

HUNTINGDONSHIRE
FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

9th
ANNUAL
REPORT
1956

PRICE (to non-members) 10/6

HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

Chairman:

J. E. H. BLACKIE, Esq., The Bell House, Alconbury, Hunts.
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Hon. Secretary:

PROFESSOR ALASTAIR N. WORDEN, Cromwell House, Huntingdon.
Tel: Huntingdon 612.

Hon. Treasurer:

D. A. DAVIES, Esq., Darholm, 26, Perry Road, Buckden.
Tel.: Buckden 371.

Hon. Social Secretary:

MISS M. J. KETTLEWELL, Y.F.C. Office, 112, High Street, Huntingdon.
Tel: Huntingdon 111. (To October, 1956)

Committee:

MRS. J. E. H. BLACKIE.
C. F. TEBBUTT.
J. L. GILBERT.
W. T. K. GARNETT.
L. W. ANGELL.
MISS E. M. THACKRAY.
MISS O. D. CLARKE.
G. E. D. ALCOCK.
R. FRASER.

Referees:

Flora - - - J. L. Gilbert, 157, Kew Road, Richmond, Surrey.
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.

Annual Report for 1956

(No. 9)

INTRODUCTION

Once again we have to thank the Headmaster for his permission to hold the Annual General Meeting at the Huntingdon Grammar School, this time on Saturday, 25th February, when the officers and committee named were elected. The meeting was combined with a conversazione, arranged by Mr. D. A. Davies and was followed by two short papers on "Birds of Huntingdonshire," by Mr. C. T. Lees, and on "The Distribution of Huntingdonshire Lepidoptera," by Mr. J. E. M. Blackie. Unfortunately, Miss Jill Kettlewell left the district during the latter part of 1956, and her contribution is therefore included in this section of the Report.

On Friday, 16th March, the Society held a public lecture, the first in its 8 years of existence, in the Council Chamber, Old Grammar School, Huntingdon, when some 60 members and visitors listened to an extremely stimulating lecture on "Some British Mammals" by the Earl of Cranbrook, D.L. Lord Cranbrook, who is President of the Mammal Society of the British Isles, dealt with a wide variety of topics and answers to questions and pleaded for local records of the yellow-necked field-mouse, *Apodemus flavicollis* Melchior. This species, which is larger than the long-tailed field mouse, *Apodemus sylvaticus* L., has been recorded from counties south of Huntingdonshire but not from the County itself (see section on Mammals).

Members were invited to participate in the annual conversazione of the Cambridge Natural History Society in the Department of Zoology on Wednesday, 2nd May, and to meetings of the Bedford Natural History Society. They were invited also to participate in the following field excursions arranged by the Peterborough Museum Society.

Saturday, 26th May, to Castor Hanglands (Leader, Mr. H. F. Tebbs), to search for the Chequered Skipper and Duke of Burgandy Fritillary butterflies.

Saturday, 16th June, to Winwick (Leader, Mr. J. L. Gilbert), to study the abundant flora of a limestone area.

Saturday, 28th July, to Horsey Toll (Leader, Mr. J. L. Gilbert) to study the flora of fen land.

Monday, 30th July, to Old Sulehay Forest (Leader, Mr. J. L. Gilbert) to study the colonization of disturbed ground.

Saturday, 11th August, to Elton Furze (Leader, Mr. J. L. Gilbert) to study the flora of Elton Furze Wood.

Saturday, 18th August, to Farcet Knotholes (Leader, Mr. H. F. Tebbs) to study the natural history of old clay pits.

The only formal field excursion by the Society itself was to Monks Wood on 23rd June. Following this excursion it was decided to circulate all members with notes contained in a letter to the Chairman dated 31st May, 1956, from Dr. E. Duffey, Regional Officer for East Anglia, The Natural Conservancy, 6, Upper King Street, Norwich (Tel. Norwich 20558). These notes embody suggestions as to the work that could usefully be done in the wood and they are reproduced below as follows:—

Mammals

Observations on the distribution and numbers of rabbits, rats, mice, grey squirrels, badgers and foxes would be very useful. I should add here that care should be taken not to disturb badger setts, of which I believe there is only one. Of the other mammals I would particularly like information on the distribution and numbers of rabbits and grey squirrels. Tracing and plotting squirrel dreys would be a useful part of this work.

Birds

We have a B.T.O. survey of the Reserve, but other information would be useful.

The Flora

(1) Additions to the species list. Mapping the distribution of local and rare species and any comments on their special requirements would be useful.

(2) An ecological survey of the flora of a selection of different rides to illustrate the diversity of plant life in these important habitats.

(3) We need a detailed account of the vegetation in the two large clearings. We do not yet know whether these recently cultivated areas are likely to change as the vegetation establishes itself and we would like to have as complete a record as possible. No interference with them is contemplated except to mow the thistles and keep down woody growth.

(4) A plant distribution map of the herbaceous vegetation in the new glades would be useful as we intend to enlarge these glades.

(5) Studies on distribution of tree species, shrubs or the dominant plants of the forest floor.

(6) The vegetation of the ponds and streams.

The Invertebrates

(1) In spite of the numbers of species lists of butterflies and moths which we have, we know practically nothing of the distribution of each species recorded. Even the distribution of such a characteristic insect as the Black Hairstreak is not known to me. I would be very grateful for information on this subject.

(2) The beetles are being covered by Messrs. Buck and Weal.

(3) Information on other groups of insects or other invertebrates would be very gratefully received, but I would emphasise the need for an ecological approach. A record of the animals living in the major habitats within the Reserve with notes on their distribution, food, numbers, etc., is of the greatest value to us. If anyone is interested in spiders I will undertake to identify the collections. The specimens should be bottled in 70% alcohol and all specimens from one habitat can go in one tube. As an example, habitats are: Tree canopy, tree hole, shrubs, herbaceous flora in woodland, herbaceous flora in ride, glade or clearing. The date, locality and description of habitat should be included.

The Warden of the wood, Mr. Hall, is empowered to allow persons to enter on one occasion only, but permits to enable one to enter at any time may be obtained from Dr. Duffey at the address given above.

It is very much to be hoped that members will avail themselves of the opportunity to study Monks Wood and help to build up the information indicated by Dr. Duffey.

Special attention is being paid by members of the Society to the dammed brook in the clearing 200 yards W. of a point in the main ride 300 yards N. of "Old Saul." Details of the ecological study that is being made may be obtained from the Chairman.

Mr. C. F. Tebbutt and a team of helpers have continued to make routine observations that are included in the International Wildfowl Counts.

The growing activities of the Society merit a much larger membership and again a plea is made for recruitment.

The revised constitution came into force as at 30th April, following the procedure agreed at the Annual General Meeting.

A.N.W.

MAMMALS

Mr. Harry V. Thompson, of the Infestation Control Division, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, writes that there is not much to report on myxomatosis in Huntingdonshire for 1956. Approximately eighty per cent. of the County was covered by the disease prior to 1956 and there have not been any genuine outbreaks during the year or further spread. It is believed therefore, that myxomatosis is no longer active in the County.

Mr. L. W. Angell, of Great Paxton, submitted a specimen of a melanistic form of water-vole, *Arvicola amphibius* L., which had been captured by a spaniel at mid-day on 29th August, 1956, Grid reference 52/212653. Dr. Peter Crowcroft, of the British Museum (Natural History) who examined this specimen, informed us that, while such forms were not infrequently noted in counties to the east of Huntingdon this was the first to his knowledge recorded in the County. Mr. Angell has seen water-voles virtually daily in the same vicinity for 30 years—the only exception being during spells of hard frost—and this is the first melanistic form observed.

Mr. Angell has cited two records of polecats in the Great Paxton area in former years. The first was in early November, 1926, and the second in late July, 1930, in both cases running up trees to escape being shot or captured.

We have learned with interest that pupils at the Kimbolton School have been making a study of small rodents, and we shall hope that they may in time be able to supply us with useful records.

So far no specimens of yellow-necked field mouse, *Apodemus flavicollis* Melchior have been submitted direct to the Society following Lord Cranbrook's request (see Introduction), but Mr. J. L. Gilbert confirms the almost certain existence of this species in the northern part of the County.

A.N.W.

