

# HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

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**Referees:**

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*Birds:* C. F. TEBBUTT, The Ferns, Eynesbury, St. Neots.

*Macro-lepidoptera:* J. E. H. BLACKIE.

*Aphides:* MISS B. HAMLYN, Everton Vicarage, Sandy.

*Coleoptera:* REV. C. E. TOTTENHAM, Zoology School, Cambridge.

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## Annual Report for 1949

A great deal of information has been sent in by members and others, for this second Annual Report. It has not been possible to publish all of it because of the expense of printing, but it has all been carefully filed for reference and later use. The following members have sent in substantial lists: Miss E. G. M. Coles (Flora), R. Connon (Birds), Dr. J. G. Dony (Flora), J. L. Gilbert (Flora, etc.), H. A. Leeds (Lepidoptera), E. T. Lees (Birds), L. A. C. Macnab (Birds), Mrs. Bevington (Birds), the Rev. R. F. McNeile (an extensive list of Somersham Flora). Records have also been received from: P. J. Manning, Lady De Ramsey and members of the Committee.

The Committee would like to impress upon all members the desirability of increasing membership. This report costs about fifteen shillings a page to print and could be very much larger if we had more members. Our present membership is 54, and we should like to raise it to 75 during the coming year.

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## MAMMALS

*Badger*: During the early part of the year three badgers were most unfortunately caught in vermin traps in Midloe Wood (C.F.T.) One reported at Stibbington (J.L.G.)

*Deer*: A large deer (? Fallow) has twice been seen in Midloe Wood (C.F.T.) Deer are most frequently seen when put up by hounds and it would be interesting if members who hunt would report any that are seen. Exotic deer sometimes escape from Woburn and might find their way into the county.

*Red Squirrel*: Monks Wood and Hermitage Wood in 1948 (P.A.V.B.)

*Grey Squirrel*: Monks Wood, 1948 (P.A.V.B.) Stibbington (J.L.G.)

*Otter*: Heard at Stibbington (J.L.G.)

## BIRDS

The last comprehensive account of Huntingdonshire birds was that written by Rev. H. Peake for the Victoria County History (Part 3) published in 1926. The necessity for economy of space has prevented comparisons with the above being made in the present brief record, but anyone sufficiently interested to compare the two will at once see that great changes have occurred in the status of some birds, and that these are chiefly attributable to the late War.

The construction of numerous airfields caused the opening of a chain of gravel pits along the whole length of the Ouse valley. Some of these were left as large lakes, together with shallows and islands, soon thickly vegetated with willows and other marsh plants. The drive for food production was responsible for the drainage of many water-logged fields, especially water meadows, and on some stretches of the river the water level was permanently lowered.

As soon as cover grew up, the gravel pits were colonised by such birds as Sedge Warbler, Reed Bunting, Kingfisher, Water Rail, Moorhen and Coot; and Ducks that had rarely, if ever, nested in the county before, now do so regularly and include Common Pochard, Tufted Duck and Shoveller, while breeding Mallards have increased greatly. Gadwall are often seen and may have bred, and Garganey are regular spring visitors. The Great Crested Grebe can now be seen on all suitable sized pits.

The Ouse valley has perhaps always been on a migration route for waders and terns, but until the gravel pits appeared there was

little inducement for them to linger and few were seen. Now the watcher with an eye to likely dates can expect to record each year Black and Arctic or Common Terns, Common Sandpipers, Green Sandpipers, Greenshank, Dunlin and Ring Plover.

The improved drainage of land has had the opposite effect to that of the gravel digging, and the result has been a marked decrease in the numbers of breeding Snipe, Redshank and Lapwing.

Notable records appearing below are the breeding of the Whinchat, Redstart and Woodcock, and probable breeding of the Wryneck, the apparent extinction of the Nightjar, and the remarkable number of Pintail at Fletton during the last two winters. The Wood Sandpiper is new to the county.

Unfortunately few members are sending in records. Those received are distinguished by initials: John Gilbert (J.G.), E. T. Lees (E.T.L.), Cambridge Bird Club Report, 1948 (C.B.C.), L. A. C. MacNab (L.A.C.M.), Mr. and Mrs. J. E. H. Blackie (B.), Roger Connan (R.C.), Mrs. Bevington (D.B.) Other records are those of your Recorder, as are opinion as to status. It is hoped many more will come in for 1950.

*Hooded Crow*. Appears to become less common. Great Paxton, March 8th, 1947, one (D.B.) Great Gransden, Feb. 15th, 1949, one flying west.

*Rook*. All Hunts rookeries were counted in April, 1944, for the National Rook Census. The result was 8,795 nests, a density of 24 to the square mile. Since then it is probable that an increase has taken place. See sample counts below.

	1944	1949
Diddington Park	38 nests.	84 (plus a new site with 22).
St. Neots	204 nests.	320
Little Paxton	20 nests.	25 (plus a new site with 24).

In one rookery, breeding was 16 days earlier in 1949 than the average of the last 20 years. (E.T.L.)

*Maggie*. Great increase since 1939, and, through lack of high hedges, nests commonly in woods. During 1946 (Feb. 24th), 1947 (Jan. 18th), and 1948 (Jan.) numbers up to 50 observed coming, mostly in pairs, at dusk to grove of hawthorns in Hail Weston Wood, and taking part in ceremonial dances. (See Handbook British Birds).

*Hawfinch*. Very few records. One Kimbolton, June, 1947.

*British Goldfinch*. Continues to increase. Commonly nests in urban gardens. Nest in Lime, Eynesbury Green, 1949.

*British Bullfinch*. Decreasing.

*Corn Bunting*. Curiously local at nesting time. Common, Hilton to Woolpack, Fenstanton; Brampton Hut to Buckden; Buckden to Southoe, 1949; as evidenced by males on telegraph wires.

*Reed Bunting.* Colonized Little Paxton and Fenstanton gravel pits directly cover was thick enough.

