

HUNTINGDONSHIRE
FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

5th
ANNUAL
REPORT
1952

PRICE (to non-members) 10/6

HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

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C. F. TEBBUTT.

Hon. Secretary:

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J. E. H. BLACKIE.

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W. J. GARNETT.

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R. V. KEYWORTH.

Referees:

- Coleoptera* - - REV. C. E. TOTTENHAM, Department of Zoology,
Cambridge.
- Flora* - - - J. L. GILBERT, Riverside, Wansford.
- Mammals* - - ALASTAIR N. WORDEN, Cromwell House, Huntingdon.
- Birds* - - - C. F. TEBBUTT, The Ferns, Eynesbury, St. Neots.
- Macro-lepidoptera* J. E. H. BLACKIE, The Bell House, Alconbury.
- Aphides* - - - MISS B. HAMLYN, Everton Vicarage, Sandy.

Annual Report for 1952

(No. 5)

INTRODUCTION

The Annual General Meeting was held at Huntingdon Grammar School, by kind permission of the Headmaster, on 3rd May, 1952, when the officers and committee named above were, with the exception of Miss O. D. Clarke, elected. Miss Clarke was later elected by the Committee to act as Hon. Social Secretary in place of Mr. Roger Connan, who had been compelled to resign owing to military duties. Following the formal business, Prof. A. N. Worden gave an address on "The Rabbit," and it is hoped to hold a lecture or film as a regular feature of the meeting in future.

Other events held during the year were as follows:—

- 15th June : Expedition to Wicken Fen.
- 12th July : Expedition to Oxey and Simons Woods, Helpston, combined with a visit to the Clare Festival staged by Mrs. B. Garfoot-Gardner and a visit to Clare's Cottage, conducted by Mrs. K. Hutchison.
- 13th September : Visit to Orton Hall.
- 15th October : Exhibition of bird films by Dr. G. A. Metcalfe, of Bedford.

The other members of the Committee are grateful to Mr. J. L. Gilbert and to those who have helped him to organise and conduct the expeditions, and to Mr. D. E. Kime for temporary assistance as Hon. Social Secretary.

Membership is 92, or two fewer than a year ago. The following have joined the Society since preparation of the report for 1951: Mrs. D. A. Davies, Miss Morton, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. B. Munro, Mr. H. F. Tebbs, Mr. and Mrs. H. G. Walden, Miss A. Wheatley, and Mrs. D. M. Worden.

The need to recruit new members remains an urgent one, and it is to be hoped that all present supporters of the Society will do their best to make its activities known and to stimulate additional membership. Subscriptions should be paid to the Hon. Treasurer, Mr. D. A. Davies, at the address given above.

In the interests of economy, it has again been necessary to curtail the report and to hold over certain records, including those relating to mammals. Attention is, however, drawn to the first instalment in this Report of the contribution on "The Lepidoptera of Huntingdonshire," by Mr. J. E. H. Blackie, F.R.E.S., and to the contribution on "The Upper Lias near Stibbington Hall," by Mr. J. L. Gilbert.

Mr. C. F. Tebbutt and other members have again undertaken routine counts for the International Wildfowl Enquiry, for which the Hon. Secretary acts as regional organiser.

BIRDS

Although this is my fifth report the county still seems to be producing as much new material as ever. Unfortunately rather fewer people are sending in reports and we need more observers to cover the county properly. A new member, J. E. Archer, of Brownhill Staunch, Bluntisham, is in a good position in an important and hitherto neglected area, and was lucky enough to see the first Osprey recorded on the Ouse since 1863, and to find the first Black Headed Gull's nest.

Little Stints, Firecrest, Hoopoe and a Grasshopper Warbler are notable, as well as a casualty from the country wide "wreck" of Leach's Petrels.

The event of the year was the first breeding of the Little Ringed Plover. The rapid extension of this bird's range over the country is one of the outstanding ornithological events of the century. Again the breeding of the Corncrake is strongly suspected and members should listen for the bird's call in June.

All ducks breeding in the county did well, particularly Mallard, Tufted and Pochard. Teal, Gadwell and Shoveler certainly bred.

The status of Cole, Marsh, and Willow Tits is uncertain, and the two former seem to have disappeared from some areas. Observations would be welcome.

G. Alcock surpassed his last year's work on Butler's Pit, Fletton, by making counts of waterfowl on 96 days. From these a selection to show significant trends of population is again printed in tabular form.

The table of migrants shows exceptionally early Spring dates for some species.

Members have taken counts for the International Wildfowl Survey, and completed B.T.O. Breeding Season Distribution Survey 1952 forms for a number of representative areas, while the census of Heronries and Great Crested Grebes was done by myself.

We are again grateful to Bedfordshire Natural History Society for enabling members to enjoy their Annual Conference, and to Cambridge Bird Club for notes sent in by their members.

Contributors to this Report are: R. Connan (R.C.), Mr. and Mrs. Blackie (B.), W. Garnett (W.G.), C. Burge (C.B.), G. Alcock (G.A.), R. D. Kime (R.K.), L. Angell (L.A.), J. E. Archer (J.A.), L. A. C. MacNab (L.A.C.M.), E. T. Lees (E.L.), Cambridge Bird Club (C.B.C.), Gaynes Hall Bird Club (G.H.B.C.), and the Recorder (Rec.)

Hooded Crow. 1952. Nov. 9th, three Bluntisham (J.A.) Dec. 28th, two Little Paxton (C.B.)

Carron Crow. 1952. The winter population is much greater than generally supposed. In 1951/52 keepers in the Kimbolton and Great Staughton area killed about 220 birds on about 11,000 acres (Rec.)

Rook. 1952. At last some decline in numbers nesting compared with 1951. St. Neots 368 (minus 11). Little Paxton 61 (minus 7). Diddington 209 (plus 90). Little Paxton summer roost showed an increase. On July 15th it was estimated that 900 Rooks and 2,700 Jackdaws were using it. The origin of at least one of our winter migrants is proved by a bird ringed at Giethoorn, prov. Overijssel, Holland, as a nestling May 6th, 1951, and shot at Great Gransden, Dec. 28th, 1952. (Rec.)