REPTILES AND AMPHIBIA

Mr. J. L. Gilbert has drawn our attention to the undermentioned publication which constitutes an important new systematic work on the palaentology of Huntingdon: the "Peterborough" of the title refers to Old Fletton and neighbouring areas actually within this County.

Publication

Thompson, Harry V., & Worden, Alastair N. (1956) *The Rabbit* (New Naturalist Special Volume No. 13). London: Collins.

The Leeds Collection of Fossil Reptiles from the Oxford Clay of Peterborough, 1956, by E. Thurlow Leeds, edited by Dr. W. E. Swinton.

BIRDS

The faithful few continue to send in observations in sufficient quantity to again make this a most interesting report. Members will read it remembering 1956 as a year of abnormal weather. With a few short breaks January and February had severe conditions. This was followed by a dry Spring and a wet cold Summer, and a dry Autumn. As a result young birds hatching into a wet environment suffered a high percentage of casualties. Noticeable sufferers were Mallard, Tufted Duck, Coot, Moorhen and Partridges.

Of the country wide invasion of Bewick Swans in late February we had more than our share.

The long stay of a Goshawk is a noteworthy event, although it has had to be square bracketed owing to the possibility of it being an escape. The uneven distribution of Goshawks seen in recent years (more in S.E. England than elsewhere) must mean that not all can be escapes.

Other outstanding records are of Sanderling, the Fletton Black Tern passage, Longtailed Ducks at Bluntisham, a Cirl Bunting at Hilton and Lapwing Buntings at Somersham. I am glad to know of the nesting of Meadow Pippit and should be interested to hear of nests anywhere else in the county.

Valuable notes from past years include the occurrence of Dotterel and breeding of Wheatear, Pied Flycatcher, Red Backed Shrike and Cirl Bunting.

The B.T.O. census of heronries and Mute Swans, and the National Wildfowl Counts were carried out by members.

Contributors to the report are: G. Alcock (G.A.), L. Angel (L.A.), J. E. Archer (J.A.), P. Banks (P.B.), W. Garnett (W.G.), L. King (L.K.), E. T. Lees (E.L.), R. Lucas (R.L.), R. Powley (R.P.), D. Scholes (D.S.), J. Scholes (J.S.), and your Recorder (Rec.)

Red Necked Grebe. 1 Bluntisham, March 4th, 10th. (H. B. Ginn).

Cormorant. Jan. 10th, 1 Lt. Paxton (L.A.) Late Nov., 1 St. Neots Paper Mill (L.K.)

Shag. March 4th, 1 Bluntisham Stauch (J.A.) The first recorded for many years.

Heron. Census showed same total of nests as last year. At St. Neots some pairs left Priory Park to nest in a nearby wood. Hemingford Park, 7 nests (— 2); Hinchingsbrooke, 7 (— 2); St. Neots, 8 (+ 3). (Rec.)

Bittern. Single birds seen during the hard weather as follows: Hartford G.P., Jan. 16th, 17th; Gt. Paxton, Jan. 3rd, Feb. 20th; Marsh Lane, Hemingford, Feb. 19th (L.A., Rec.)

Gadwall. 4 Fenstanton G.P. Jan. 22nd (H. B. Ginn).

Pintail. See counts Butler's Pit, Fletton. Probable passage there on March 14th, when 29, and on March 20th when 20 were seen flying N.E. at approx. 500 ft, these dates corresponding with concentration of numbers on the pit. Bury Fen, Bluntisham, 51, Feb. 29th; 17, March 2nd. Observations in S. of county now useless as local farmer has tame full winged birds. (G.A., W.G., J.R., Rec.)

Shoveller. Surprisingly few Butler's Pit, Fletton, or elsewhere in N. of county. Records in S. useless as local farmer has tame full winged birds. (Rec.)

Tufted Duck. See counts Butler's Pit, Fletton. Few nested successfully, only 1 brood seen, near Huntingdon.

Common Pochard. See counts Butler's Pit, Fletton. 3 broods seen in May and June near Huntingdon. (Rec.)

Goldeneye. See counts Butler's Pit, Fletton. Feb. 19th and March 8th 2 Bury Fen, Bluntisham. (J.A., Rec.)

Long-tailed Duck. Feb. 22nd. 22 Bury Fen, Bluntisham (J.A.) Has not been recorded in the county for many years.

Merganser. Feb. 20th, flock 20 on river at Gt. Paxton, one shot (L.A.)

Goosander. Jan. 8th - 19th, 1 juv. male on Lt. Paxton G.P. until shot. (Rec.)

Smew. Bluntisham, Feb. 19th, 2; Feb. 29th, 17; March 2nd, 5. (J.A.)

Shelduck. Oct. 31st, 1 Meadow Lane G.P., St. Ives. (Rec.)

Grey Geese. Many seen passing over and flight direction as: Jan. 2nd, Bluntisham, 18, W.; Jan. 3rd, Highfield, Eynesbury, 200, S.W.; Bluntisham, Jan. 11th, 32, W.; Jan. 24th, 19, S.W.; Feb. 18th, 1 feeding; Feb. 19th, 14, S.; Feb. 29th, 16 and 22, W.; Feb. 1st, Lt. Paxton, 50, S.; and at Warboys, flock feeding on bean field. Feb. 8th, Portholme, Huntingdon, 1 feeding. Mid-Feb., Gaynes Hall, flock S. or S.W. Lt. Paxton, March 4th, 12, N.; March 10th, 40, N. (J.A., L.A., Rec.)

Brent Goose. March 3, Bluntisham, 3 feeding near pumping station. Colour and small size noted (J.A.) The first recorded for many years.

Mute Swan. See count Butler's Pit, Fletton. Census repeated and showed 33 pairs breeding, or occupying breeding territory; 12 on the Ouse or its tributaries and the remainder on ponds or pits. There were also present at the same time 120 - 150 non-breeders. 50 - 60 or these were on Butler's Pit, where no pairs nested this year. There was the usual early Spring concentrations near Earith, 121 on March 8th, and 106 on March 11th. Secondary School boys and girls from Huntingdon, Ramsey and St. Ives gave useful help in the census. (Rec.)

Whooper Swan. A single bird, possibly the same, Gt. Paxton, Oct. 31st and Nov. 11th. Nov. 23rd, 3 flying E. over Holme Fen (L.A., Rec.) In each case call heard.

Bewick Swan. During the second half of February most Bewicks were reported to have left N. Europe owing to hard weather, and about this time a large flock (one count made it 700) frequented the Earith neighbourhood. On March 8th and 11th at Bluntisham there were 50 on Bury Fen, on March 14th, 34, and on March 15th, 36 were seen flying W. (Rec., J.A., W.G.)

Common Buzzard. March 29th, 1 seen Gt. Paxton (L.A.) 2 seen about for some months at Gt. Staughton, left in May. Others wintering at Kimbolton also left in Spring but 1 returned in Sept. (Rec.) July 8th, 2 flying N.E. at 1,00 ft. Yaxley Fen. Sept. 30th, 2 at Woolley (G.A.)

Sparrow Hawk. Appears to have greatly diminished in numbers. E.L. reports only seeing 1 (St. Ives Thicket) during year. Sept. 15th, 1 Hilton (W.G.)

[*Goshawk*.] On Nov. 23rd Mr. Spring, keeper Hamerton Estate, reported a large hawk present there since July. It lived mainly on pigeons but had been seen to kill a Mallard. He noted it had rounded wings, brown back, light breast with dark bars across. When flying head was level with front of wings, flew slowly except in pursuit, perched on trees and had harsh heron like cry. Its prey was torn about, unlike neater Sparrow Hawk's kill. This can hardly be other than a Goshawk but is square bracketed owing to the possibility of its being an escape (Rec.)

[*Montagu's Harrier*. May 29th, Lt. Paxton, a Harrier flying N., alternately flapping and gliding. Slate colour above, lighter below and being mobbed by Carrion Crows (Rec.)

Hen Harrier. Dec. 14th, 1 near Perry, seen by Major J. Compton, who knows this species well. Dark brown with prominent white rump. Settled on ground. Keeper had seen it about for approx. 2 weeks (Rec.)

Partridge and Red-legged. Still greatly diminished in numbers as for last 4 years. Some signs of slight recovery in W. of county. (Rec.)