*Tree Sparrow.* Status unknown, probably uncommon. Nesting Alconbury Weston Aug. 16th, 1949, in hole in ash tree.

*Yellow Wagtail.* Breeds near the new gravel pits. Flocks 20—30 Little Paxton pits August and September, 1949, but gone by October.

*Grey Wagtail.* A regular winter and late summer visitor. Fenstanton, one Jan. 28th, Jan. 29th, Feb. 2nd, 1947. (E.T.L.) Eynesbury, one, Feb. 20th, 1949. Little Paxton, one, July 28th, and several August 26th, 1949.

*Pied Wagtail.* Little Paxton gravel pit, July 14th, 1949. 50—60, mostly young.

*British Nuthatch.* Very local. Broods reared Huntingdon, Kimbolton and near Buckworth Wood, 1949 (E.T.L.) One, Weald, St. Neots, July 25th, 1949.

*Blue Tit.* Milk bottles attacked, St. Neots, Little Paxton, Ellington, 1949. Paper book covers in bedroom torn to strips, Eynesbury, Oct. 17th, 1949.

*Willow Tit.* [Two probable family parties Holme Fen, June 6th, 1948 (C.B.C.)]

*Long-Tailed Tit.* Great increase since 1947. Eynesbury, Oct. 20th, 1948, flock 26. Nest river bank Little Paxton, April, 1949.

*Waxwing.* Two, Caxton Gibbet, Feb. 25th, 1949, last seen flying towards nearby Hunts. boundary.

*British Goldcrest.* Fairly common in West Hunts., and breeds Kimbolton and Monks Wood (B.) Glatton, Feb., 1949, one. (L.A.C.M.)

*Firecrest.* Glatton, Feb., 1949, one caught by cat. (L.A.C.M.)

*Chiffchaff.* Not common as breeding species, but heard in spring and autumn passage. Singing St. Neots, Sept. 15th, 1949.

*Sedge Warbler.* Has quickly colonized gravel pits where there is sufficient cover.

*Lesser Whitethroat.* Status uncertain. Stibbington, 1949, one pair. (J.G.)

*Song Thrush.* Not yet returned to pre-1947 status. May 20th, 1949, Buckden, nest containing 4 eggs and cuckoo's egg. (D. A. Davies).

*Blackbird.* Fully recovered pre-1947 numbers. Flock 17 at Little Paxton, October 30th, 1948.

*Wheatear.* Single birds or small flocks pass in Spring and Autumn. Alconbury, April 4th, 1946, two. Great Paxton, Sept. 1st, 1947, three. Bluntisham, Sept. 6th, 1947, one.

*Whinchat.* Local. Two pairs apparently breeding near Fletton Brick Pits May 17th, 1947. In 1949, five young reared near Buckden; nest with two eggs destroyed by cattle at Diddington; single bird seen between Hartford and Houghton, May 16th. (E.T.L.)

*Redstart.* Only known at Kimbolton. 1949, two nests in gardens there. One, in nest box within few yards of house and street, reared three young from six eggs.

*Swallow.* Still shows steady decrease.

*House Martin.* Numbers appear to remain constant.

*Sand Martin.* Undoubted increase owing to provision of suitable nesting sites in the gravel pits.

*Swift.* Appear to be increasing. Many nest in ventilators of Council Houses at St. Neots. Most local birds leave August 7th to 9th. Late record one Sept. 9th, 1948, Little Paxton. Migration watched May 8th, 1949, at Little Paxton in light N.E. wind. Birds continually arriving, circling gravel pit for 5—10 minutes and then climbing high and making off N.E.

*Nightjar.* Probably has ceased to breed in last few years. Bred regularly Orton pre-1920, Foxholes Wood, St. Neots, up to about 1939; Great Staughton up to about 1946. Grey squirrels may be to blame.

*Kingfisher.* Recovered numbers since 1947. Frequents most gravel pits containing fish, hovering before diving. The great chasing and vocal activity noticed over many years in Hen Brook, St. Neots, in October and November, may represent winter territory defence.

*Green Woodpecker.* Steadily recovering from near extermination in 1947.

*Wryneck.* Very local. Hemingford Park, one April 18th, and pair May 2nd, 1949. Single bird Holywell, end May, 1949. (E.T.L.)

*Little Owl.* Has undoubtedly decreased in last 20 years.

*White-breasted Barn Owl.* Notable increase in last ten years in S. Hunts.

*Hobby.* No record of breeding in 1949 in its usual haunt.

*Kestrel.* Undoubtedly a great increase since 1939.

*Common Buzzard.* In spite of persecution this fine bird is trying to re-establish itself in the east of England as it has done successfully in the west. One seen near Kimbolton, mid-October, 1947; and another remained in Great Staughton and Kimbolton district during August and September, 1949.

*Common Heron.* There are now three heronries in the county, at Priory Park, St. Neots, Hinchingsbrooke, Hemingford Park (and neighbourhood), and irregular nesting in Needingworth Fen. A count of nests is taken each year for the Sample Census of Heronries.

	1946	1947	1948	1949
St. Neots Priory Park (established from Eaton Socon, 1940) ... ..	13/14	5/6	8	5
Hemingford Park (and neighbourhood) ...	12	3	7	8
Hinchingsbrooke (established 1944) ...	2	5	3	5
Needingworth Fen ... ..	1/2	0	0	1

*Bittern.* An occasional winter visitor. One, St. Neots Common osier beds, Jan. 21st, 1946. Hartford gravel pit [one, winter, 1948.]

*Mallard.* The gravel and brick pits have added spectacularly to the numbers of residents and winter visitors, as no bird responds more quickly to protection. The greatest concentrations occur from August to about Christmas, when numbers up to 250 may be seen on Butler's Pit, Fletton, or the undisturbed gravel pits near St. Neots and St. Ives. In the New Year, numbers fall to the breeding pairs that can be accommodated.