Hawfinch. Recorded as nesting Toseland Wood, 1929, and Priory Park, St. Neots about 1930. (Rec.)

Bullfinch. 1952. Continues to increase.

Brambling. 1952. April 5th, one, Farcet Fen with buntings and finches. (Rec.)

Reed Bunting. 1952. Gradually abandoned Great Paxton roost in February. Returned in November, when 100+ present. (L.A.)

Tree Sparrow. 1952. Jan. 13th, Little Paxton, unmixed flock 200. Jan. 30th, flock still present but mixed with H. Sparrows. Feb. 24th, 45 with 100 H. Sparrows. March 15th, unmixed flock 60. (Rec.)

Tree Pippit. 1952. Breeding Houghton and Brampton Wood. (R.K.)

Yellow Wagtail. 1952. An exceptionally early Spring migration. Besides the one seen on March 27th, several were recorded about April 10th.

Grey Wagtail. 1952. Sept. 21st, one Fenstanton. (C.B.C.) Oct. 9th, pair St. Neots. (Rec.)

Pied Wagtail. 1952. Great Paxton roost shared with Reed Buntings abandoned in Feb. (L.A.)

Nuthatch. 1952. Present in breeding season St. Neots, Glatton, and Hartford. Nests found at Huntingdon, Brampton and Gaynes Hall, where five young were seen. (Rec., L.A.C.M., R.K., R.C., E.L., G.H.B.C.)

Spotted Flycatcher. 1952. Aug. 11th, strong passage, local birds having left some weeks before (Rec.)

Red Backed Shrike. 1952. Cock on telegraph wires, Offord Mill, May 27th. (E.L.)

Goldcrest. 1952. June two nests Diddington Park. (L.A.) Oct. 6th - 29th, several Hilton. (W.G.)

Firecrest. 1952. Oct. 28th, 29th, Hilton, one with Goldcrests. (W.G.)

Grasshopper Warbler. 1952. May 19th, one heard singing between Offord and Graveley. (E.L.)

Garden Warbler. 1952. Breeding near Hilton and Lattenbury Hill. (W.G.)

Blackcap. 1952. Breeding Hilton (W.G.) and between St. Ives and Hartford (R.K.)

Lesser Whitethroat. 1952. Breeding near Hilton and Lattenbury Hill. (W.G.) Nest 5 eggs Great Paxton. (L.A.) Three nest Great Paxton, 1 St. Ives Thicket, 1 Wood Walton Fen. (E.L.)

Wheatear. 1952. Bluntisham Staunch, one and later two, remained April 1st—22nd, another April 26th, and June 19th. (J.A.) April 4th, Hartford, 5/6 flying N.E. (E.L.) St. Neots, one April 20th and 27th, two May 6th. (C.B.) Little Paxton one Aug. 5th. Offord one Sept. 3rd. (Rec.)

Winchat. 1952. Probably one or more pairs bred between Hilton and St. Ives. (W.G.) May 4th, one Abbots Ripton. (B.) May 5th, two Little Paxton. (Rec.) June 2nd, pair with 4 young Houghton. (E.L.) Sept. 7th, one Farcet. (G.A.)

Stonechat. 1952. Feb. 25th, one cock Hail Weston. (Rec.)

Common Redstart. 1952. None seen at usual Kimbolton sites. (Rec.) Nest found in old woodpecker's hole in ash tree, Ellington, May 7th. (E.L.)

Swift. 1952. Aug. 9th—14th, Great Paxton, heavy passage to W. and S.W. (L.A. and Rec.) Sept. 8th, Farcet, weak passage. (G.A.)

Nightjar. 1952. June 5th, one Eynesbury. (C.B.) Kimbolton Woods, three found killed by predator. Brampton Wood keeper says they were common until a few years ago. (Rec.) One seen Upton Wood, May 25th. (E.L.)

Hoopoo. 1930. Nov. 1st, one seen between Toseland and Gt. Paxton. (Rec.) 1952. June 18th, one seen between Bluntisham and Earith. (W.G.)

Shorteared Owl. 1952. April 13th, one Bury Fen, Bluntisham. (Rec.)

Hobby. 1952. May 14th, one Great Paxton. (L.A.)

Common Buzzard. 1951. Sept. 9th, one Kimbolton. (Rec.)

Osprey. 1952. May 25th. Bluntisham, one was seen flying up river. It stopped at and caught fish in Engine Drain and then flew low and leisurely towards St. Ives. (J.A.) Probably the same bird seen over Southill Lake, Beds., on May 30th, and at Radlett, Herts., on June 15th.

Common Heron. 1952. Nest census: Hemingford 15 (+6). Hinch-
ingbrooke 7 (-3). St. Neots, 8 (-2/3). (Rec.)

Bittern. 1951. Dec. 26th. One Eynesbury. (Rec.)

Mute Swan. 1951/52. Lt. Paxton Gravel Pit. A pair hatched and reared a brood of 6. On their initial flight in September, two cygnets struck electric wires, one being killed and the other, perhaps slightly injured, returned to the pit accompanied by one adult (the pen?). The other adult with four young flew to, and remained on, the river. This or another adult joined the two on the pit in Jan., 1952, and display and coition was seen between the adults on Jan. 30th. The cygnet was now persecuted by the mated pair but although it could fly it refused to leave and was killed by them on Feb. 27th. (Rec.)

Grey Geese. 1952. Dec. 28th. Little Paxton, 8 flying N. (C.B.)

Gadwall. 1952. June 4th. Bluntisham, duck displaying, obviously on account of brood. (Rec.)

Teal. 1952. June 23rd. Duck with brood 7 Bluntisham Stauch. (J.A.) Others seen in late May and early June near Bluntisham and St. Ives. (Rec.)