Corncrake. May 7th. 1 found dead Wintringham, St. Neots. Oct. 3rd, 1 near Grafham. None heard near Perry this year. (Rec.)

Moorhen. Nest with 9 eggs at Hilton 30 ft. above ground and not overhanging water (L.K.)

Coot. Lt. Paxton G.P., few young survived more than day or two after hatching. 1 submitted to Cambridge Pathology Lab. died of Infective Sinusitis (type of roup or cold) (Rec.) Increasing number of nests on Ouse near Bluntisham (11 this year). (J.A.)

Oyster Catcher. 1955, June 11th - 14th. Pair Bluntisham Fen (J.A.)

Ringed Plover. July 28th, Lt. Paxton G.P. 1, with Dunlin. S.W. wind and thundery rain (Rec.)

Lt. Ringed Plover. A pair tried unsuccessfully to breed in S. of county. A single bird seen first on May 8th and many subsequent dates. On June 5th a pair present uttering alarm notes. In next few days the probable nesting area flooded owing to a pump breakdown. By June 12th both had disappeared (Rec.)

Dotterel. Following an article in "Country Life" on Aug. 3rd, Mr. Tregoning, formerly of Houghton, wrote describing a Dotterel seen on Hemingford Meadow in Spring of 1937 or 1938 (Rec.)

Woodcock. Not so many as usual breeding Kimbolton woods but more at Gt. Staughton where 6-8 pairs and 10-13 young seen. A nest found in Woodwalton Fen. (G. Mason, Rec.)

Curlew. Heard passing over St. Neots to E. or N. and calling mid-night, March 12th/13th. Bluntisham, April 10th, 2; April 28th, 2. Gt. Paxton, July 23rd, 1 flying W.; Aug. 7th, 1 flying W. (Rec., J.A., L.A.)

Bar-tailed Godwit. April 4th, 3 remained some time feeding on gravel spit in river near Bluntisham Stauch (J.A.) The first recorded for many years.

Green Sandpiper. As in 1955 very few seen. Feb. 12th, 1 between Earith and Overcote (D. Ballance). 1 Lt. Paxton G.P., Aug. 6th, 7th, 11th (Rec.)

Dunlin. Lt. Paxton G.P., July 28th, 1 (Rec.) See Ringed Plover.

Sanderling. May 20th, 1 in almost full summer plumage, Lt. Paxton G.P., full field description in records. First since Norris's doubtful record of 1888 (Rec.)

Ruff. Feb. 12th, 2 Bury Fen. Dec. 27th, 1 Fenstanton (A. Easy, W. Clarke).

Black Tern. A spectacular return passage was seen at the Fletton Pits on Aug. 11th during overcast weather with rain, some fog, and a gusty S.W. wind veering with the passage of a cold front. Some birds were present all day from 9.30 — 17.00 hrs. with a maximum of 45 at one time. Others seen were 8 at Orton, Sept. 2nd, and 1 at Fletton on Sept. 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th and 3 on Sept. 16th (G.A.)

Com/Arctic Terns. An unusually prolonged return passage this year. Small numbers seen in the Fletton area on June 21st, 22nd, 28th, July 10th, 16th, Aug. 6th, 8th (4 Arctic), 11th, 13th, 29th, Sept. 1st (9), 2nd (6), 6th, 7th, 9th, 10th, 16th (G.A., J.S., R.P., D.S., R.L.) Also at Paxton on Aug. 19th (3 Arctic), Sept. 1st, 10th. Noteworthy late dates were 2 Common at St. Ives Oct. 11th, 2 Common at Paxton Oct. 21st (L.A., Rec.) It is thought that some of the Fletton Terns may have come from a possible breeding colony at Peterborough Sewage Farm.

Little Tern. July 3rd, 1 Stanground (J.S.)

Cuckoo. Appeared to be a slight increase in numbers from low ebb of 1955 (E.L.) Late song noted on July 13th, 15th, 26th (L.A., Rec.) At Diddington on Aug. 11th, fledged young seen being fed by a Redstart and a Yellow Wagtail (L.A.)

Little Owl. Further decline and call now rarely heard (E.L., Rec.) Nested in old Carrion Crow's nest Bluntisham (J.A.)

Long-eared Owl. July 31st, 1 Woodwalton Fen (P.B.)

Short-eared Owl. Nov. 15th. Several Kimbolton airfield in usual place (Rec.)

Nightjar. None seen in the Kimbolton or Gt. Staughton Woods (Rec.)

Kingfisher. Sept. 12th, Dec. 13th, 1 seen to visit garden pool at 84, High Street, Huntingdon, and on first occasion to catch and carry off a 2-inch Rudd (R.C.)

House Martin. Oct. 7th, nest at Huntingdon still contained 4 nearly fledged young (R.C.)

Hooded Crow. Jan. 29th, 3 Bluntisham Stauch (J.A.)

Rook. A small increase again in the size of the control rookeries. St. Neots 390 (+ 12), Lt. Paxton 114 (+ 8), Diddington 226 (+ 16). Correction: St. Neots 1955 total should have been 278 (Rec.) 7 Huntingdon rookeries counted for last 6 years show smaller rate of increase. 1949, 406; 1950, 390; 1951, 422; 1952, 512; 1955, 495; 1956, 464 (R.C.) In similar period at St. Neots rookeries nests have increased from 493 to 730. On April 14th the riverside rookery at Diddington, with 16 nests, had at night 58 roosting rooks (Rec.)

Wheatear. 1931 or 1932 a pair nested in a rabbit hole on Godmanchester Common (bridle road to Hemingford) (E.L.) Migrants seen. April 2nd, 2 Woodhurst; 5th, 2 Bluntisham; 7th, 12 Fenstanton; 12th, 4 Hilton; 14th, 2 Toseland; 16th, 4 Bluntisham; 26th, 1 Godmanchester; May 3rd, 20 Brampton; 5th, 2 Bluntisham; 8th, 1 Hilton; 13th, 1 Paxton; Aug. 18th, 3 Hilton (E.L., J.A., L.K., L.A., C.B., W.G., Rec.)

Whinchat. Pair seen, and probably nested, Diddington (E.L., L.A.)

Common Redstart. Several broods hatched Kimbolton and Tilbrook (Rec.) April 29th, pair Godmanchester (E.L.) Aug. 11th, 1 seen feeding young Cuckoo, Diddington Park (L.A.)

Wood Warbler. Sept. 2nd, 1 Fletton (G.A.)

Pied Flycatcher. Mr. Lees has a record of a nest in Diddington Park, about 1914. One bird was killed by a boy with a catapult.

Meadow Pippit. 2 nests near Bluntisham Staunch (J.A.)

Tree Pippit. June 13th, 1 singing Woodwalton Fen (Rec.)

White Wagtail. Seen near Fletton, April 9th, Sept. 10th, 11th, 12th, 25th (G.A.)

Grey Wagtail. Both in 1955 and 1956 a pair have nested in the iron box containing the machinery for operating Bluntisham Sluice. This year they fledged 4 young (J.A.) The first record of breeding in the county.

Red Backed Shrike. May 24th, 1 near Fenstanton (E.L.) The last nest Mr. Lees found was near Gt. Paxton Hill about 1930.

Brambling. Feb. 2nd, 2 Eynesbury; 23rd several Grafham (Rec., R.C.) During same month about 100 feeding in mustard at Holme (A. C. Dixon).

Cirl Bunting. April 27th, 1 Hilton (E.L.) Mr. Lees recalls finding a nest at Buckden, N. of Offord Mill, about 1934/35, and his father found a nest at Gt. Paxton, W. of the railway arch, about 1916/17.

Lapland Bunting. On March 24th in a strong E.S.E. wind Mr. Lees saw a flock of 8 Buntings (including 5 cocks) on ploughed land in Somersham N. Fen. They attracted his attention by their behaviour, which was fidgety and more like that of Wheatears than the expected Reed Buntings. Examining them at close range he saw that the head colouring of the cocks was not that of the Reed Bunting and he made notes of its pattern. Later reference to the Handbook showed that it corresponded to the Lapland Bunting. None has been recorded in the county before.