*Gadwall.* Undoubtedly increasing. 1948, Butler's Pit, Fletton, Jan. 20th, one duck (shot); June 4th, four drakes. Lenton's Pit, Brampton, June 4th, one drake. 1949, Little Paxton Pit, Oct. 9th, to Dec. 18th, two pairs.

*Teal.* No definite breeding record, but large numbers visit brick and gravel pit sanctuaries, between November 1st and March 1st. Outside these dates only odd pairs are seen, some of which remain through the summer.

*Garganey.* A regular spring passage migrant, usually staying a few days. 1948, Little Paxton Pit, April 30th to May 2nd, one drake. Lenton's Pit, Brampton, May 1st, a pair. 1949, Little Paxton Pit, April 17th, a pair.

*Wigeon.* When floods are out in the Ouse valley great numbers flight daily from the Wash. Large pits, as at Fletton, hold many throughout the winter. A remarkable migratory flock of approximately 2,000 settled on Hartford gravel pit on Feb. 25th, 1948. 1948, Butler's Pit, Fletton, held 25; on Oct. 3rd; and 100, Nov. 6th. 1949, Jan. 10th, 100; Feb. 23rd to March 6th, 200; March 27th, 70; October 23rd, 60; Dec. 31st, 75. (L.A.C.M. and Recorder).

*Pintail.* Usually rare, but the years 1948 and 1949 were remarkable for the large numbers on Butler's Pit, Fletton. 1948—Jan. 17th, 1—2; Jan. 20th, 6—7 (three drakes shot); Jan. 25th, 2 pairs; Feb. 6th, 25—30. 1949—Jan. 10th, a few; Jan. 14th and 16th, nine; Jan. 31st, 12; Feb. 23rd, 290; March 6th, 100; March 27th, 50; April 12th, 12; April 25th, 2 pairs; June 8th, 11. (L.A.C.M. and Recorder). Fenstanton Pit, two, Dec. 17th, 1948. (C.B.C.) Unfortunately it was not possible to determine if breeding took place, and none have been seen in the Autumn of 1949.

*Shoveler.* Pairs appear on nearly all the pits in March or April and some undoubtedly stay to nest. They are seen more rarely in autumn and winter. Butler's Pit, Fletton, 1948: Dec. 10th, several. 1949: Jan. 16th, 12; Feb. 23rd, 50; May 7th, 5 drakes; Aug. 16th and Sept. 1st, one young. Fenstanton Pit, 1949: March 5th, nine; March 26th, seven pairs (one pair displaying); April 18th, two drakes; May 5th, one drake.

*Common Pochard.* Flights up the river with Wigeon in large numbers in flood time. Have successfully colonized the gravel and brick pits as a nesting species. Some can be seen there at all times of the year, and large numbers in the early spring. Butler's Pit, Fletton, 1948: Feb. 6th, 50; March 9th, 250. 1949: Jan. 16th, 74; Feb. 23rd, 150; March 6th, 350; March 27th, 100; Dec. 1st, 150. Fenstanton Pit, March 5th, 135. In 1948 broods were seen at Fenstanton and Hemingford Grey Pits (six and three young). In 1949 young were seen at Fletton Pit, while at Fenstanton Pit there were at least five broods of 6, 6, 5, 7 and 5/6 young. (L.A.C.M. and Recorder).

*Tufted Duck.* Like the Pochard can be seen on the pits at all times of the year, but breeding does not appear to be so successful. Large flocks appear early in Spring. Butler's Pit, Fletton, 1949: Feb. 23rd, 100; March 6th, 250; March 27th, 50; April 6th, six; Oct. 23rd, 60; Dec. 1st, 50. (L.A.C.M.) A duck with 8/9 young was seen at Inns Pit, Hemingford Grey, July 20th, 1946, and a brood of three at Fenstanton Pit. Pairs remain each spring and summer since, but no young have been seen.

*Goosander.* Usually only seen in hard winters. 1947: Jan. 14th, Offord, 12 (one pink breast shot); Feb. 28th, Earith, six flighting at dusk; Feb. 1st—8th, several lots seen flying up river Little Paxton. March 22nd, one drake, Bluntisham.

*Red-Breasted Merganser.* Butler's Pit, Fletton, 1949. Dec. 31st, a pair.

*Great Crested Grebe.* Until 1946 only breeding in the Fletton brick pits. Now nesting in four brick pits near Fletton, and gravel pits at Hartford, Hemingford Grey, St. Ives, Fenstanton, and Little Paxton. Counts are taken of birds each year for the Great Crested Grebe Census, giving the following totals: 1946, 20; 1947, 18; 1948, 18/22; 1949, 25.

*Black-necked Grebe.* 1947, Dec. 17th, one Hemingford gravel pits, had been there several days. Fenstanton Pit [five probables seen in bad light.]

*Little Grebe.* Formerly uncommon as a breeder, but has now colonized all the gravel pits. 1946: July 9th, Little Paxton, 7.30 p.m., newly-hatched young tumbled off nest, temperature taken just below surface of nest platform 80 deg. F., air temperature on bank 68 deg. F.

*Red-throated Diver.* 1946, Dec. 28th. One on river, Brampton, remained about a week. (E.T.L.)

*Turtle Dove.* Unusually large number of 60 seen on electric wires, Great Staughton, Sept. 16th, 1949.

*Curlew.* 1947, Jan. 31st, a number, Earith Great Washes. 1949, April 25th, one, Great Gransden.

*Woodcock.* Winter migrants vary in numbers. 1948 was a good year, 25/30 being seen in Brampton Wood on Dec. 20th. In 1949 generally scarce. Breeding records very few. Nested, Orton, about 1914; and Monks Wood, May 5th, 1948. (B.)

*Common Snipe.* Has greatly decreased since the improved drainage of the Ouse valley meadows during the War. A few nests at St. Neots. Some frequent the gravel pits.