Garganey. 1952. May 30th, one drake, Marsh Lane, Hemingford. (Rec.) May 28th, eight Bluntisham Fen (C.B.C.)

Shoveler. 1952. Almost certainly nested. Bury Fen, Bluntisham, April 26th, nine. May 25th, three drakes, May 28th, twenty, St. Ives area. June 20th, two drakes, Aug. 4th, 10 juveniles. (Rec., C.B.C.)

Common Pochard. 1952. At least 3 broods averaging 6 were hatched on one pit in St. Ives area. (Rec.)

Tufted Duck. 1952. Colony nesting occurred on one pit where at least 9 broods were seen between May 28th and Aug. 4th (less than a week old.) (Rec.)

Goosander. 1952. Nov. 9th, Little Paxton pit, one drake in partial eclipse.

Cormorant. 1952. Lt. Paxton pit, one seen April 14th, and one present Sept. 1st—15th. (Rec.)

Leach's Petrel. 1952. Oct. 30th, one found in dying condition Gaynes Hall, Great Staughton. (G.H.B.C.)

Great Crested Grebe. 1952. Census of birds in breeding season: 43 (-11). (Rec.)

Little Grebe. 1952. Bred on river at Godmanchester, Fenstanton Pit and Fishponds Kimbolton. (Rec.)

Curlew. 1952. Jan. 27th. Offord, 1 flying S. April 1/3rd, Staughton Moor, 2. April 13th, Earith, 2 flying N.E. Aug. 6th, Staughton Moor, 7 flying W. wind light W.S.W. Aug. 9th, Lt. Paxton, 20 flying W. wind strong S.W. Oct. 3rd, Lt. Paxton, 2 flying W. (Rec.)

Woodcock. 1952. March 26th. Nest Brampton Wood 4 eggs, where subsequently three lots of young seen. In April a pair seen several times Perry Wood. (Rec.)

Jack Snipe. 1952. Feb. 16th. Little Paxton pit, one. (Rec.)

Little Stint. 1952. May 30th, Meadow Lane pit, St. Ives, four feeding on low bare islands. First authentic record since 1825. (Rec.)

Green Sandpiper. 1952. Aug. 4th, Marsh Lane pit, Hemingford, 2. Aug. 19th, Lt. Paxton pit, 1 flew in from E., wind N. (Rec.)

Redshank. 1952. First seen March 22nd, near Bluntisham and subsequently several pairs nested near Bluntisham Stauch. June 2nd, 2 pairs of adults and 3 young seen at the Beet Factory ponds, Orton Longueville. (Rec.)

Greenshank. 1952. Aug. 17th, Lt. Paxton pit 1, flew off W. or S.W., wind N.E. (Rec.)

Ringed Plover. 1952. Sept. 5th. Lt. Paxton pit, 2 flying E., wind N.W. (Rec.)

Lt. Ringed Plover. 1952. For the first time a pair nested and hatched young in the county. On April 25th, a pair was seen at pit A., and on May 7th and 25th a single bird at pit B., which was searched on May 28th with no sign of birds. A pair was then seen at pit A., but not subsequently. On May 30th, a pair was seen at pit C., and on June 4th a nest with 4 eggs was found here on an island. It was unlined in a simple hollow on the open shingle. At the same time a single bird, apparently unmated, was seen at pit A. on May 30th, June 2nd and Aug. 4th. On June 23rd, at pit C. a bird could be seen brooding newly hatched young, of which 3 were subsequently found on an island separated by 4 feet of deep water from the nest site. All traces of shell had been removed from the vicinity of the nest. On July 2nd, the adult pair was present with no sign of young and on July 4th a new nest with four eggs was found a few yards from the old site but partly under vegetation which now covered the shingle bank. One egg was not pointing inwards. On Aug. 4th the adult pair was still there but vegetation was thick and no young could be seen. The first brood was probably taken by crows and probably also the second. (Rec. and R.C.)

Golden Plover. 1952. Jan. 18th, Portholme, Huntingdon, 400/500. Nov. 1st, Oford, small flock. Nov. 8th, Yaxley, small flock. Nov. 10th, Bluntham Stauch, 5 flying S.W. In neither winter have they been seen in their usual haunts at Brampton, Hail Weston or Eynesbury. (J.A. and Rec.)

Black Tern. 1952. April 30th, Woolpack Farm pit, Hemmingford, 2 (W.G.) May 5th, Bluntham Stauch, 3. (J.A.)

Arctic/Common Tern. 1952. May 4th, Great Paxton 1 [Sandwich] (L.A.) May 25th, Lt. Paxton pit, 2 Common flew off N.E. May 28th, Hartford pit, 1 Common (Rec.) July 7th, Marsh Lane pit, Hemmingford, 1 Common (R.C.) Aug. 16th, Lt. Paxton pit, 1 Arctic flew off W., wind N.N.W. (Rec.) Aug. 19th, Fenstanton pit, 2 (C.B.C.) Sept. 9th, St. Neots, 2 flying N.E., wind N.E. (Rec.)

Blackheaded Gull. 1952. During May and June several pairs appeared to be trying to nest on flooded Bury Fen, Bluntham, but were frustrated by the water subsiding. (Rec.) In June a nest with eggs was found on the washes near Bluntham Stauch and egg shells found later were sent to the British Museum and identified as almost certainly of this species, a first county record. (J.A.) Summer movements near St. Neots are puzzling. Single birds were seen flying S. and S.W. on July 13th, 21st, 22nd, Aug. 6th, 9th, six on Sept. 28th, and 25 on Oct. 12th. Single birds were flying N. on July 2nd, 15th, 28th, Aug. 19th, 22nd. Daily fighting up the Ouse valley started in early December. (Rec.)

Common Gulls. 1952. At St. Neots there seemed to be a movement to the N. during late March and April, and to the E. in late September. (Rec.)