WOODWALTON FEN

Breeding confirmed of Jackdaw, Tree Pippit and Woodcock (Rec.)

MIGRANT DATES, 1956

Golden Plover. May 6th, Bluntisham (J.A.) Nov. 7th, Buckden (Rec.)
Redshank. March 3rd, Bluntisham (J.A.)
Turtle Dove. April 30th, Paxton (L.A.) Sept. 26th, Fletton (G.A.)
Cuckoo. April 9th, Bluntisham (J.A.) April 14th, Farcet (G.A.)
All other Spring records April 20th-23rd. July 24th, adult, Hilton (W.G.)
Swift. April 21st, Buckden (L.A.) 22nd, Bluntisham (J.A.)
May 11th, residents St. Neots (Rec.) Sept. 10th, Paxton (L.A.)
Swallow. March 26th, April 20th, residents. Sept. 15th, residents left. Nov. 13th, Paxton (L.A.)
House Martin. April 14th, Paxton (L.A.) 27th, residents St. Neots (Rec.) Oct 17th, Bluntisham (J.A.)
Sand Martin. April 11th, Hilton, Huntingdon (W.G., Rec.) May 5th, residents Paxton (Rec.) Sept. 7th, Fletton (G.A.)

Fieldfare. April 24th, Paxton (L.A., Rec.) Oct. 28th, Tose-land (Rec.)
Redwing. March 27th, St. Neots (Rec.) Oct. 13th, Yaxley (Rec.) 14th, Fletton, Paxton (G.A., L.A.)
Nightingale. April 18th, Waresley Wood (Rec.)
Reed Warbler. May 6th, Bluntisham (J.A.) May 13th, residents Paxton (L.A., Rec.)
Sedge Warbler. May 4th, St. Neots (Rec.)
Whitethroat. April 22nd, Bluntisham (J.A.)
Lesser Whitethroat. April 10th, Bluntisham (J.A.)
Willow Warbler. March 22nd, Bluntisham (J.A.) April 12th, St. Neots, Paxton (Rec., L.A.) Sept. 24th, Hilton (W.G.)
Chiffchaff. March 26th, 27th, Sept. 21st, St. Neots (Rec.)
Yellow Wagtail. April 15th, Paxton (Rec.) Sept. 14th, Huntingdon (R.C.)

Besides the birds named in the text or tables the following are believed to have bred in the county :—

Gt. Crested Grebe, Lt. Grebe, Tufted Duck, Kestrel, Pheasant, Water-Rail, Lapwing, Snipe, Stock Dove, Wood Pigeon, Barn Owl, Tawny Owl, Green Woodpecker, Gt. Spotted Woodpecker, Lesser Spotted Woodpecker, Skylark, Carrion Crow, Jackdaw, Magpie, Jay, Gt. Tit, Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Marsh Tit, Willow Tit, Long-Tailed Tit, Nuthatch, Tree Creeper, Wren, Mistle Thrush, Song Thrush, Blackbird, Robin, Grasshopper Warbler, Blackcap, Garden Warbler, Goldcrest, Spotted Flycatcher, Hedge Sparrow, Pied Wagtail, Starling, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Linnet, Bullfinch, Chaffinch, Yellow Hammer, Corn Bunting, Reed Bunting, House Sparrow, Tree Sparrow.

A passage migrant was the Common Sandpiper.

G. F. TEBBUTT,

Recorder.

FLORA

Despite the very wet summer more botanizing has been done within the county during 1956 by members and Distribution Map Scheme helpers than in any previous year since our Society began: consequently, a great amount of useful information has been collected. It has been necessary to omit many interesting records from the list owing to shortage of space, but it is hoped to include these in future reports.

Although few members attended the Winwick, Horsey Toll (Stanground South), Elton Furze and Farcet outings owing to the weather, fortunately it kept fine, though the grass was very wet at Winwick. Distribution Map Scheme Cards were filled in and a number of uncommon Huntingdonshire wild flowers recorded, valuable additions to our county records. More members, however, attended the Monks Wood outing and a few records were received from Mr. Blackie.

It is hoped to publish in our next report a first list of Huntingdonshire lichens. A glance at Dr. W. Watson's "Census Catalogue of British Lichens" will show how much this group of plants has been neglected in the county. Any specimens, even of very common species, would be very much appreciated.

At the beginning of the year Collins published their "Pocket Guide to Wild Flowers" by D. McClintock and R. S. R. Fitter, a book that cannot be too highly recommended to those members who have not yet become thoroughly acquainted with the British flowering plants.

Special attention is drawn to two papers in the list of botanical publications. Mr. M. E. D. Poore (M.E.D.P.) has made an extensive study of Woodwalton Fen (for The Nature Conservancy) in the *Journal of Ecology*, adding a great deal to our knowledge of fenland plant communities, and members of K.S.N.H.S. (Kimbolton School Natural History Society) have made a worthwhile study of the mistletoe around Kimbolton in their *Annual Report*. Records made on the Peterborough Field Meeting of the Botanical Society of the British Isles (B.S.B.I.) and mentioned in our 1953 *Report* have been extracted from their *Proceedings*.

The following abbreviations are used for contributors of several records: L. W. Angell (A.), Mr. and Mrs. Blackie (B.), O. N. Bishop (O.N.B.), R. Fraser (R.F.), R. D. Kime (R.D.K.), D. H. Kent (D.H.K.), T. Patston (T.P.), G. F. Tebbutt (T.), S. M. Walters (S.M.W.) and Anne Young (Y.), aged 8, whose records were kindly forwarded by her schoolmaster, Mr. Alcock. It is

BUTLER'S PIT, FLETTON — SELECTED WILDFOWL COUNTS

1956	Mallard	Teal	Wigeon	Pintail	Pochard	Tufted Duck	Goldeneye	Coot	Mute Swan
Jan. 5	—	—	—	—	—	12	—	10	—
" 15	—	25	—	—	—	5	—	17	12
" 27	—	30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Feb. 10	Few	10	—	—	—	10	—	35	—
" 13	—	15	—	—	—	15	—	65	—
" 18	—	4	—	—	—	35	—	65	27 + 17 Bewicks.
" 22	1	25	—	—	—	35	—	70	30 + 1 Bewick.
" 26	2	10	—	—	—	75	—	50	37
" 28	—	15	—	16	—	40	2	50	40
Mar. 1	—	2	—	—	—	70	7	50	15
" 2	—	—	—	18	5	65	9	50	40
" 6	7	—	—	—	9	25	2	60	45
" 10	—	10	2	2	13	25	—	45	25
" 14	6	10	—	10	—	45	—	35	40
" 16	5	30	—	56	—	35	—	15	55
" 20	5	—	—	48	8	25	—	10	No count.
" 25	—	—	—	16	3	35	—	10	No count.
" 27	—	—	—	—	—	20	—	10	—
" 28, 29, 30	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	5	—
April 3	8	5	—	—	—	1	—	2	12
" 14	5	10	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
April 27th - October 29th.	Almost no waterfowl except a few Mallard and 2 juv. Shoveller, July 5th.								
Oct. 30	5	30	—	—	—	1	—	—	—
Nov. 7	5	7	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
" 22	10	20	2	—	—	—	—	—	—
" 23 - Dec. 31st.	Similar figures to Nov. 22nd.								

(G.A.)

pleasant to receive records from such a young observer. As usual, where no name or initials are given, the records are those of your recorder, also indicated by Rec. All Mr. Fraser's undated records refer to 1953, though, doubtless, these plants still occur at Great Staughton. Once again, unless old records have been confirmed, only new localities are listed below.

Old records made by L. J. Tremayne (L.J.T.) have again been included and, also, a few interesting ones taken from specimens collected by A. W. Nicholls (A.W.N.) during 1880, recently discovered in Peterborough Museum. All those plants known to be new to the County are indicated thus *.

