wrong.

If anyone in AWG reckons to have more insight into these organisms than I do, please get in touch.

Richard

For me plants represent a never-ending, never-failing source of fascination. Each month when I start thinking about my next Plant Corner article something crops up based on what I've recently seen or wondered about.

This month I'll start with something I haven't seen, but which someone else has. Chris Metherell, the botanical recorder for North Northumberland (or Vice County 68 as naturalists call it) is also a long-standing member of AWG. He'd recently been wondering why there had been no recorded sightings of Globeflower *Trollius europaeus* in VC68 for the last 28 years. You may remember that in my June Plant Corner article Globeflower was one of the good species I'd seen in Bickerton Wood near Hepple, but this wood is south of the River Coquet and so is officially in South Northumberland (VC67).

Then "BOOM!", out of the blue our member Janet Chubb sent in a fantastic photo of a major Globeflower patch that she'd come across in June near the viaduct over the Aln just NW of Lesbury. This plant has never been recorded for anywhere on this coastal strip and yet this population looks well established which makes it very surprising that it hasn't been recorded before. Chris was delighted with Janet's sighting which will eventually make its way onto the BSBI database.



Back on the home front, when we got back from our holiday it was to find two good new weeds in our back garden. One was a very small specimen of Common Fiddleneck *Amsinckia micrantha*. I've seen it several times before in our area – Ford Moss; by the River Till at Wooler; etc., but not before in our garden. It's a relative of the forget-me-nots and I've included, on the next page, both the photo of the little one in the garden and one that's bigger and shows the typical cymose arrangement of the flowers in the plants of this Boraginaceae family.

Far better, both because they were much bigger and were things I've never seen before, were two specimens of Night-flowering Catchfly *Silene noctiflora*. They had appeared in a flower bed and initially looked like white campions with rather shrivelled-looking flowers, but when I touched them the stems were unpleasantly sticky and had quite a few small insects trapped in the stickiness. So they were clearly catchflies and when the following morning they had several new open flowers that soon shrivelled during the morning the identification as the night-flowering species was clear. The flowers produced during the night are highly scented and attract the moths that pollinate them.

The issue of where these two garden weeds came from is hard to answer. Neither seems likely to have been part of any bird-seed mix, so possibly the seeds simply arrived on birds' feet. The catchfly is increasingly uncommon in the UK except, the books say, in eastern England where it crops up in sandy arable soils, although the only 21stC record in VC68 was in 2011 at Fowberry.

It really was good finding a catchfly in the garden that was new to me because in Scandinavia we kept coming across two other catchflies that are comparatively common. The red one is Sticky Catchfly *Silene viscaria* which often crops up in road verges in spring and early summer in exactly the way that Red Campion does in Britain. The other white one is the

curiously-named Nottingham Catchfly *Silene nutans* which seems to have no particular association with Nottingham. Both these last two are native plants in Britain, but, apart from one record at Hauxley in 2011 for the red one, neither is recorded in Northumberland. I'm also somewhat unclear about the advantage to these catchflies of having the stickiness on the stems. You might think that the small flies and beetles that tend to get stuck would be potential pollinators, so killing them would be self-defeating.



'My' Common Fiddleneck



A more mature Fiddleneck specimen



Night-flowering Catchfly in our garden



Sticky Catchfly



Nottingham Catchfly

On Friday 12th July we had a successful moth trapping event at Howick Village Hall. 11 of us were present on Friday night until 00.30am then in the morning about 15 of us eagerly sorted out the catch.

It is always pleasing to see the reactions of guests who are quite new to 'mothing' when there is a good diversity of species on show.

Earlier in the week, thing didn't look promising for the Friday. The forecast was for rain all day until 8pm and a cool NW breeze. At one stage I pondered pulling the plug, but it was too late for that. The show must go on, so they say.

As it happens, Friday turned out to be quite warm and fine and by the time it got to our opening of 10pm, it was a pleasant evening with some nice moth- inducing cloud cover and by midnight the temperature was still 14.5 degrees.