Herring Gull. 1952. Butler's Pit, Fletton, Feb. 2nd, one. Feb. 3rd, 15/20. Feb. 4th, 25. Feb. 16th, 5. (G.A.)

Lesser Blackbacked Gull. 1952. Butler's Pit, Fletton. Feb. 4th, two. (G.A.)

Gt. Blackbacked Gull. 1952. May 26th, Lt. Paxton, 1 flying N.N.E. (Rec.) Farret, Oct. 5th, two flying W.N.W. at 600 ft. Oct. 12th, two flying W. at 300 ft. (G.A.)

[*Kittiwake*] 1952. Butler's Pit, Fletton. Oct. 5th. A gull with a call like a Kittiwake flying E. at 800 ft. (G.A.)

Corncrake. 1952. Again it seems possible that breeding may have taken place. In June "craking" was heard at Lattenbury Hill, Hilton. (W.G.) and Lymage Farm, Perry (Rec.) On Aug. 14th, a young bird was killed flying into binder sails at Wittingham, St. Neots, and another was seen at the same place on Aug. 19th. (C.B.) On Aug. 23rd, one was killed on Gt. North Road at Norman Cross, and on Sept. 10th one was seen at Lt. Paxton. (Rec.)

Quail. 1952. Oct. 31st. Southoe. One caught by a dog and released. (Rec.)

BUTLERS PIT, FLETTON

1952	Mallard	Teal	Wigeon	Pintail	Shoveler	Pochard	Tufted Duck	Coot	
Jan. 12	240	50	Few	55	4	70	15	100	2 Goldeneye
" 19	180	40	—	25	—	115	15	150	
" 25	70	20	—	—	1	55	10	N.C.	
" 27	135	75	—	4	—	80	35	100	3 Goldeneye
Feb. 2	130	75	2	52	1	60	30	160	3
" 6	200	70	—	2	—	130	25	N.C.	2
" 12	160	60	—	30	2	360	35	100	4
" 16	200	55	25	45	—	300	35	95	3
" 20	105	25	—	35	4	85	15	120	3
" 28	30	10	—	15	—	25	35	40	2
Mar. 4	50	—	—	15	—	20	15	—	2
" 10	50	—	—	10 (last seen)	—	—	20	—	2
May 18	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	" (last seen)
June 7	1	—	—	—	—	—	1	—	
July 11	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	15	
Aug. 1	80	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
" 18	230	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
" 29	580	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	
Sept. 2	600	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	
" 8	400	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	
" 13	650	—	Few	—	—	—	1	—	
" 17	150	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	
" 23	20	—	—	—	—	—	—	10	
Oct. 7	110	15	—	2 (first seen)	—	—	1	20	
" 23	220	40	5	30	6	2	—	20	
" 28	110	15	—	10	6	—	2	15	
Nov. 8	170	1	—	2	—	30	2	15	
" 11	220	30	—	2 (last seen)	—	30	5	15	
" 15	190	10	—	—	—	10	3	N.C.	1 Goldeneye
Dec. 1	230	—	—	—	—	—	3	40	
" 4	400	—	—	—	—	—	3	100	
" 6	190	70	—	—	—	—	—	140	
" 31	200	—	—	—	—	—	—	160	

N.C.: Not counted.

(G.A.)

MIGRATION DATES, 1952.

<i>Yellow Wagtail.</i>	March 27th, Gt. Paxton. Sept. 30th, Brampton. (L.A.)
<i>Spotted Flycatcher.</i>	May 5th, St. Neots. (Rec.)
<i>Chiffchaff.</i>	March 23rd, Brampton. (R.C.)
<i>Willow Warbler.</i>	March 27th, Gt. Paxton (L.A.) None vocal until April 10th.
<i>Reed Warbler.</i>	April 15th, Gt. Paxton (L.A.)
<i>Sedge Warbler.</i>	April 18th, Huntingdon (R.C.)
<i>Blackcap.</i>	March 23rd, Houghton (R.K.)
<i>Whitethroat.</i>	April 11th, Huntingdon (R.C.)
<i>Lesser Whitethroat.</i>	April 25th, Gt. Paxton (L.A.)
<i>Nightingale.</i>	April 13th, Brampton Wood (R.C.) Glatton (L.A.C.M.)
<i>Swallow.</i>	April 2nd, Nov. 4th, Hilton (W.G.)
<i>House Martin.</i>	April 10th, Oct. 18th, St. Neots (C.B.)
<i>Sand Martin.</i>	April 11th, St. Neots (Rec.) Sept. 26th, Farcet (G.A.)
<i>Swift.</i>	April 30th, Hilton (W.G.) Sept. 22nd, Farcet (G.A.)
<i>Cuckoo.</i>	April 10th, Gt. Paxton (L.A.)
<i>Turtle Dove.</i>	April 28th, Sept. 10th, Gt. Paxton (L.A.)
<i>Woodcock.</i>	Nov. 7th, Gt. Staughton (Rec.)
<i>Golden Plover.</i>	Nov. 1st, Offord (Rec.)

C. F. TEBBUTT.

LEPIDOPTERA

Silver-washed Fritillary. One in an Alconbury garden. 26/7/52.

Comma. Very scarce 1952.

Marbled White. Seen at Eynesbury, an extension southwards of previous range.

Speckled Wood. Very scarce, perhaps disappearing.

Duke of Burgundy. One 30/6/52, locality unspecified. (84, *Entom.* 204).

Macroglossum stellatarum, L. Two seen at Alconbury.

Macrothylacia rubi, L. Plentiful at Wood Walton, 2/6/52.

Melanchnra persicariae, L. One at Alconbury, 6/7/52.

[*Bombycia viminalis, L.* Wrongly recorded in 1949 and 1951.]

Brachionyche sphinx, Hufn. At light, Alconbury, 10/11/52.

Plusia iota, L. One on Red Valerian, Alconbury, 29/6/52.