- 39/2 *Cardamine amara* L. Large Bittercress. Hemingford Grey, 2/6 (S.M.W.) Offord Darcy (A.)
- 49/2 *Descurainia sophia* (L.) Prantl. Flixweed. Weed of arable land, Great Staughton (R.F.) Dried up dyke, Hod Fen, 31/7. Farmyard, Horsey Toll (Exc.)
- 54/16 *Brassica juncea* Coss. Indian Mustard. Farmyard, Horsey Toll (Exc.) ONLY ONE PREVIOUS RECORD. Herb. Kew.
- 61/4 *Lepidium rudemale* L. Narrow-leaved Pepperwort. Hemingford Grey, 15/6/1918 (L. V. Lester-Garland) Herb. Kew. It would be interesting to know whether this rare Hunts. plant still exists there.
- 98/4 *Melandrium dioicum* (L.) C. & G. Red Campion. Fletton (on Oxford Clay), July, 1880 (A.W.N.) Stilton, 29/5/55 (Y.) More records of this rare Huntingdonshire plant are urgently required.
- 101/7 *Stellaria graminea* L. Lesser Stichwort. Kimbolton Castle grounds, 4/7/55 (O.N.B., *K.S.N.H.S. Ann. Rep.*, 1955, p.3). Fletton (on Oxford Clay), July, 1880 (A.W.N.) Elton Furze (Exc.)
- 127/7 *Geranium pyrenaicum* Burm. f. Mountain Cranesbill. Little Stukeley, 23/5/55 (B.) Rly. banks near St. Ives Station 17/6/55 (D.H.K.) Abundant along roadside, Hemingford Grey, 26/5/55.
- 127/12 *G. pusillum* Burm. f. Small-flowered Cranesbill. Waresley, 6/5/30 (L.J.T.) Kimbolton Castle grounds, 3/6/55 (O.N.B., *K.S.N.H.S. Ann. Rep.*, 1955, p.2.) Cornfield, Stibbington, 5/9.
- 138/2 *Rhamnus catharticus* L. Purging Buckthorn. Norman Cross, 16/9/36; Morborne, 17/9/36 (L.J.T.) Hedgerows N. of St. Ives station, 17/6/55 (D.H.K.) Calamagrostis sere, Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44, 465 and 486).
- 147/3 *Genista tinctoria* L. Dyer's Greenweed. Roadside by Limage Farm, Great Staughton (R.F.)
- 156/1 *Anthyllis vulneria* L. Kidney-vetch. Top of L.B.4 pit, just N. of Pickpocket Bridge, Farcet, 20/6/55 (H. F. Tebbs). ONLY TWO PREVIOUS RECORDS.
- 160/4 *Lotus uliginosus* Schk. Large Birdsfoot-trefoil. Elton Furze (Exc.) Roadside, Offord Darcey, July - August (A.)

- 176/8 *Vicia sepium* L. Bush Vetch. Stanground, June, 1880 (A.W.N.) Upton Wood, 26/6/54 (Exc.) Roadsides and open woodland, Gt. Staughton (R.F.). ONLY TWO OTHER RECORDS (V.C.H.)
- 176/35 *V. tetrasperma* (L.) Moench. Smooth Tare. Cornfield, Elton Furze (Exc.)
- 178/8 *Lathyrus nissolia* L. Grass Vetchling. Between Easton and Grafham (with Elecampane) along an old track, July (Mrs. H. D. Atkinson). Offord Darcy (A.) Judging by the records received this plant appears to be locally common in the county.
- 189/8 *Potentilla anglica* Laicharding Trailing Tormentil. Elton Furze (Exc.) ONLY TWO PREVIOUS RECORDS (V.C.H.). Herb. Kew.
- 190(2)/2 *Aphanes microcarpa* (Boiss. & Reut.) Rothm. (conf. S.M.W.) Cornfield, Elton Furze (Exc.) ONLY ONE PREVIOUS RECORD.
- 216/2 *Myrophyllum alterniflorum* DC. Alternate-flowered Water-milfoil. Woodwalton Fen, 1955 (Dr. M. Bruyns, *Handbook Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves*, 1956). ONLY ONE OTHER RECORD (V.C.H.)
- 218/1 *Peplis portula* L. Water Purslane. Damp hollows in cleared area, Monks Wood, Aug. (S.M.W.) ONLY ONE PREVIOUS RECORD (V.C.H.)
- * *Eccremocarpus scaber* Ruiz & Pav. Still growing around the remains of Connington Castle (demolished 1954), 14/9 (G.E.D. Alcock). Herb. Kew.
- 256/1 *Conopodium majus* (Gouan) Lor. & Barr. Pignut. Fletton (on Oxford Clay), June, 1880 (A.W.N.) Grassland, Gt. Staughton (R.F.) Offord Darcy (A.) ONLY ONE PREVIOUS RECORD (V.C.H.)
- 263/1 *Foeniculum vulgare* Mill. Fennel. Fletton (on Oxford Clay), Aug., 1880 (A.W.N.) ONLY ONE OTHER RECORD (V.C.H.)
- 282/5 *Torilis nodosa* (L.) Gaertn. Knotted Hedge Parsley. Horsey Hill Fort, Horsey Toll (Exc.)
- 308/1 *Scabiosa columbaria* L. Small Scabious. Top end of "New Road" (approach to Top and Waterloo Farms, Offord Cluny) (A.) V.C.H. states "VERY RARE."
- 304/5 *Valeriana rimosa* Bast. Arable weed, Gt. Staughton (R.F.) ONLY TWO PREVIOUS RECORDS (V.C.H.)
- *354/2 *Galinsoga ciliata* (Rafn.) Blake Garden weed, Offord Darcy, September (A.) Herb. Kew.
- 377/1 *Tanacetum vulgare* L. Tansy. Buckden (Offord—Buckden roadside) (A.) V.C.H. states "VERY LOCAL."
- 378/1 *Artemisia absinthium* L. Wormwood. Abundant in brickyards, Fletton, 26/9/53 (*Proc. B.S.B.I.*, 1., p.253). V.C.H. states, "COMMON ALONG THE FEN-DRIVES."
- 383/8 *Senecio viscosus* L. Stinking Groundsel. Roadside near Holme Fen, 7/9 (T.P. and Rec.) First record: Wodwalton, 14/8/1915.

- *385/1 *Calendula officinalis* L. Marigold. On green, Morborne, 17/9/36; Stibbington, 18/9/36 (L.J.T.) Roadside and ditch, Offord—Paxton road (A.) Roadside near Holme Wood (on old rubbish tip) 7/9 (T.P. and Rec.) Has been growing in the latter locality for several years.
- 391/1 *Carlina vulgaris* L. Carlina Thistle. Rough ground between Grafham and Ellington, Aug., 1954 (R.F.) ONLY TWO OTHER RECORDS.
- 396/8b *Cirsium arvensis* (L.) Scop. var. *mite* Wim. & Grab. Largest wood, Elton Furze (Exc.) Horsey Toll (Exc.)
- 405/12 *Centaurea cyanus* L. Cornflower. Nr. the swings, Mill Common, Huntingdon, 7/7/56. Probably a garden escape. (Miss O. D. Clarke). V.C.H. states "VERY LOCAL."
- 435/3 *Campanula trachelium* L. Bats-in-the-Belfry. Midloe Wood (R.F.) ONLY THREE OTHER RECORDS.
- 473/2 *Vinca minor* L. Lesser Periwinkle. Great Paxton, 14/9/36 (L.J.T.) By walls, Stilton (Y.) This confirms an old record by J. Harrison Smith (Vide *Rep.* 6, page 19).
- 506/4 *Myosotis caespitosa* K.F. Schultz Tufted Water Forget-me-not. On the edge of ponds, Monks' Wood (Exc. per B.) ONLY TWO PREVIOUS RECORDS.
- 507/3 *Lithospermum arvense* L. Corn Gromwell. Field, Winwick (Exc.)
- 509/1 *Echium vulgare* L. Viper's Bugloss. One plant only, side of path, Gaynes Hall, July, 1954 (R.F.) ONLY TWO PREVIOUS RECORDS (V.C.H.)
- 511/1b *Calystegia sepium* (L.) R. & S. var. *coloratus* Lange (pink flowered variety of Bindweed). Hod Fen, Yaxley, 31/7. More abundant there than the white flowered form. Herb. Kew.
- 521/1 *Atropa belladonna* L. Deadly Nightshade. Around gardens, Gaynes Hall. Doubtless a relic of cultivation. (R.F.) Garden weed, Stilton, Sept., 1955 (Y.)
- 534/1 *Antirrhinum majus* L. Snapdragon. Old walls, St. Ives, 17/6/55 (D.H.K.)
- 543/9 *Veronica catenata* Pennell. Dried up dike, Hod Fen, Yaxley, 31/7.
- 545/5e *Odontites verna* (Bell.) Dum. var. *serotina* Dum. Along a cart track N. of the largest wood, Elton Furze (Exc.) Herb. Kew.
- 547/1 *Pedicularis palustris* L. Marsh Redrattle. Wet ditch, Great Paxton (A.) ONLY TWO PREVIOUS RECORDS (V.C.H.)
- 547/2 *P. sylvatica* L. Lousewort. The "Heath," Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44, 465). ONLY ONE OTHER RECORD (V.C.H.)
- *550/10 *Orobanche minor* Sm. Lesser Broomrape (conf. R. A. Graham). Meadow by a brook, Wistow. Parasitic on *Trifolium pratense*. Flowering from August until the last week in October. (Miss F. M. Blackhurst).
- 577/3 *Stachys sylvatica* L. A pink-flowered Hedge Woundwort growing near type with normal flowers. Rough ride, Winwick (near Barnwell Wold), 3/8 (T.P. and Rec.)