*Jack Snipe.* Has decreased for same reasons as above. 1948, Jan. 6th, one, Farcet brick pits. Sept. 24th, one, Little Paxton gravel pit, too tired to fly more than a yard or so.

*Little Stint.* [Ouse, near Over, Oct. 31st, 1948. (C.B.C.)]

*Common Sandpiper.* Appears regularly as spring passage migrant, April 29th to May 30th, and on return July 5th to Sept. 26th. At Little Paxton Pit, two to six are constantly present between the latter dates.

*Dunlin.* 1949. First recorded from gravel pits at Little Paxton. July 24th, one; Sept. 5th, flock 12; Sept. 7th, flock seven.

*Wood Sandpiper.* A dead and dried up specimen found in field south of Hail Weston Wood, Sept. 13th, 1947. Apparently the first record for the county.

*Green Sandpiper.* A regular spring and autumn passage migrant, often staying a day or so at the gravel pits; three greatest number seen together. Spring, April 14th to 21st; Autumn, August 3rd to September 17th, are limiting recorded dates.

*Redshank.* Before 1939 increasing as a nesting species in Ouse valley, but has greatly declined for same reason as the Snipe. Occurs spasmodically at the gravel pits during summer. 1947: May 23rd, three seen Buckden Station gravel pits, including pair displaying and mating. 1948: Pair nested Lenton's pit, Brampton, and April 24th pair seen Hartford pit.

*Greenshank.* 1948, one, Little Paxton pits, May 5th. 1949, one, Little Paxton pits. August 26th, 27th and 28th.

*Ringed Plover.* A rare migrant. 1946, Aug. 13th, one, Little Paxton pit. 1948, May 11th, one, Little Paxton pit, very tame.

*Golden Plover.* A regular winter visitor to be found in the same or neighbouring fields year after year. Small lots nearly always associate and fly in formation with Lapwings; large flocks on their own. Fields between Hail Weston and Cross Hall, the neighbourhood of Buckden Station, between Eynesbury and Little Barford, and Portholme are favourite resorts. During the great floods of 1947 at least 1,000 were on splashy fields near Fenstanton on March 18th. Arrive early November and leave by the end of February. (R.C. and Recorder).

*Lapwing.* The winter migrant flocks are as great as ever, but as a breeding species has greatly declined, probably for the same reason as Snipe and Redshank.

*Black Tern.* The Ouse valley seems to be on the inland migration route. Every year a few may be seen if watch is kept on likely dates. 1946: May 10th, three, Little Paxton, feeding on fly on surface of gravel pit, left flying down river. May 13th, one, Fenstanton Pit (E.T.L.) 1947: May 7th and 9th, one, Little Paxton pit, feeding on surface. 1949: May 15th, two, Little Paxton pit, stayed some hours.

*Tern.* Some seen most years on spring migration. 1947: April 25th, two, Hartford pit; April 26th, six [Arctic] Fenstanton pit; April 28th, three [Arctic], St. Neots Paper Mills, diving for fish below sluice gate; April 29th, two, Great Paxton; May 8th, eight, Little Paxton; May 20th, one. 1948: May 18th, one, [Common] Little Paxton pit. 1949: One each, May 6th and 10th, Little Paxton pit. One, mid-May, Hartford pit. (R.C. and Recorder).

*Little Tern.* [1949. May 22nd, two, Hartford pit. (R.C.)]

*Corn Crake.* Appears to be extinct as a breeding species. Last record, dead bird under telephone wires, Little Paxton, April 19th, 1946.

*Water Rail.* Probably more common than supposed owing to secretive habits. Has colonized Little Paxton gravel pit, where one was seen or heard January 23rd and October 27th, 1949. One seen Huntingdon. (R.C.)

*Coot.* Quickly colonized all the suitable gravel pits by 1946, which supported numerous nests and a large migrant winter population. All

suffered badly in 1947. 1946: About 10 pairs breeding Little Paxton pit, and 80/100 birds during the winter. On Fenstanton pit there were 80 old and young on August 26th. 1947: Little Paxton pit, 2/3 pairs bred. Fenstanton, April 9th, one pair. 1948: Numbers recovered somewhat. Fenstanton pit, 40, August 11th. Winter flocks on Butler's pit, Fletton, were up to 150 on January 10th, 1949, and 100 on December 31st.

*Pheasant.* Does well in fine dry summers. In 1947 and 1949 there were more wild pheasants than for many years. Many estates had more than when artificial rearing was practiced.

*Quail.* 1947: July 13th, one heard calling, Fenstanton. Sept. 6th, one flushed, Bluntisham. 1949: April 29th, one found dead Hemingford. (E.T.L.)

*American Black and White Warbler.* Mr. J. Gilbert handled a bird killed by a cat at Stibbington on March 15th, 1949, which he supposes to be this species. Another was seen in the same place on April 6th. He has indentified it from Audubon's 'Birds of America,' plate 90. There are other British records, (Handbook of British Birds 1. 233.) which are ~~thought to be~~ <sup>insects</sup>.

#### MIGRATION DATES, 1949

March 12th	Chiffchaff	(Eynesbury).
March 17th	Sand Martin	(Little Paxton).
April 4th	Willow Warbler	(Huntingdon).
April 14th	Cuckoo	(Little Paxton).
April 17th	Swallow	(Little Paxton).
	Yellow Wagtail	(Little Paxton).
May 2nd	Common Sandpiper	(Little Paxton).
May 8th	Swift	(Little Paxton).
May 10th	Turtle Dove	(Little Paxton).
May 27th	Spotted Flycatcher	(Eynesbury).
October 15th	Redwing	(Hail Weston).
October 25th	Fieldfare	(Offord).

#### Woodwalton Fen.

The secretary of the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, sends the following report:—

"Montague's harrier (*circus pygargus*) has been observed in most years; a pair nested in the reserve in 1949 and were frequently seen. Grasshopper warbler (*locustella n. noevia*) occurs regularly, but no nest has been observed. Short-eared owls (*asio f. flammeus*) visit the reserve annually, and woodcock nest there in most years."