Abrostola tripartita, Hufn. Stibbington, 26/7/52. (Gilbert). Several Alconbury.

Ectypa glyphica, L. Brooklands Wood. Abbots Ripton, 17/5/52.

Ephyra annulata, Schulze. Brooklands Wood, Abbots Ripton, 17/5/52.

Triphosa dubitata, L. Alconbury, 19/7/52.

Ecliptopera silaceata, Schiff. Monks Wood and Hermintage Wood, singly.

Cidaria fulvata, Forst. Monks Wood, 28/6/52.

[*Lampropteryx suffumata, Schiff.* Wrongly recorded, 1950.]

J. E. H. BLACKIE.

THE LEPIDOPTERA OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Except for the lists in the *Victoria County History* no *Flora*, no *Birds* and no *Lepidoptera* of Huntingdonshire has ever been published. It is clearly the duty of our Society to remedy this state of affairs, and I hope to publish yearly in the Report notes on the Lepidoptera in the desire to attract information from as many helpers as possible. I begin with the Lycaenidae (Blues, Coppers and Hairstreaks) since this family is one of the most interesting from the county point of view.

A. LYCAENINAE.

Cupido minimus. Fuesse. (Small Blue). T

county by Tutt on the authority of Norris, by Newman for Monks Wood and by the Rev. E. H. Raynor for Brampton. The food-plant (*Anthyllis vulneraria*) is exceedingly scarce and there are no suitable habitats. I consider these records to be extremely doubtful, and, in absence of confirmation would reject them.

Plebejus argus, L. (= aegon) (Silver-studded Blue). Tutt records this for St. Ives (*teste* Bond). Here again there must be doubt. Chalk down and heather moors are not to be found in Hunts., though some of the food plants are common enough. The name *Argus* was used by some older writers for *P. icarus* and it is possible that there has been confusion. I think the records are just possibly true, but confirmation would be most desirable.

Aricia agestis agestis. Schiff. (= medon) (Brown Argus). There is no doubt of this butterfly's occurring in the county. I have taken it myself singly at Alconbury, Conington, Monks Wood and St. Ives. Dr. Newton has found it in several places between Sawtry and Hamerton, and Mr. Leeds

and Mr. Dickinson report it from Wood Walton. The puzzle is the food-plant. The only authenticated food-plant for the Southern sub-species is *Helianthemum* which hardly occurs in the county and is certainly totally absent at all the localities named. *Erodium*, on which the Northern sub-species feeds is equally rare. There must be another unrecorded food-plant (possibly one of the *Geraniaceae*) and it is hoped that someone will soon discover what this is.

Polyommatus icarus, Rott. (= alexis) (Common Blue). This was undoubtedly abundant in the county until recently but it is certainly not common now. Ploughing up of waste land and pasture and latterly, I suspect, the use of chemical weed-killers, have greatly reduced its numbers. It is unlikely to become a rarity but its hold should be watched and reported on all over the county.

Lysandra coridon, Poda. (Chalkhill Blue). Tutt gives 'Huntingdon' (teste Curtis). This was probably a stray specimen like the one seen at Wood Walton in 1950.

Lysandra bellargus. Rott (= thetis) (Adonis Blue). Tutt gives 'St. Ives District' on the authority of Mr. Norris. This is a fantastic statement. The food plant (*Hippocrepis comosa*) does not occur, there is no suitable habitat and the most northerly point at which the species has been authentically recorded is nearly 20 miles away. The record should be rejected.

Maculinea arion, L. (Large Blue). This fine butterfly was once found within our boundaries at Stilton, near Yaxley, in Monks Wood and near Brington, and close by in Barnwell Wold, Northants. It is now restricted to Gloucestershire, Cornwall, the Hebrides and possibly to one or two other places. The double requirement of *Thymus serpyllum* and of the ants *Myrmica scabrinodis* or *M. laevinodis* cannot now be supplied in Hunts. The exact sites of the Hunts. localities would be interesting to know. They were probably exceedingly restricted.

Celastrina argiolus, L. (Holly Blue). My impression is that this is not very common. Holly, the most general food, is a rare native plant in Hunts., but *Rhamnus* is common.

Lycaena phlaeas, L. (Small Copper). This more or less common though fluctuating butterfly may be adversely affected by chemical weed killers.

Lycaena dispar dispar, Haw (British Large Copper). The localities were Whittlesey, Yaxley, Trundle and Holme. Accounts of the discovery and total extinction of this magnificent insect may be found in *British Lepidoptera*, Vol. VIII, by J. W. Tutt and in *Our Lost Butterflies and Moths* by R. F. Bretherton (*Entomologists' Gazette*, Vol. 2, No. 4).

Lycaena dispar batavus, Oberth (Dutch Large Copper). In 1927 this sub-species, which very closely resembles the British sub-species, was introduced in the reserve at Wood Walton and, under close protection, survives.

Heodes virgaureae, L. (Scarce Copper). It is questionable whether this species ever occurred in England. It is supposed to have been found in the Huntingdonshire Fens during the 18th century.

B. THECLINAE.

Callophrys rubi, L. (Green Hairstreak). Usually the commonest Hairstreak, but, though present in Monks Wood, Upton Wood, Aversley Wood and at Somersham, it seems to be very scarce in the county. Information needed.

Thecla betulae, L. (Brown Hairstreak). Recorded from Monks Wood, Wood Walton and Salome Wood. The *imago* is rarely seen even when the *larva* is common. Probably scarcer than formerly. Information needed.

Thecla quercus, L. (Purple Hairstreak). Recorded from Monks Wood, Calpher Wood, Brampton Wood and Buckden, but apparently not common. Information needed.

Strymonidia w-album. Knoch (White-letter Hairstreak). Recorded from Monks Wood, Godmanchester, Aversley Wood, Ellington Thorpe and Somersham. Always a rather uncertain and fluctuating species.