We ran four traps. They were -

Twin Actinic tube Robinson Trap

125w MV Robinson Trap x2

160w MV Skinner Trap with a white sheet over a table.

Until midnight the action was quite slow then, as if a tap had been turned, moths began to drop into the light.

We wandered around discussing the catch and eating fresh homemade Victoria sponge cake and drinking tea. A Hedgehog came in for a look while two group members were almost no more when a Barn Owl flew into the upward light shaft and screeched like a banshee before disappearing just as quickly. There was a constant presence of Bats, probably common pipistrelles too.

The next morning, I was out at 4am to cover the traps and place them in the shade. All cables and sheets etc were packed away by 5am ready for the morning visitors to arrive at 8.30am.

One everyone arrived and were filled with tea, coffee and another cake, this time a blueberry and lemon loaf, we opened the first of the traps.

What a surprise to find them choc a bloc of moths of many different species.

They were –

Howick Village Hall, Howick, Northumberland

12/07/19

Taxa

Coleophora species (Coleophora sp.) 1
 Common Rustic agg. (Mesapamea secalis agg.) 2
 Marbled Minor agg. (Oligia strigilis agg.) 4
 03.003 Map-winged Swift (Korscheltellus fusconebulosa) 3
 03.003 Map-winged Swift (Korscheltellus f. gallicus) 4
 03.005 Ghost Moth (Hepialus humuli) 4
 18.001 Diamond-back Moth (Plutella xylostella) 24
 28.010 Brown House-moth (Hofmannophila pseudospretella) 2
 35.040 a moth (Bryotropha terrella) 1
 37.048 a moth (Coleophora mayrella) 1
 38.037 a moth (Elachista canapennella) 1
 40.002 a moth (Mompha ochraceella) 1
 41.003 a moth (Blastobasis laticolella) 3
 49.029 a moth (Lozotaenia forsterana) 1
 49.031 Timothy Tortrix (Aphelia paleana) 1

49.051 Flax Tortrix (*Cnephasia asseclana*) 4
 49.091 a moth (*Pseudargyrotoza conwagana*) 1
 49.109 a moth (*Agapeta hamana*) 9
 49.166 a moth (*Celypha lacunana*) 27
 49.194 a moth (*Bactra lancealana*) 1
 49.265 a moth (*Eucosma cana*) 2
 62.001 Bee Moth (*Aphomia sociella*) 2
 62.042 Thistle Ermine (*Myelois circumvoluta*) 1
 63.025 Small Magpie (*Anania hortulata*) 3
 63.038 Mother of Pearl (*Pleuroptya ruralis*) 2
 63.052 Rush Veneer (*Nomophila noctuella*) 1
 63.064 a moth (*Scoparia ambigualis*) 5
 63.066 a moth (*Scoparia pyralella*) 1
 63.067 a moth (*Eudonia lacustrata*) 2
 63.080 Garden Grass-veneer (*Chrysoteuchia culmella*) 301
 63.102 a moth (*Catoptria falsella*) 1
 63.114 Brown China-mark (*Elophila nymphaeata*) 1
 65.009 Buff Arches (*Habrosyne pyritoides*) 2
 66.010 Drinker (*Euthrix potatoria*) 2
 69.003 Poplar Hawk-moth (*Laothoe populi*) 3
 69.016 Elephant Hawk-moth (*Deilephila elpenor*) 4
 70.011 Single-dotted Wave (*Idaea dimidiata*) 9
 70.013 Small Fan-footed Wave (*Idaea biselata*) 2
 70.016 Riband Wave (*Idaea aversata* ab. *remutata*) 3
 70.045 Shaded Broad-bar (*Scotopteryx chenopodiata*) 2
 70.053 Flame Carpet (*Xanthorhoe designata*) 1
 70.054 Silver-ground Carpet (*Xanthorhoe montanata*) 1
 70.074 July Highflier (*Hydriomena furcata*) 1
 70.093 Barred Straw (*Gandaritis pyraliata*) 9
 70.100 Green Carpet (*Colostygia pectinataria*) 2
 70.131 Twin-spot Carpet (*Mesotype didymata*) 1
 70.132 Rivulet (*Perizoma affinitata*) 1
 70.133 Small Rivulet (*Perizoma alchemillata*) 2
 70.141 Double-striped Pug (*Gymnoscelis rufifasciata*) 1
 70.190 Grey Pug (*Eupithecia subfuscata*) 1
 70.265 Mottled Beauty (*Alcis repandata*) 2
 71.025 Buff-tip (*Phalera bucephala*) 1
 72.002 Straw Dot (*Rivula sericealis*) 33
 72.003 Snout (*Hypena proboscidalis*) 13
 72.019 Buff Ermine (*Spilosoma lutea*) 1
 72.026 Garden Tiger (*Arctia caja*) 18
 72.036 Muslin Footman (*Nudaria mundana*) 4
 72.045 Common Footman (*Eilema lurideola*) 14
 73.001 Spectacle (*Abrostola tripartita*) 2
 73.012 Burnished Brass (*Diachrysia chrysis*) 7
 73.016 Beautiful Golden Y (*Autographa pulchrina*) 3
 73.018 Gold Spangle (*Autographa bractea*) 1
 73.076 Scarce Bordered Straw (*Helicoverpa armigera*) 1
 73.092 Mottled Rustic (*Caradrina morpheus*) 10
 73.097 Rustic (*Hoplodrina blanda*) 10
 73.113 Angle Shades (*Phlogophora meticulosa*) 2
 73.147 Small Dotted Buff (*Photodes minima*) 2
 73.154 Dusky Brocade (*Apamea remissa*) 1
 73.156 Clouded-bordered Brindle (*Apamea crenata*) 1
 73.162 Dark Arches (*Apamea monoglypha*) 147
 73.163 Light Arches (*Apamea lithoxyla*) 25