We are grateful to Messrs. G. Bath, of Hartford, A. Everdell, of Fenstanton, G. Lenton, of Brampton, R. Copley, of Hemingford



Grey, L. Edwards, of Earith, Fields & Pateman, of St. Neots, and the London Brick Co., Ltd., of Fletton, all of whom have allowed their pits to become virtual sanctuaries.

Finally, may we urge upon all who have any influence to discourage nest-robbing, which is still far too common, and to induce boys who collect eggs to take an interest in the living bird.

C. F. TEBBUTT.

## LEPIDOPTERA

The only published list of Huntingdonshire butterflies and moths is that in the *Victoria County History*, Vol. 1 (1926) compiled by Mr. J. Omer-Cooper, but the fame of Monks Wood, Holme Fen and Woodwalton Fen and, in the long-distant past, of Whittlesey and Yaxley meres, has brought many entomologists into the county, to which constant reference will be found in books and periodicals.

What is principally necessary now is that old records should be checked, that the effects of recent cultivation should be studied, that attention should be paid to some of the less well-known localities and that the distribution of certain species should be closely investigated. Nearly all the information that follows comes from four observers, Mr. H. A. Leeds, Mr. J. L. Gilbert, Mr. B. B. West and the writer, and it must necessarily be limited. Much remains to be learned about even the commonest species and for this many more observers are needed.

Since the Society is anxious not to put off young and inexperienced members by the use of scientific names, the English names of butterflies have been used, but in the case of the moths this practice is open to objection, and nomenclature employed is that of Heslop's *Indexed Check-list* 2nd edition.

### Butterflies

The following were not recorded in 1949: High Brown and Dark Green Fritillaries and the Duke of Burgundy. They should be closely searched for in 1950.

The following were much scarcer than usual in 1949: Orange-tip, Brimstone, Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Comma, Peacock, Red Admiral, Gatekeeper, White Admiral, Small Copper, Black Hairstreak, Holly Blue, Grizzled Skipper, Dingy Skipper, Essex Skipper.

Additional localities have been discovered for the following: Pearl-bordered Fritillary, Black Hairstreak, Silver-washed Fritillary, Chequered Skipper.

The following individual notes may be of interest:—

Small Pearl-bordered Fritillary. This insect, which favours rather damper localities than its congener, used to be found in Monks Wood and Bevill's Wood. The only known locality now is Wood Walton fen, where it is very rare. Any information about it will be welcome.

White Admiral. This was unknown in the county in 1926. It is not known exactly when it appeared. There is a series in the Wrangham collection at St. Ives marked "Wistow Wood, 1941." Dr. J. Newton says that it began to appear in 1943 in Monks and one or two other woods. Mr. P. G. M. Dickinson records it from Molesworth. I took one in Monks Wood in 1948, and Mr. H. A. Leeds saw one there in 1949. It does not appear to be making progress. Information needed.

Marbled White. A close study of its distribution is being made. All colonies should be recorded, and it would be of special interest if any *outside* the following ring could be reported: Aversley Wood — Wood Walton — Little Raveley — Wistow — Broughton — King's Ripton — Sapley — Alconbury — Brampton — Offord — Diddington — Brampton Hut — Woolley — Spaldwick — Leighton — Salome Wood — Buckworth — Aversley Wood.

Grayling. This had one restricted locality at Abbots Ripton until about 1941. It has since been reported between Sapley and King's Ripton. Its presence anywhere in the county should be reported, but the heathy wastes that it likes are almost all gone.

Clouded Yellow. This was not uncommon in the southern counties in 1949, and a number were seen in Oxfordshire and Buckinghamshire. Only five Hunts. records have come to hand: Little Sukeley (July), Little Paxton (August), Orton, Hail Weston, Wood Walton (October).

### Moths

I do not know of anyone who is systematically working the moths of the county. Only steady and protracted collecting of larva and imago, with the use of sugar and light, can reveal fully the moth fauna of an area and few have time or opportunity for this. The following records should be read in conjunction with the V.C.H. list, to which they are either additions or modifications of sufficient interest to put down:—

*Deilephila porcellus*. Two Alconbury, 1948. None, 1949.

*Macroglossum stellatarum*. Numerous on *Buddleia variabilis*, Alconbury, Sept. Not seen at Wood Walton. (H. A. Leeds).

*Orgyia antiqua*. V. rare Alconbury.

*Phragmatobia fuliginosa*. One at light, Alconbury, 2/8/48.

*Polia nitens*. One at red valerian, Alconbury, 26/6/49.

*Hadena trifolii*. On nicotiana, Alconbury, 23/5/49.

*H. cucubali*. On nicotiana, Alconbury, 13/8/49.

*Bombycia viminalis*. Houghton, 18/6/49.

*Eremobia ochroleuca*. Two on knapweed 27/8/48 between Woolley and Ellington. Two in Wrangham Coll. St. Ives marked "Somersham, 11/8/41."

#### An addition to the County list.

*Aporophyla lutulenta*. At sugar, Alconbury 24/9/49.

*Brachionycha sphinx*. At light, Alconbury 22/11/49.

*Arenostola pygmaea*. At sugar, Alconbury, 11/9/49.

*Amphipyra pyramidea*. Little Gidding, 17/8/48.

*Panemeria tenebrata*. Common in hedgerow by the sluice, Alconbury, 17/5/48.

*Rivula sericealis*. Salome Wood, 3/7/48.

*Scoliopteryx libatrix*. Rare. One hibernating Alconbury, January, 1948. One Stibbington, May, 1949. (J. L. Gilbert).

*Euclidimera mi*. Upton Wood, 30/5/48.

*Ectypa glyphica*. Hermitage Wood, 1948. Somersham (Wrangham Coll.)