Strymonidia pruni, L. (Black Hairstreak). *The* Huntingdonshire butterfly. It was discovered to be British by the capture of specimens in Monks Wood in 1823, though it was not until 1834 that the captures were correctly identified. It still survives in Monks Wood and has been recorded from Warboys Wood, Wistow Wood, Hamerton Grove, Orton Wood and from St. Ives. A full account of its distribution is to be found in *The Entomologist* for Nov., 1950. (The distribution of *Strymonidia pruni*, L. by J. E. H. Blackie).

(TO BE CONTINUED)

REFERENCE: Tutt. *British Lepidoptera*, Vols. VIII—XI (1905-14).

J. E. H. BLACKIE.

FLORA

The nomenclature in this paper follows the "Flora of the British Isles" by Clapham, Tutin and Warburg (Cambridge University Press), 1952.

Records, which are apparently new to the County, are indicated by *. These include about five natives.

Where several records have been received from the same contributor initials have been used for the sake of economy as follows: L. W. Angell (A), Mr. and Mrs. Blackie (B), Cambridge Nat. Hist. Soc. (C.N.S.), D. A. Davies (D), J. G. Dony (J.G.D.), H. B. Souter (H.B.S.), P. D. Sell (P.D.S.), and C. F. Tebbutt (T.)

Our excursion to Helpston, Northants. on July 12th, produced a number of uncommon woodland species. Among those seen in Simons Wood were: *Heracleum sphondylium* var. *angustifolium* (Narrow-leaved Hogweed), the rare pink-flowered *Prunella vulgaris* (Self-heal), *Asperula odorata* (Sweet Woodruff), *Galeobdolon*

luteum (Yellow Archangel), *Poa nemoralis* (Wood Poa), and *Spiraea ulmaria* var. *denudata* (Smooth-leaved Meadow-sweet). Near by, in a grass field, *Leontodon leysseri* (Hairy Hawkbit) was very abundant.

- 1/1 *Clematis vitalba* L. Old Man's Beard. Warboys (R. Forster).
 2/1 *Thalictrum flavum* L. Common Meadow Rue. Offord Darcy (A.)
 6/9 *Ranunculus arvensis* L. Corn Crowfoot. Very common in wheat fields on heavy soil, Yaxley, etc. (H. Toynton).
 Low Shoe Weed and Double Back.
 20/1 *Nymphaea alba* L. White Water-lily. Ouse, St. Neots and Gt. Paxton (T.)
 21/5 *Papaver argemone* L. Rough Long-headed Poppy. Connington (J.G.D.)
 25/1 *Chelidonium majus* L. Greater Celandine. Roadside, Eynsbury Hardwick, 14/5/39 (T.) Quarry, on rubbish from Abbotsby Churchyard wall (T.) Holme (F. Huetson).
 54/13 *Brassica nigra* L. Koch. Black Mustard. Brickyards, Fletton, 9/7.
 85/3 *Reseda luteola* L. Dyer's Rocket. Little Paxton gravel pits. (T.)
 92/3 *Dianthus armeria* L. Deptford Pink. Connington, 1943 (T.)
 101/1 *Myosoton aquaticum* L. Moench. Water Chickweed. Common, lagoons, St. Neots, 11/8/46 (T.)
 *101/3(2) *Stellaria apetala* Ucria. Lesser Chickweed. Wall top, Waternewton village, 1/3.
 101/7 *Stellaria graminea* L. Lesser Stitchwort. Orton Hall (Exc.)
 102/6 *Arenaria leptoclados* (Rchb.) Guss. Lesser Thyme-leaved Sandwort. Orton Hall (Exc.)
 103/7b *Sagina filicaulis* Jord. Kimbolton Rly. Station, 2/6 (J.G.D. and E. Milne-Redhead).
 127/4 *Geranium pratense* L. Meadow Cranesbill. White-flowered form Orton Hall (Exc.) ?Planted.
 128/3 *Erodium cicutarium* L. Orton Hall (Exc.)
 133/3 *Impatiens parviflora* DC. Small Balsam. Weed in a yard, Hilton (W. T. K. Garnett). Naturalised Orton Hall (Exc.)
 137/1 *Euonymus europaeus* L. Spindle-tree. Hedgerows, Folksworth.
 141 *Aesculus carnea* Hayne. Red Horse-chestnut. Planted near Monks Wood, etc.
 153/4b *Medicago hispida* Gaertn var. *denticulata* (Willd.) Toothed Medick. St. Neots sidings, 22/8/50 (J.G.D.)