- 581/4 *Lamium hybridum* Vill. Cut-leaved Deadnettle. Waste ground Winwick (Exc.) Hod Fen, Yaxley, 31/7. V.C.H. states "RARE."
- 595/2 *Scleranthus annuus* L. Knawel. Cornfield, Elton Furze (Exc.)
- 600/15 *Chenopodium polyspermum* L. Many-seeded Goosefoot. Common, arable land, Gt. Staughton (R.F.) Stangground South (Whittlesey Road) 21/9/1910 (L.J.T.) Seen there again on the Horsey Toll Exc. Cornfield, Elton Furze (Exc.)
- *600/36 *C. capitatum* (L.) Aschers. In a field (dressed some years ago with shoddy) Offord Darcy, September (A.) Herb. Kew.
- 617 *Rheum rhaponticum* L. Rhubarb. In a dyke near Hod Fen, Yaxley, 31/7. This did not appear to have been deliberately planted, as it was in such an unlikely place.
- 618/12 *Rumex palustris* Sm. Marsh Dock. Farmyard, Horsey Toll (Exc.) Hod Fen, Yaxley, 31/7. Herb. Kew. V.C.H. states "RARE." Herb. Kew.
- *626/1 *Viscum album* L. Mistletoe. On lime trees, S.W. corner of the Mall, Kimbolton Castle (*K.S.N.H.S. Ann. Rep.*, 1955, p.7 and T.) The only other trees recorded by K.S.N.H.S. bearing mistletoe were apple trees growing in gardens. Cottage garden, Offord Darcy; gardener's cottage, Stukeley Hall (A.) Both implanted on apple trees. One plant on hawthorn, Elton.
- 628/15 *Euphorbia exigua* L. Dwarf Spurge. Cornfield, Elton Furze (Exc.)
- 633/1x4 *Ulmus glabra* Huds. x. *plottii* Druce (conf. R. Melville). Near the pond, Tollbar Spinney, Stibbington. Herb. Kew.
- *633/2 *U. coritana* Melville Coritanian Elm. Hedges and copses, Gt. Staughton (R.F.) Hemingford Grey (S.M.W.)
- 644/1 *Carpinus betulus* L. Hornbeam. Hedgerows N. of St. Ives station 17/6/55 (D.H.K.) ONLY ONE OTHER RECORD RECEIVED OF THIS TREE SINCE V.C.H.
- 646/3 *Quercus cerris* L. Turkey Oak. Naturalised and regenerating freely in Midloe Wood (R.F.) "The Sluice," Alconbury 9/6 (B.)
- 669/11 *Orchis fuchsii* Dr. Spotted Orchid. Rough ride, Winwick (Exc.)
- *694/1 *Convallaria majalis* L. Lily-of-the-Valley. Woodbury Woods near Everton, about 1905 (v.-c. 30) (H. N. Dixon and C. G. Tebbutt.)
- 727/2 *Lemna polyrhiza* L. Great Duckweed. Pond near St. Ives station, 17/6/55 (D.H.K.)
- 727/4 *L. gibba* L. Gibbous Duckweed. Horsey Toll (Exc.)
- 737/4 *Potamogeton coloratus* Hornem. Fen Pondweed. Knot Holes, Fletton, 26/9/53. (*Proc. B.S.B.I.*, 1, p.253).
- 737/8 *P. xsparganifolius* Laest. With both parents, dyke, Ramsey Heights, 26/9/53 (*Proc. B.S.B.I.*, 1, p.253.)
- 737/13x1 *P. xfluitans* Roth Woodwalton Fen, 1954 (Dr. G. Taylor *Handbook, Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves*, 1956).

- *737/17x16 *P. xcooperi* Fryer With both parents, Knot Holes, Fletton, 26/9/53 (*Proc. B.S.B.I.*, 1., p.253).
- 737/23 *P. pusillus* L., sec. Dandy & Taylor. Knot Holes, Fletton, 26/9/53, (*Proc. B.S.B.I.*, 1., p.253).
- 753/34 *Carex pallescens* L. Pale Sedge, Monks' Wood, 11/6/55 (Exc.) ONLY ONE PREVIOUS RECORD (V.C.H.)
- 753/36 *C. panicea* L. Carnation Grass. Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44., 465).
- 780/3f *Agrostis gigantea* Roth var. *ramosa* (Gray) Philipson (det. C. E. Hubbard). Hod Fen, Yaxley, 31/7. Horsey Toll (Exc.) Herb. Kew.
- *794/3 *Helictotrichon pratense* (L.) Pilger Meadow Oat Calamagrostis sere, Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44., 465).
- 809/1 *Koeleria gracilis* Pers. Crested Hair-grass. On a lawn, Stibington, 15/6. ONLY ONE PREVIOUS RECORD (V.C.H.)
- 818/2 *Melica uniflora* Retz. Wood Melick. Diddington Wood, Aug., 1954 (R.F.) ONLY ONE PREVIOUS RECORD (V.C.H.)
- 822/1 *Briza media* L. Common Quaking Grass. Small patch in centre of grass field, Stilton, 8/6/55 (Y.) Grassland, Gt. Staughton (R.F.)
- *824/2b *Poa angustifolia* L. Narrow-leaved Meadow-grass. In grassland by roadside near Alconbury Weston, 30/5/38 (C. E. Hubbard). Herb. Kew.
- 826/3 *Festuca arundinacea* Schreb. Tall Fescue. Along rough ride, Winwick and Old Weston, 3/8 (T.P. and Rec.) Elton Furze (Exc.) Herb. Kew.
- 826/3x2 *F. arundinacea* Schreb. x *gigantea* (L.) Vill. (det. C. E. Hubbard). Along rough ride, Old Weston, 7/8/55 (T.P. and Rec.) With both parents.
- 827/6 *Bromus ramosus* Huds. Hairy or Wood Brome. Edge of wood, St. Ives (R.D.K.) Shady places, Gt. Staughton (R.F.) Large wood, Elton Furze (Exc.)
- 830/6 *Agropyron caninum* (L.) Beauv. Bearded Couch. N. of St. Neots, 13/9/36 (L.J.T.) Woodland and shaded roadsides, Gt. Staughton (R.F.)
- 851/7 *Asplenium ruta-muraria* L. Wall-rue. Hemingford Grey, 2/6 (S.M.W.) V.C.H. states "RARE."
- 856/1 *Dryopteris filix-mas* (L.) Schott Male Fern. Elton Furze (Exc.)
- 866/1 *Ophioglossum vulgatum* L. Adder's Tongue. In short grass, Gaynes Hall, July, 1954 (R.F.) Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.* 44., 486).

BRYOPHYTA

- *24 *Aneura pinguis* (L.) Dum. On clay near L.B.C.'s play-pit, Warboys, fruiting 23/4/55, (Rec., *Trans. British Bryological Soc.*, Vol. 2, p. 146).
- *101 *Campylopus fragilis* (Turn.) B. & S. Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44., 463).

- *113 *Dicranum rugosum* Brid. Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44., 465).
- *116 *D. bonjeani* De Not. Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44., 486).