*Scopula imitaria*. Alconbury, 18/7/48.

*Calocalpe cervinalis*. At light, Alconbury, 5/5/48.

*Coenotephria derivata*. Monks Wood, 14/5/49.

*Colotois pennaria*. Monks Wood (larva), 1949.

*Hapalia lutealis*. Abbots Ripton, 22/7/48.

*Perinephela fuscalis*. Alconbury, July, 1948.

*Mesographe forficalis*. Alconbury, common.

*Pyralis costalis*. Alconbury, 28/7/49.

#### An addition to the County list.

*P. farinalis*. Alconbury, 12/8/49. V.C.H. gives only St. Ives, and it would be interesting to know whether this usually common flour-eating species is really as restricted as these records suggest.

*Zygaena filipendulae*, *loniceræ* and *trifolii*.

The distribution of Burnet moth colonies needs working out and, since the moths are day-

flying, conspicuous and easily captured, this would be a good undertaking for school groups and beginners. *Filipendulae* (six spots) is given in V.C.H. as "common near Bevill's Wood." In fact it is widespread and abundant on many roadsides all over the Alconbury district, and at Somersham. *Loniceræ* (five spots) is also more widespread than the V.C.H. list suggests. *Trifolii* (five spots), which is extremely difficult to distinguish from *loniceræ*, is said to occur in Monks Wood, but no certain confirmation of its presence exists.

I have a few copies of a reprint of an article entitled, "The Butterflies of the Monks Wood District," published in *The Entomologist* for March, 1949, and shall be glad to give them to members who desire them.

J. E. H. BLACKIE, F.R.E.S.

#### FLORA

The following list of species of plants recorded in Hunts. by members of the Society is arranged according to the "British Plant List," of Druce (1928); each species is preceded by its reference number in that List. I have been obliged to omit from the list certain records which need verification, and have also had to leave out a number of records of commoner species, not because they are of no value, but simply out of consideration of space. It is gratifying to find that in the first year of the Society's existence such a large number of records have been contributed by members, and that no fewer than six of the flowering plant records are apparently new to the County (these are indicated by \*). Species which have already been included as new county records in Dr. J. G. Dony's paper, "A Contribution to the Flora of Huntingdonshire," to be presented in *Watsonia*, are indicated in the list by a preceding D.

The contributors of the records are indicated as follows:—

Mr. and Mrs. J. E. H. Blackie—(B)

Mr. J. L. Gilbert—(G)

Rev. R. F. McNeile—(M)

Mr. B. B. West—(W)

In addition, single records from Miss E. Tillard and Dr. J. G. Dony have been included. I have given the English names for

the plants where 'good' common names exist; where the English name cover a number of different species, I have given it in parenthesis.

A little advice and encouragement to members intending to contribute records in the future would perhaps not be out of place. The correct identification of plants is essential if records are to be published; and to ensure this, members should save a single dried "voucher specimen" of every plant they record, so that if necessary it can be checked by the Recorder. This may sound laborious, but it is not so in reality, and a dozen certain records are of more value than a list of hundreds which cannot be verified. An exception must of course be made in the case of species which are known or suspected to be rare; in these special cases it will be the duty of the Recorder to satisfy himself that the identification is correct by other means, and the plant should not be picked. Records of all plants are of value, even the very common ones, for our knowledge of the distribution of any species in the County is so imperfect that we do not even know whether the commonest species are abundant throughout the County. Of particular value would be lists, as complete as possible, and with voucher specimens, made in single localities (e.g. a wood, a wet meadow, or a pond). In giving the locality in which a species was found, in addition to the map name, information as to soil, associated species of plants, abundance of the plant concerned, etc., would all be of value.

S. M. WALTERS.

Jan., 1950.

- 1/1 *Clematis Vitalba* L. Traveller's Joy. Globe Lane; Monks Wood; Ellington Hill; Gt. Stukeley (B). Abundant nr. Newbridge, Stibbington, 25—7 (G).
- \* 4/1 *Adonis Annua* L. Pheasant's Eye. Garden weed, Alconbury, 15—5 (B).
- 6/7 *Ranunculus Flammula* L. Lesser Spearwort. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 24—7 (G).
- D13/3 *Delphinium Gayanum* Wilmott Larkspur. Brickyards, Fletton; Stibbington, 29—6 (G).
- 21/3 *Papaver dubium* L. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 18—6 (G).
- 21/5 *Papaver Argemone* L. Cornfields, Stibbington, 6—6; Ramsey 11—3—36 (G).
- 49/2 *Sisymbrium Sophia* L. Flixweed. Nene side, Stibbington, 26—6—35, 1—7—48; (does not appear every year); roadside, Ramsey, 11—6—36 (G).
- 49/4 *Sisymbrium orientale* L. Brickyards, Fletton; cornfields, Stibbington, 4—5 (G).