- 153/26 *Medicago praecox* DC. St. Neots rly. sidings, 22/8/50 (J.G.D.)
 Offord rly. sidings, 30/9/50 (J.G.D., H.B.S. & D.)
 *185 *Rubus rhodanthus* W. Watson. Holme Fen (J. E. Woodhead).
 *185/149f *Rubus tuberculatus* (Bab.) Warboys Wood (J. E. Woodhead).
 185/151c *Rubus conjugens* (Bab.) W. Watson. (det. W. G. R. Watson).
 Common along Nene side, Stibbington.
 194/6 *Rosa canina* L. var. *fraxinoides* H. Br. (det. R. Melville). Wennington Wood, 1951 (J.G.D.)
 196/2 *Crataegus oxyacanthoides* Thuill. Midland Hawthorn. Wood, Folksworth.
 *222/2 *Clarkia elegans* Dougl. (det. Miss Hillcoat). Roadway to Sutton Ford, Stibbington, 9/7/49. Probably introduced with rubble to build up roadway. Did not persist.
 225/1 *Circaea lutetiana* L. Common Enchanter's Nightshade. Wood, Folksworth.
 243/1 *Conium maculatum* L. Hemlock. Offord Darcy (A.) Bluntisham Heath, June, 1951 (Colne School children). Fenstanton (P.D.S.) Monks Wood (J.G.D.) Holme Fen (C.N.S.) Roadsides and brick yards, Fletton. Stibbington.
 283/4 *Torilis arvensis* (Huds.) Link. Spreading Hedge-parsley. St. Ives, 1949 (J.G.D.)
 296/6 *Galium uliginosum* L. Fen Bedstraw. Holme Fen (C.N.S.)
 *296/14 *Galium cruciata* L. Scop. Crosswort. In Hunts. near Fenstanton, 15/6 (B.) This plant is omitted from the V.C.H., hence this is our first localized record.
 308/4 *Succisa pratensis* Moench. Devil's-bit Scabious. Orton Hall (Exc.)
 320/2 *Erigeron acris* L. Blue Fleabane. Orton Hall (Exc.)
 320/3 *Erigeron canadensis* L. Canadian Fleabane. Orton Hall (Exc.)
 370/1 *Chrysanthemum segetum* L. Corn Marigold. Little Paxton gravel pit, 1944, etc. (T.)
 377/1 *Tanacetum vulgare* L. Tansy. Orton Hall (Exc.) ?Planted.
 379/1 *Tussilago farfara* L. Local name (Yaxley, etc.): Foalsfoot.
 415/1 *Picris echioides* L. Bristly Ox-Tongue. Little Paxton gravel pits, July, 1944 (T.) Connington Castle grounds, 29/7. Orton Hall (Exc.)
 *419 *Hieracium bladonii* Pugsl. (det. P.D.S.) Orton Hall (Exc.) ?Introduced.
 422/1 *Leontodon hispidus* L. Rough Hawkbit. Meadows, etc., Stibbington. Connington Castle grounds. Churchyard, Leighton Bromswold, 29/7. Orton Hall (Exc.)

- 422/3 *Leontodon leysseri* (Wallr.) Beck. Hairy Hawkbit. Orton Hall (Exc.)
- 425/2 *Lactuca serriola* L. Prickly Lettuce. Roadside, Woodston, 13/9.
- 427/1 *Sonchus palustris* L. Marsh Sow-Thistle. Overgrown riverside land, Ramsey St. Mary's (L. A. Richardson).
- 427/3 *Sonchus asper* Hill var. *glandulosus* (Coss.) Druce. (det. S. M. Walters). Riverside, Stibbington, 12/6. 5 ft. high.
- 460/1 *Primula elatior* L. Schreb. Oxlip. Leycourt (H. & D. Meyer).
- 460/1x3 *Primula elatior* L. Schreb. x. *veris* L. ditto.
- 460/3 *Primula veris* L. Cowslip. New Close Cover, Elton.
- 467/2 *Anagallis arvensis* L. Scarlet Pimpernel. Monks Wood (J.G.D.) Waresley (P.D.S.) Fields and gardens, Stibbington.
- 477/1 *Blackstonia perfoliata* L. Huds. Yellow-wort. Connington, 1949 (J.G.D.)
- 506/4 *Myosotis caespitosa* K.F. Schutz. (Water Forget-me-not). Hartford, 1949 (J.G.D.)
- 506/9 *Myosotis hispida* Schlecht. Early Forget-me-not. Fenstanton Pits, 1951 (J.G.D.)
- 521/1 *Atropa belladonna* L. Deadly Nightshade. Timber yard, St. Neots (T.) A garden weed, Huntingdon (R. Connan and Miss P. E. Goodliffe). Orton Hall (Exc.). Hedgerow, Woodston (R. Forster).
- 527/3 *Verbascum thapsus* L. Aaron's Rod. Orton Hall (Exc.)
- 527/8 *Verbascum nigrum* L. forma *albiflorum*. A white-flowered Dark Mullein. Garden weed, Stibbington, July (F. H. Clarke).
- 532/26 *Cymbalaria muralis* Baumg. Ivy-leaved Toadflax. Riverside walls, St. Neots (T.) Churchyard walls, Leighton Bromswold, 29/7. Orton Hall (Exc.)
- 534/1 *Antirrhinum majus* L. Snapdragon. Nene dredgings, Stibbington, 1948. Did not persist.
- 556/1 *Verbena officinalis* L. Vervain. Roadside, Chesterton, 13/9.
- 560/1 *Origanum vulgare* L. Marjoram. Orton Hall (Exc.) ?Planted. More records of this rare Hunts. plant would be most welcome.
- 563/1 *Clinopodium vulgare* L. Wild Basil. Orton Hall (Exc.)
- 600/1 *Chenopodium rubrum* L. Red Goosefoot. Connington Castle grounds, 29/7.
- 615/10 *Polygonum mite* Schrank. Earith gravel pits, 1951 (J.G.D.)
- 618/11 *Rumex pulcher* L. Fiddle Dock. Common waste places, Stibbington.