MOSES OF HOLME FEN

The following species were collected by Mrs. J. R. Garrood on 15/5/31 and named by the late Mr. W. R. Sherrin:—

- *36 *Polytrichum piliferum* Hedw.
- 37 *P. juniperinum* Hedw.
- *40 *P. formosum* Hedw. Recently recorded for Woodwalton Fen (M.E.D.P., *Journ. Ecol.*, 44., 486).
- 117 *Dicranum scoparium* Hedw.
- 421 *Bryum capillare* Hedw.
- 519 *Pseudoescleropodium purum* (Hedw.) Fleisch.
- 590 *Hypnum cupressiforme* Hew. (conf. D. H. Dalby). A FORM WITH GLOSSY LEAVES. Denton Fen, 13/8 (T. P. & Rec.)
- *1/9 *Sphagnum squarrosum* Pers. ex Crome (det. E. C. Wallace). Denton Fen, 13/8 (T.P. & Rec.)
- *1/26 *S. nemoreum Scop.* (det. E. C. Wallace) Denton Fen, 13/8 (T.P. & Rec.)

Other mosses from Holme Fen are listed in *Rep.* 6, page 21.

FUNGI AND SLIME FUNGI OF ELTON NEW CLOSE

The following species were collected from Elton New Close (also known as High Holborn Spinney) by Mr. T. Patston and myself. They were all growing on ash leaves, twigs or stumps:—

- 6/9/56 *Nectria cinnabarina* (Tode ex Fr.) Fr.
- Mycena hiemalis* Osbeck in Retz ex Fr.
- Typhula phacorrhiza* Fr. The prostrate sclerotial state formerly known as *Sclerotium scutellatum* Alb. & Schw.
- Exidia nucleata* (Schw.) Burt
- Pachnocybe albidia* (Fr.) Berk. Not recorded for the British Isles since the Rev. M. J. Berkeley first reported it (for King's Cliffe, Northants.) in 1836.
- Trichoderma viride* Pers. ex Fr.
- Dianema corticatum* Lister
- 24/12/56 *Sclerotium complanatum* Tode. (Believed to be the sclerotial state of a *Typhula* sp.)
- Pistillaria pusilla* Fr.
- 23/12/51 *Lasiosphaeria spermoides* (Hoffm.) Ces. & De Not. Collected with *Trichia decipiens* (Pers.) Macbride (Vide *Rep.* 4, Page 22).

I am indebted to Dr. R. W. G. Dennis and Mr. D. A. Reid, of Kew, for identifying most of the above mentioned species.

PUBLICATIONS

A. G. L. Hellyer (1956) TREES FOR CITY STREETS, *Country Life*, Vol. CXX, No. 3104, p. 68.

M. E. D. Poore (1956) THE ECOLOGY OF WOODWALTON FEN, *The Journal of Ecology*, Vol. 44, p. 455-492.

A number of useful ecological studies written by Kimbolton School boys have appeared in *The Journals and Annual Report* (1955) of the Kimbolton School Natural History Society. These include: THE FLORA OF THE UPPER ORCHARD AT BAKER'S MEAD, SURVEY OF THE CASTLE GROUNDS, KIMBOLTON, and MISTLETOE SURVEY.

JOHN L. GILBERT.

THE UPPER LIAS NEAR THE STAUNCH PIT, STIBBINGTON, N.G.R. 52/077994

(Continued)

The limestone of the Jurensis Zone also contained the following fossils:—

†*Hippopodium ponderosum* (J. Sow.).

†Cf. *Astarte elegans* (J. Sow.).

†*Camptonectes laminatus* (J. Sow.). As *C. laminatus* occurs in the Inferior Oolite both Dr. Cox and Mr. Castell consider this the most likely species in the Upper Lias, rather than *C. rigidus* as mentioned in the list of fossils (Ann. Rep. H.F.F.S. 8, p.18), which does not occur in the Inferior Oolite.

Beneath these beds were blue clays of the Bifrons Zone which yielded:

†*Grammatodon chapuisi* (Arkell) = *Cucullaea elegans* (Chapuis & Dewalque) non Roemer

†**Gresslya donaciformis* (Phillips)

†**Nuculana ovum* (J. de C. Sow.)

†**Acrocoelites* spp. Both stout and slender forms present (B.M.)

†**Hildoceras bifrons* (Bruguieue)

†**Porpoceras "subarmatum"* (Young & Bird)

†*Polyplictus subplanatus* (Oppel)

†**Phylloceras heterophyllum* (Sow.)

†**Pseudolioceras lythense* (Young & Bird)

†*Lytoceras* sp. indet.

†*Procerithium (Rhabdocolpus)* sp. cf. *jole* (d'Orb.) (G.S.M.)

†*Nerineid gastropod* indet.

†*Hybodus* sp. Fragment of fin spine only. (B.M.)

†*Ichthyosaurus* sp. One vertebra only. (B.M.)

Limestone nodules were abundant in the clay; they included napiform and lenticular specimens. Others were: bored by marine borers (*Lithophaga* sp.); scratched; smooth; bleached; and coated with pyrites. Some of the nodules contained calcite crystals. Nodules formed from mollusc shells, such as *Gresslya donaciformis*, also occurred. Near Stibbington House, N.G.R. 52/075986, a nodule contained the following fossils:—

†*Pleuromya* sp. indet.

†*Inoceramus polyplocus* Roemer

†**I. dubius* (J. Sow.)

†**Hildoceras bifrons* (Bruguieue)

†**Porpoceras "subarmatum"* (Young & Bird)

†**Pseudolioceras lythense* (Young & Bird)

†*Lytoceras* sp. indet.

†*Isocyprina* sp. cf. *paupertina* (Fox-Strangways) (B.M.) (attached to a cast of coniferous wood).

†*Ichthyosaurus* sp. One vertebra only. (B.M.)

Petrified coniferous wood, with the original wood substance partly present but the cells filled with calcium carbonate and iron compounds, was abundant in the clay including the nodules.

Nodules consisting of a hardened brown clay contained the following fossils:—

†**Nuculana ovum* (J. Sow.)

†*Grammatodon* sp.

†*Modiolus* sp.

†*Zygopleura* sp.

†?*Pseudomelania (Oonia)* sp. (G.S.M.)

†*Sulcoactaeon* sp. nov.? (G.S.M.)

†*Promathildia* sp. (G.S.M.)

†**Discinisca reflexa* (J. Sow.)

?*Opercula* or small seeds.

This brown clay probably either belonged to or was derived from the Lower *Nuculana ovum* clays of the Braunianus Subzone in which small gastropods are usually abundant. Certainly either the lower beds of the Braunianus-subzone or the upper beds of the next subzone (*Fibulatum*) were present near Wansford Old Bridge, N.G.R. 52/075992, by the quantity of nail-head spar or cone-in-cone structure composed of argillaceous limestone dredged from the Nene there, as this formation usually occurs in these beds.

The blue clay also contained concretions of iron sulphide and small concretions resembling coprolites of fish.

The dredgings also yielded the following, but their exact provenance is unknown: a fragment of quartz sandstone cemented with calcite; a nodule of clear quartz grains cemented by calcite with darker balls of a very fine grained silica—probably chalcedony; fin rays of an indeterminate fish; a shark's tooth (?*Strophodus* sp.); and part of symphysis of mandible of †*Steneosaurus* sp. The distal end of ?fibula of †*Steneosaurus* sp. was found at Sutton Ford, N.G.R. 52/094986.

This paper, together with the preceding ones, cannot do justice to the many remnants of past life occurring in the Upper Lias at Stibbington, as well over 100 different species were discovered within the distance of one mile. Many are not yet determined.

For the identification of the fossils I gratefully acknowledge the assistance I have received from the following experts: Dr. W. E. Swinton (with the reptiles), Dr. L. F. Spath (with the ammonites), Dr. L. R. Cox and Mr. C. P. Castell (with the lamellibranchs and gastropods), Dr. Helen M. Muir-Wood (with the brachiopods), Dr. T. M. Harris (with the plants), and Mr. R. V. Melville (generally).

Abbreviations and symbols used in this paper: B.M.—specimens presented to the Natural History Museum, South Kensington; G.S.M.—specimens presented to the Geological Survey Museum; *—species recorded by Beeby Thompson from similar zones in Northants.; †—typical oolitic species; ‡—typical liassic species. Specimens of the majority of species mentioned have been retained in my collection at Stibbington.