73.168	Double Lobed (<i>Lateroligia ophiogramma</i>)	1
73.176	Middle-barred Minor (<i>Oligia fasciuncula</i>)	4
73.254	Antler Moth (<i>Cerapteryx graminis</i>)	5
73.267	Bright-line Brown-eye (<i>Lacanobia oleracea</i>)	10
73.291	Common Wainscot (<i>Mythimna pallens</i>)	26
73.293	Smoky Wainscot (<i>Mythimna impura</i>)	27
73.298	Clay (<i>Mythimna ferrago</i>)	7
73.317	Heart and Dart (<i>Agrotis exclamationis</i>)	18
73.328	Flame (<i>Axylia putris</i>)	12
73.329	Flame Shoulder (<i>Ochropleura plecta</i>)	1
73.334	Small Square-spot (<i>Diarsia rubi</i>)	4
73.342	Large Yellow Underwing (<i>Noctua pronuba</i>)	85
73.358	Six-striped Rustic (<i>Xestia sexstrigata</i>)	1
73.359	Setaceous Hebrew Character (<i>Xestia c-nigrum</i>)	2
73.361	Double Square-spot (<i>Xestia triangulum</i>)	9

In total 949 moths of 86 species were caught and counted. Of these, Scarce Bordered Straw (*Helicoverpa armigera*) was only the second Howick record in 10 years of trapping. 18 Garden Tigers were a good count plus things such as Double Lobed, Gold Spangle, Elephant Hawk-moths etc. were all welcomed.



Figure 1: Scarce Bordered Straw. The rarest moth of the night.



Figure 2: 50% of the Garden Tiger catch.



Figure 3: Gold Spangle



Figure 4: Alan Fairclough and Ian Davison et al at the trap.



Figure 5: Howick Village traps.

June and early July has been a mixture of warm sunny spells and periods of rain. The vegetation especially the grasses have flourished, and crops of hay and silage have been big. The news at Front Street is not good. After losing the **House martin's** nest to wet weather, both pairs have not returned to re-build. I am starting to consider putting up an artificial nest over the winter. Birds still visit to inspect the site but there has been no building.