- 60/2 *Coronopus procumbens* Gilib. Swine's Cress. Fields, roadsides and waste places, Stibbington, 6—6 (G).
- \* 61/3 *Lepidium Draba* L. Hoary Cress. Houghton, 20—5—48; Salome Wood, 22—5—48 (B).
- 61/5 *Lepidium campestre* (L.) R.Br. Near Ship End Quarries, Stibbington, 24—7—48 (G).
- 96/4 *Silene noctiflora* L. Night-Flowering Catchfly. Cornfield nr. Ship Ship End Quarries, Stibbington, 29—8 (G).
- 98/1 *Lychnis Flos-Cuculi* L. Ragged Robin. S.W. corner, Salome Wood (B).
- 98/4 *Melandrium dioicum* (L.) Garcke. Red Champion. Copse at Upton (B).
- 100/2 *Cerastium arvense* L. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 21—5—35 (G).
- 112/15 *Hypericum humifusum* L. (St. John's Wort). Brampton Wood (B).
- 117/1 *Malva moschata* L. Musk Mallow. River dredgings, Stibbington, 1—7—48 (G).
- 127/4 *Geranium pratense* L. Meadow Cranesbill. Bluntisham (M.); roadway to Sutton Ford, Stibbington, 9—7 (G).
- 128/3 *Erodium Cicutarium* L'Herit. Storksbill. Gravel pits, quarries, etc., Stibbington, 15—4 (G).
- 147/3 *Genista tinctoria* L. Dyer's Greenweed. Abundant between Alconbury and Woolley (B).
- 154/3 *Melilotus arvensis* Wallr. Brickyards, Fletton; waste places, Stibbington, 30—5 (G).
- D155/11 *Trifolium striatum* L. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 18—6 (G).
- 156/1 *Anthyllis Vulneraria* L. Lady's Fingers. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 5—6—38 (G).
- 166/1 *Astragalus glycyphyllos* L. Wild Licorice. Gypsy Lane, Stibbington (not flowering, 1949) (G).
- D179/9 *Lathyrus Aphaca* L. Bluntisham (M).
- 184/12 *Spiraea Filipendula* L. Dropwort. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 5—6—38 (G).
- 193/4 *Sanguisorba officinalis* L. Greater Salad Burnet. Alconbury (one field) (B), Bluntisham (M).
- 220/5 *Epilobium tetragonum* L. (Willow Herb). Gravel pits, Stibbington, 7—7 (G).
- 232/1 *Bryonia dioica* Lacq. White Bryony. Very common, hedgerows, Stibbington, 29—5 (G).
- 244/1 *Smyrniolum Olusatrum* L. Alexanders. Still in abundance on roadside at Gt. Stukeley where recorded in 1912. (B).
- 269/1 *Silaum Silaus* (L.) Schinz & Thell. Fletton; Stibbington, 15—6 (G).



- 308/1 *Scabiosa Columbaria* L. Meadow, Stibbington, 28—8 (G).
- 324/3 *Filago germanica* (L.) Huds. (Cudweed). Gravel pits and cornfields, Stibbington, 7—7 (G).
- 328/2 *Gnaphalium uliginosum* L. (Cudweed). Brampton Wood (B); gravel pits and cornfield, Stibbington, 2—7—48 (G).
- 333/1 *Inula Helenium* L. Elecampane. Spaldwick, 1948; Abbots Ripton (B); Wood Walton Fen, 1948 (W).
- 365/2 *Achillea Ptarmica* L. Sneezewort. Bluntisham (M); Nene side, Stibbington, 18—7—33 (G).
- 370/1 *Chrysanthemum segetum* L. Corn Chamomile. Cornfields and Nene dredgings, Stibbington, 18—8—38 (G).
- \* 380/3 *Petasites fragrans* Presl. Opposite "Wheatsheaf," Alconbury Hill. (B).
- 383/7 *Senecio squalidus* L. Oxford Ragwort. Near "The Globe," Alconbury, 26—9—48 (B).
- 391/1 *Carlina vulgaris* L. Carlina Thistle. Near Wansford Quarries, Stibbington, 28—8 (G).
- 395/1 *Carduus nutans* L. Musk Thistle. Pale pink flowered form (det. W.A. Sledge). Gravel pits, Stibbington, 9—7 (G).
- 396/1 *Cirsium eriphorum* (L.) Scop. Near Wansford Quarries, Stibbington, 28—8 (G).
- 397/1 *Onopordon Acanthium* L. Scottish Thistle. Elton rubbish pits, 8—7 (G); Alconbury, two localities, 1948 (B).
- 405/31 *Centaurea Solstitialis* L. Lucerne field, Stibbington, 30—8—39 (G).
- 409/1 *Cichorium Intybus* L. Chicory. Bluntisham (M.); Alconbury (B).
- \* 435/1 *Campanula glomerata* L. Clustered Bellflower. Near Wansford Quarries, Stibbington, 28—8 (G).
- 435/5 *Campanula rotundifolia* L. Harebell. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 24—7 (G).
- 436/1 *Legousia hybrida* (L.) Del. Venus' Looking-Glass. Common in cornfields, Stibbington, 5—8—36 (G).
- 459/1 *Hottonia palustris* L. Water Violet. Meadow ponds, Stibbington, 10—6—34 (G).
- 460/3 *Primula veris* L. x *vulgaris* Huds. "False Oxlip (Primrose-Cowslip hybrid)" Hermitage Wood (B).
- 463/4 *Lysimachia Nummularia* L. Creeping Jenny. Nene side and gravel pits, Stibbington, 5—7 (G).
- 469/1 *Samolus Valerandi* L. Brookweed. Gravel pits and Nene side, Stibbington, 18—6 (G).
- 477/1 *Blackstonia perfoliata* Huds. Yellow-wort. Brickyards, Spaldwick (B).