JOHN L. GILBERT.

LEPIDOPTERA

It was a wretched year for most species. I include some of the more interesting 1933-37 records supplied by Capt. F. Stanley-Smith.

14. *Argynnis paphia* L. Elton Furze 11/6/56, a new locality (H.F.T.)
29. *Vanessa cardui* L. Not recorded since 1952.
34. *Melanargia galathea* L. Winwick, a new locality (J.L.G.) Fletton, new locality (H.F.T.) Usually c. along Elton road at Sibson (J.L.G.)
35. *Pararge aegeria egerides* St. Elton Furze, new locality (J.L.G.)
47. *Thecla quercus* L. Brampton Wood, 33/37 (F.S.-S.)
67. *Erynnis tages* L. Farcet, new locality (H.F.T.)
81. *Sphinx ligustri* L. Woodstone (H.F.T.)
109. *Lophopteryx cucullina*. Schiff. Monks Wd. July (L. G. Warren).
113. *Pterostoma palpina* L. Larva at Yaxley, 22/6/56 (H.F.T.)
140. *Trichiura crataegi* L. Monks Wd. 33/37 (F.S.-S.)
149. *Gastropacha quercifolia* L. Brampton, 33/37 (F.S.-S.)
214. *Apatele rumicis* L. Brampton, 33/37 (F.S.-S.)
243. *Spaelotis ravida* Hb. Brampton Wd. 33—37 (F.S.-S.)
280. *Polia nebulosa* Hfn. Bevills Wd., 33—37 (F.S.-S.)
340. *Apamea obscura* Haw. Bevills Wd. and Woodwalton Fen, 33—37 (F.S.-S.)
342. *A. unanimitis* Hb. Woodwalton, 33—37 (F.S.-S.)
429. *Petilampis minima* Haw. Alconbury 4/8/56 (J.E.H.B.)
493. *Cucullia chamomillae*. Schiff. Fletton, 2/6 (H.F.T.)
665. *Xanthorhoë designata* Rott. Fletton 22/6 (H.F.T.)
716. *Plemyra bicolorata* Hfn. Common at Alconbury early July (J.E.H.B.)

819. *Erannis aurantiaria* Esp. Bred fr. larva coll. Monks Wd. May. (J.E.H.B.)

852. *Biston betularia* L. ab. carbonaria Dbdy. Yaxley Aug. (H.F.T.)

868. *Aethalura punctulata* Schiff. Monks Wd. 22/5 (J.E.H.B.)

2297. *Hepialus sylvina* L. Brampton 33—37 (F.S.-S.) Fletton 22/6 (H.F.T.)

H.F.T.—H. F. Tebbs. J.L.G.—J. L. Gilbert, F.S.-S.—F. Stanley-Smith.

The long-planned County collection is now being set up. Through the generosity of the Peterborough Museum it was possible to buy a 20-drawer cabinet at a very low figure and this was presented to the Society by the Chairman. It is at present at Alconbury and the collection is in the course of being arranged. Many species are still needed and specimens of these will be welcome, provided that they have data labels.

THE LEPIDOPTERA OF HUNTINGDONSHIRE—contd.

4. Noctuoidea

The largest families of the Noctuoidea require much more work before they can be dealt with, and there is really no group which can be properly covered in the absence of a much larger number of observers in all parts of the county. The Arctiidae (Tiger and Footman moths), a small and conspicuous group, are discussed here in the full knowledge of the incompleteness of the information and in the hope of attracting additional records.

1. Arctiidae

A. ARCTIINAE

Spilosoma lubricipeda (= *menthastris* = Esp.) L. (White Ermine). V.C.H. says "common," and Mr. Tebbs finds it so at Fletton. I have records from Huntingdon, Abbots Ripton and Alconbury, but I do not often see either the larva or the imago.

S. lutea Hfn. (= *lubricipeda* auctt). (Buff Ermine). V.C.H. gives "common." The larva swarms on garden mint most years (H.F.T.) Records from Norman Cross, Fletton, Alconbury, but not often seen in the perfect state.

Cycnia mendica Clark. (Muslin Ermine). V.C.H. gives "common in woods." Mr. Tebbs recorded it at Fletton in 1951 and 1952 and Capt. Stanley-Smith at Brampton from 1933 to 1937. I found the larva on Nipplewort at Alconbury in 1948. Status in the county indeterminate.

Diacrisia sannio L. (= *russula* L.) (Clouded Buff.) Found on Holme Fen by Prof. Babington (in ? 1828) (V.C.H.) Capt. J. A. Vipian recorded it for the county without specified locality. There is no modern record though parts of Woodwalton and Holme look suitable. It is found just over the border at Castor Hanglands (H.F.T.)

Pyrrharctia fuliginosa L. (Ruby Tiger). Monks Wd. (V.C.H.) One, very worn, came to light at Alconbury 2/8/48. Mr. Tebbs recorded it at Fletton in 1950, '51, '53 and '56. I have no other records and it looks as if its hold may be precarious.

Arctia caja (= *caia* auctt). L. (Garden Tiger). Common (V.C.H.) Records from Fletton, Woodston, Holme Fen and Alconbury. No doubt common everywhere, but the destruction of hedges will not help it.

Panaxia dominula L. (Scarlet Tiger). Fens in Hunts. formerly (V.C.H.) Hunts. (Capt. J. A. Vipan), Hunts. (Humphrey, and Westwood). I once lived for four years within a mile of a colony of this local moth without discovering it. It may survive somewhere.

Callimorpha jacobaeae L. (Cinnabar). Varies in numbers from year to year and has lately been rather scarce. It will feed on groundsel but its favourite food is Ragwort which, in the present high state of cultivation, is uncommon.

B. LITHOSIINAE

Atolmis rubricollis L. (Red-necked Footman). V.C.H. records it for the county on the authority of the late Capt. J. A. Vipan, of Stibbington. No further information.

Nudaria mundana L. (Muslin Footman). Hunts. (J. A. Vipan), Somersham district (V.C.H.) No recent records but it ought to survive at Woodwalton and Holme, and would be worth a search.

Mitochondria miniata Forst. (Rosy Footman). Warboys, Bevill's Wood and Woodwalton Fen from '33-'37 (F.S.-S.) One at Woodwalton Fen '51, two in '53, one at Holme Fen '54 (J.E.H.B.) Holme Fen '54 (Gardner and Rivers 66 Ent. Rec. 275). Evidently holding its own.

Cybosia mesomella L. (Four-dotted Footman). V.C.H. gives Woodwalton Fen, Holme Fen, Monks Wood and Yaxley. I took it near Woodwalton Fen in 1951 and 1953 and at Holme Fen in 1954. Capt. Stanley-Smith recorded it from Bevills Wood 1933-37.

Gnophos quadra L. (Large Footman). St. Ives (H. E. Norris, 19 Entom. 178-9).

Eilema griseola Hb. (= *stramineola* Dbldy). (Dingy Footman.) Ellington, St. Ives, Somersham, Holme Fen, Yaxley (V.C.H.) Holme Fen '53 and '54 (H.F.T.) There is a Holme Fen specimen dated 6/8/17 in the Mellows Coll. at Peterborough (*teste* H.F.T.)

E. lurideola Zinck. (Common Footman). Common (V.C.H.) Neither Mr. Stanley-Smith nor Mr. Tebbs nor I have recorded it and it seems likely that it is no longer common.

E. complana L. (Scarce Footman). Hunts. (J. A. Vipan). Holme Fen (V.C.H.) Holme Fen 16/8/54 (H.F.T.)

E. sororcula Hfn. (Orange Footman). Monks Wd. (V.C.H.) I have never seen it in Monks Wd. but I have not searched for the larva and it may still be there.

J. E. H. BLACKIE.

Note.—A large number of Holme Fen records have just been received from Mr. S. W. P. Pooles, of Peterborough. They include *S. Inbricipeda*, *S. Intea*, *P. fuliginosa*, *G. miniata*, *C. mesomella*, *E. griseola*, *E. Inrideola*, and *E. complana*.

J.E.H.B.