On the plus side, a pair of **Swallows** have nested in a neighbour's arch way. I have always thought that this was a great site for Swallows, but they have never attempted to nest. Disturbance may be a factor, but they have managed to raise one young, which is ready to fledge. This has prompted me to think about putting up a 'structure' on a wall that might tempt Swallows to nest in the garden. Farm building conversions and food hygiene laws have reduced to the number of potential nest sites in our countryside.

Waders already starting to gather on estuaries and inland waters. With good counts of **Lapwing** and **Curlew** at a number of localities. Dragonflies / damselflies numbers still seem to be very low, but butterfly numbers have been good. There continue to be good numbers of **Painted ladies** and **Red admirals**. **Small coppers**, **Speckled woods** and **Common blues** also appear to have had a good year. **Small tortoiseshells** seem to be doing a little better.

AWG walk – The Hirsell

Three of us met at the Dundock wood car park at 10:30 am on the Sunday morning 9th June. We had a leisurely 3 hr stroll around the estate. The Rhododendrons in Dundock wood were slightly past their best but there were a good selection of warblers including **Garden** and **Blackcap** as well **Jay** and **Great spotted woodpeckers**. There were also good numbers of Speckled wood butterflies.

The lake held reasonable numbers of waterfowl, with a count of 12 **Little grebes** and 6 juveniles. There was also a brood of **Gadwall** and good numbers of **Swifts**, **House martin** and **Sand martin**. Probably the highlight of the walk was watching Swifts entering their nests close to the café and a **Spotted flycatcher** in the neighbouring garden. I was amazed how low the Swifts were getting before climbing towards their nests under the slates.

The walk along the river, again produced large numbers of warblers, a very brief **Kingfisher**, lots of **Bullfinches** and good numbers of Swifts using the boxes on the north side of the 'big' house. **Orange-tips** were still on the wing and **Common blue damselfly** and **Blue-tailed damselfly** were starting to appear.

We returned via the north side of the lake. Watching a **Sedge warbler** chasing a **Grey squirrel** was an eye-opener. Firstly, the Sedge warblers' nest would have likely been in the reedbed and an unreasonable target for the squirrel but the warbler was not taking a chance. Secondly the warbler was virtually pulling the hairs out of the squirrel's tail and chase it for at least 60m!

In all we saw or heard 42 species of birds. A thoroughly enjoyable morning.

Happy searching

Jack Daw

SIGHTINGS JUNE 2019

BIRDS

Manx Shearwater	3 at Craster on 13 th
Spoonbill	1 at Cresswell Pond on 29 th
Little Egret	1 at Cresswell Pond on 29 th
Canada Goose	80 over Craster on 2 nd
Barnacle Goose	1 at Branton Ponds from 28 th
Pochard	2 at Cresswell Pond on 9 th
Baikal Teal	1 at East Chevington on 3 rd
Garganey	1 at Monk's House Pool on 4 th and 5 th
Shelduck	A late record of 1 pair + 6 young were part of a larger group of 11 at Fenham Flats on 23 rd May
Wigeon	1 at Branton Ponds on 28 th
Osprey	1 near Belford on 19 th
Hobby	1 at Low Newton on 25 th
Baillons Crake	1 at Monk's House Pool on 5 th
Woodcock	2 at Beanley Woods all month
Water Rail	1 at East Chevington on 23 rd 1 at Hedgeley Lakes on 14 th
Avocet	15 at Cresswell Pond on 9 th
Wood Sandpiper	1 at Low Newton on 1 st and 7 th
Curlew	170 on Holy Island causeway on 17 th
Black-tailed Godwit	2 at Cresswell Pond on 29 th
Great Skua	2 at Craster on 8 th and 13 th 1 at Dunstanburgh on 8 th
Arctic Skua	3 at Craster on 13 th and 1 on 25 th
Little Gull	1 at Druridge Pools on 9 th 3 at East Chevington on 23 rd 4 at Cresswell Pond on 29 th
Cuckoo	1 at Beanley Woods on 5 th 1 at Hedgeley Lakes on 14 th
Little Owl	1 at Druridge Pools on 9 th
Tawny Owl	1 at Beanley Woods on 10 th
Barn Owl	1 at Cresswell Pond on 9 th 2 near Shoreston on 14 th
Nightjar	2 at Beanley Woods from 1 st
Kingfisher	1 at Branton Ponds on 29 th
Great-spotted Woodpecker	A family of 4 at Smeafields on 10 th
Skylark	4 at Smeafields on 3 rd
Whinchat	1 at Kimmer Lough on 2 nd 2 near Reaveley Bridge on 15 th
Stonechat	A late record of 6 at Smeafields on 5 th May
Redstart	1 at Holystone Woods on 20 th
Grasshopper Warbler	2 at Monk's House Pool on 5 th 1 at Hedgeley Lakes on 14 th 5 at East Chevington on 29 th
Common Whitethroat	4 at Smeafields on 13 th
Willow Warbler	12 at Kimmer Lough on 2 nd
Spotted Flycatcher	1 at Holystone Woods on 20 th
Jay	1 at Smeafields on 11 th
Raven	2 at Dunstanburgh on 13 th
Lesser Redpoll	9 at Kimmer Lough on 2 nd
Siskin	A late record of 6 at Smeafields on 20 th May
INVERTEBRATES	
Painted Lady	2 at Druridge Pools on 9 th 1 at Branton Ponds on 9 th and 4 on 15 th 6 near Ingram on 15 th 30+ at Boulmer on 16 th many at Smeafields on 18 th
Common Blue Butterfly	1 at Branton Ponds on 15 th and on 28 th several
Ringlet	Several at Branton Ponds on 29 th
Small Copper	3 at Branton Ponds on 15 th
Small Heath	5 near Ingram on 15 th