- 482/1 *Nymphoides peltatum* Gmel. Fringed Water-lily. River near "Pike and Eel," Over. (E. Tillard).
- 497/4 *Symphytum peregrinum* Ledeb. (Comfrey). Roadway to Sutton Ford, Stibbington, 29—5; New Bridge, Stibbington (G).
- 501/1 *Lycopsis arvensis* L. Fields of corn and sugar-beet, Stibbington, 1—5 (G).
- D506/9 *Myosotis collina* Hoffm (Forget-me-not). River dredgings and gravel pits, Stibbington, 1—5 (G).
- 507/3 *Lithospermum arvense* L. Corn Gromwell. Cornfields, Stibbington, 29—5 (G).
- 522/1 *Datura Stramonium* L. Thorn-Apple. Alconbury allotments, 1948 (B); garden weed, Stibbington Hall (coll. W. Renn), 25—11—47 (G).
- 524/1 *Hyoscyamus niger* L. Henbane. Spaldwick, 1948; Alconbury, 1949 (B).
- 532/7 *Linaria minor* (L.) Desf. Garden and gravel pits, Stibbington, 17—9 (G).
- 543/8 *Veronica Anagallis-aquatica* L. (Speedwell). Gravel pits, Stibbington, 2—7—48 (G.); Alconbury (B).
- \* 562/5 *Satureia ascendens* (Jord.) Dr. (Calamint). Hedgerow near Church footpath, Stibbington, 9—7 (G).
- 562/8 *Satureia Acinos* (L.) Scheele. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 24—7 (G).
- 566/2 *Salvia Verbenaca* L. Clary. Hartford, 1948 (B).
- 577/13 *Stachys Betonica* Benth. Betony. Monks Wood; Hills Wood; Brampton Wood; single locality in each. (B).
- 581/6 *Lamium amplexicaule* L. Henbit. Cornfields, Stibbington; roadside, Fletton, 29—5 (G).
- 595/2 *Scleranthus annuus* L. Knawel. Cornfields, Stibbington, 3—8—36 (G).
- 615/5 *Polygonum amphibium* L. Knot Holes, brickyards, Fletton, 4—7 (G).
- 615/6 *Polygonum lapathifolium* L. Nene side and near Gipsy Lane, Stibbington, 28—8 (G); Bluntisham (M).
- 615/7 *Polygonum Persicaria* L. Nene side and near Gipsy Lane, Stibbington, 28—8 (G); Bluntisham (M).
- 615/8 *Polygonum nodosum* Pers. Nene side, Stibbington, 6—8—47 (G).
- 615/9 *Polygonum Hydropiper* L. Houghton Mill (W); Bluntisham (M).
- \* 622/1 *Aristolochia Clematis* L. Birthwort. Bluntisham (M).
- 623/1 *Daphne Laureola* L. Spurge Laurel. Hedgerow below Alconbury Weston and "Wheatsheaf"; Rust Lane, Alconbury; near Woolley Gorse; near Buckworth (B).
- 628/16 *Euphorbia Lathyris* L. Caper Spurge. Garden weed, Stibbington, 12—5—36 (G).

- 634/1 *Humulus Lupulus* L. Hop. Bluntisham (M); Nene side, Stibbington, 30—7 (G).
- 654/1 *Hydrocharis Morsus-Ranae* L. Frogbit. Bluntisham (M).
- 663/1 *Listera ovata* (L.) Br. Twayblade. Salome Wood, 1948 (B).
- 669/17 *Orchis pyramidalis* L. Pyramidal Orchid. Stibbington, 26—6 (G).
- 721/1 *Typha latifolia* L. "Bulrush," Reedmace. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 7—7 (G).
- 722/2 *Sparganium ramosum* Huds. (Bur-reed). Gravel pits, Stibbington, 24—7 (G).
- 722/3 *Sparganium simplex* Huds. (Bur-reed). Nene, Stibbington, 8—8 (G).
- 732/1 *Sagittaria sagittifolia* L. Arrowhead. Bluntisham (M); gravel pits, Stibbington, 24—7 (G).
- 734/1 *Butomus umbellatus* L. Flowering Rush. Bluntisham (M); Alconbury (B); Nene side and gravel pits, Stibbington, 7—7 (G).
- 737/23 *Potamogeton pusillus* L. (Pondweed) (det. G. Taylor). Gravel pits, Stibbington, 9—7 (G).
- 753/9 *Carex hirta* L. Hairy Sedge. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 24—7. (G).
- 753/10 *Carex pendula* Huds. Hermitage Wood, 1948, 1949. (B).
- 770/3 *Alopecurus agrestis* L. Roadsides, gardens, etc., Stibbington, 1—6—36 (G).
- 808/1 *Cynosurus echinatus* L. (det. C. E. Hubbard). Brickyards, Fletton, 20—6 (G).
- 819/1 *Dactylis glomerata* L. var. *collina* Schlecht. (Det. C. E. Hubbard). Gravel pits, Stibbington, 9—7 (G).
- 825/2 *Glyceria fluitans* (L.) Br. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 18—6 (G).
- 826/1 *Festuca rigida* (L.) Kunth. Brickyards, Fletton, 8—6 (G).
- 826/7b *Festuca rubra* L. var. *commutata* Gaud. (Det. C. E. Hubbard). Garden wall, Stibbington, 5—6 (G).
- 844/5b *Equisetum limosum* L. var. *fluviale* L. (Horsetail). Gravel pits, Stibbington, 27—5 (G).
- 847/1 *Pteridium aquilinum* (L.). Bracken. Very common, Gipsy Lane, Stibbington, 26—6 (G).
- 850/1 *Scolopendrium vulgare* Symons. Hartstongue. Near Orton Longueville Church, 18—9—48 (G).
- Bryophyta.*
- Tortula pusilla* Mitt. (det. P. Chamberlain). Nene dredgings, Stibbington, 13—12—45 (G).
- Lunularia cruciata* (L.) Dum. Very common in gardens, Stibbington (G).

*Marchantia polymorpha* L. Gravel pits, Stibbington, 9—7; Orton Hall; High Street, Fletton (G).

*Ricciocarpus natans* (L.). Corda Ditch, Wood Walton Fen, 10—9—49. (D. H. Davies and J. G. Dony).

### Members

The following have joined the Society since the publication of the list of members in 1949 :—

Air Vice-Marshal E. B. A. Baker, Grey Tiles, Hartford.

M. Warwick Smith, The Museum, Priestgate, Peterborough.

Miss D. M. Warren, Furrows, St. Ives.

P. J. Measures, Keyston House, Keyston.

C. J. Pinkney, The Norris Library, St. Ives.

The following change of address should be noted :—

E. T. Lees, 6, Sapley Lane, Hartford.

Mrs. E. T. Lees, do.

The name of the Huntingdon and District Young Farmers' Club should be substituted for that of Miss R. Pack, who is the honorary secretary.

### Subscriptions

These were due on January 1st. Will members who have not yet paid, please send five shillings to the Honorary Treasurer.