- 618/13 *Rumex maritimus* L. Golden Dock. Holme Fen; Woodwalton Fen (J.G.D.)
- 618/16 *Rumex acetosella* L. Sheep's Sorrel. Kimbolton Rly. Station [v.c. 30] 2/6. (J.G.D. and E. Milne-Redhead).
- 623/1 *Daphne laureola* L. Spurge Laurel. Hedgerow, Perry, 29/12 (T.) Agden Wood (G. V. Staughton). Hedgerow nr. Grafham Station on road to Ellington, 1951 (B.)
- 628/8 *Euphorbia amygdaloides* L. Wood Spurge. Buckden Woods, 1949 (J.G.D.)
- 628/16 *Euphorbia lathyris* L. Caper Spurge. St. Ives, 1949 (J.G.D.)
- 638/1 *Parietaria diffusa* Mert. & Koch. Pellitory-of-the-Wall. Church wall, Leighton Bromswold, 29/7.
- *639/1 *Helxine soleirolii* Req. Mind-your-own-business. Lawn week nr. Wansford Post Office (E. Kingston).
- 644/1 *Carpinus betulus* L. Hornbeam. Wistow, 1949 (J.G.D.) Used to grow at Alwalton Lynch.
- *707/1 *Ornithogalum pyrenaicum* L. Bath Asparagus. About six plants near High Wood, Hail Weston, 2/6 (J.G.D.) ?Native.
- 724/1 *Acorus calamus* L. Sweet Flag. River. Ouse, Offord Darcy (T.) St. Neots, 1949 (J.G.D.)
- 737/12 *Potamogeton x zizii* Roth. Connington, 1949 (J.G.D.)
- 737/17 *Potamogeton crispus* L. Curled Pondweed. Nr. Hemingford, 1949 (J.G.D.)
- 737/28 *Potamogeton pectinatus* L. (det. J. E. Dandy). Earith gravel pits, 1951 (J.G.D.)
- 756/3 *Setaria glauca* Beauv. Glaucous Brittle-grass. Huntingdon rly. sidings, 14/8/50 (J.G.D.)
- 835/1 *Hordeum secalinum* Schreb. Meadow Barley. Riverside, Stibbington, 15/6.
- 844/1 *Equisetum telmateia* Ehrh. Great Horsetail. Very common, Norman Cross clay pits (D. Cluer).
- 866/1 *Ophioglossum vulgatum* L. Ssp. *vulgatum* E.F. Warburg. Adder's Tongue. Offord Darcy (A.)

Fungi

Polyporus frondosus Fr. (det. E. J. Corner). On the base of a bole of *Castanea sativa*, Orton Hall (Exc.)

JOHN L. GILBERT.

THE UPPER LIAS NEAR STIBBINGTON HALL,

N.G.R. 087988

During December, 1937, a boring for a well to wash gravel was made by Messrs. L. C. Gilbert & Co., for Wansford Quarries Ltd., in a meadow owned by Mr. J. Patston (O.S. 80), north-west of Stibbington Hall. The locality is nearly 50 feet above main sea level. A hole was dug to about a depth of 7 feet and boring was then carried out with an ordinary auger. All the liassic fossils collected were from slabs of limestone covered with red sandy clay, which also contained bored and scratched nodules. These slabs were not very thick, probably about 3 inches and belonged to the Jurensis Zone. However, the well was never constructed and the hole later filled in.

Section		
About 6 feet	Sandy soil Gravel and pebbles Yellowish clay	Post Glacial Deposit
About 6 ins.	Ruddy limestone	Lower Lincs. Limestone
About 3 ins.	Red sandy clay and limestone	Jurensis Zone ?Variabilis Subzone
	Blue clay	

Fauna of the Lower Lincs. Limestone:—

Modiolus (Inoperna) plicatus J. Sow.

Osteomya dilata (Phillips).

Fauna of the Upper Lias:—

Protocardia ferruginea Rollier.

?*Pronoella* probably nov. sp.

Lima (Plagiostoma) spp. Two spp.

**Myoconcha* sp. cf. *elongata* M. & L.

Ceratomya concentrica (J. Sow.)

**Gressyla donaciiformis* (Phillips).

**Lucina bellona* d'Orb.

**Lopecten* sp. cf. *adjectus* (Phillips).

Cucullaea sp. cf. *elegans* Roemer.

Grammotodon chapuisi (Arkell).

Parallelodon liasinus (Roemer).

Modiolus (Inoperna) plicatus J. Sow.

Astarte sp.

Isocyprina sp.

Flabellirhynchia (or *Granulirhynchia*) probably nov. sp.

Rhynchonellid probably nov. sp.

?*Euidothyris* sp.

?*Loboidothyris* probably nov. sp.

Lobothyris sp. probably *haresfieldensis* (Dav.)

Cf. *Arenicolites* sp.

Practically nothing has been written about the palaeontology of the Upper Lias in Huntingdonshire. The late Mr. Beeby Thompson made a study of it in Northants. and a * denotes those species recorded by him from the Jurensis Zone there. Quite a number of the fossils are probably new species, but one cannot be certain as no monographs dealing with lamellibranchs, etc., have been published on British fossils of this age.

Commenting about the *Arenicolites* sp. Dr. T. M. Harris states: "These have much in common with the "Arenicolites" burrows described from the Dogger at Whitby by Kendall, I think. *Arenicola*, the lug-worm, is characteristic of Estuarine mud flats and *Arenicolites* was supposed to indicate these marine conditions."

As the Inferior Oolite is represented here by the Lower Lincs. Limestone, it appears from the above section that the Northamptonshire Ironstone and Lower Estuarine Series are cut out by non-sequence. The red sandy clay Mr. R. V. Melville considers to be merely the weathered and oxidized skin of the Upper Lias formed during the non-sequence between the Upper Lias and the Inferior Oolite. This non-sequence would probably be characterized by mud flats, hence the *Arenicolites* borrows. Like those of the Northants. beds a number of the lamellibranchs are common species of the Lower Oolites and not known in the normal Upper Lias. This shows that though these species were living in Upper Lias times the environment was oolitic, resembling the sort of rock where one is accustomed to finding them.

Thanks are due to Dr. L. R. Cox for helping me with the identification of the lamellibranchs (bivalve shells), to Dr. Helen M. Muir-Wood for examining the brachiopods (lamp-shells) and to Mr. C. P. Castell for general information. I am also grateful to Mr. R. V. Melville for both palaeontological, as well as stratigraphical, help.

JOHN L. GILBERT.

The British Trust for Ornithology

2 KING EDWARD STREET, OXFORD

The aim of the British Trust of Ornithology is the encouragement of individual field research and of co-operative investigations where these are suitable for any particular problem. *Individual research* is encouraged in three ways—by giving members publicity in the Trust's bulletins for approved requests for information on their own line of research, by holding courses in bird biology at certain of the Field Centres of the C.P.F.S., and by giving grants towards the cost of special activities when approved by the Scientific Advisory Committee. Members of the Trust can also take part in the Nest Records Scheme and population studies, such as the census of heronries and of great crested grebes.

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