Large Skipper	Several at Branton Ponds on 26 th
Small Skipper	1 at Branton Ponds on 28 th
Orange Tip	1 was a late record from 10 th May at Smeafields
Wall	A late record of many at Smeafields on 24 th May
Poplar Hawk-moth	1 at Branton on 1 st
Elephant Hawk-moth	2 at Branton on 6 th and 3 on 29 th
Small Elephant Hawk-moth	1 at Branton on 29 th
Lunar Thorn	2 at Branton on 1 st
Scorched Wing	1 at Branton on 16 th
Ghost moth	1 at Branton on 19 th with 3 on 28 th
Foxglove Pug	1 at Branton on 6 th
Peppered moth	1 at Branton on 19 th
Banded Demoiselle	1 on River Aln on 16 th
Large Red Damselfly	10 at Quarry House on 22 nd 6 at Lemmington Banktop on 29 th
Common Hawker	1 at Lemmington Banktop on 29 th
Golden-ringed Dragonfly	1 at Lemmington Banktop on 29 th 1 at Branton on 30 th
4 Spotted Chaser	1 at Hedegley Lakes on 19 th 1 at Quarry House on 22 nd 12+ at Lemmington Banktop on 29 th
Tree Bumblebee	1 on Alnwick Moor on 16 th
Mountain Bumblebee	5 on Alnwick Moor on 16 th
Violet Ground Beetle	1 at Branton Ponds on 28 th
Great Diving Beetle	1 at Branton on 16 th
MAMMALS	
Bottle-nosed Dolphin	2 off Holy Island on 8 th 4 off Dunstanburgh on 6 th 6 off Craster on 18 th
PLANTS	
Northern Marsh Orchid	Numerous on Holy Island on 8 th many at East Chevington on 23 rd
Common Spotted Orchid	On Holy Island on 8 th several at East Chevington on 23 rd
Broad-leaved Helliborine	Many at Branton Ponds on 15 th
Heath Spotted Orchid	5 spikes on Alnwick Moor on 16 th
Lesser Butterfly Orchid	20+ at East Chevington on 23 rd
Musk Thistle	At Hedegley on 15 th
Chickweed Wintergreen	Numerous on Alnwick Moor on 16 th
Cow Wheat	On Alnwick Moor on 16 th
Globeflower	The previous months record of this species at Lesbury has been confirmed as the first for the Vice County since 1991
RAINFALL	99mm
OBSERVERS	J Chubb, I&K Davison, G Dodds, M&J Drage, A Keeble, S Reay.