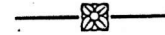


HUNTINGDONSHIRE
FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

15th
ANNUAL
REPORT
1962

PRICE (to non-members) 10/6

HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY



Chairman :

J. L. GILBERT, Esq., The Herbarium, The Royal Botanic Gardens,
Kew, Richmond, Surrey.

Hon. Secretary :

PROFESSOR ALASTAIR N. WORDEN, Cromwell House, Huntingdon.
(Tel. : Huntingdon 1122/3)

Hon. Treasurer :

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

Hon. Social Secretary :

P. G. M. DICKINSON, Esq., The Willows, Wyton, Hunts.
(Tel. :

Committee :

1962

G. E. D. ALCOCK
MRS. J. M. BAGLEY
H. T. BERMAN
J. E. H. BLACKIE
MISS P. GOODLIFF

E. T. LEES (co-opted during 1962)
MAJOR LYNTON
DR. K. MELLANBY
DR. N. W. MOORE
C. F. TEBBUTT

Referees :

Mammals - - - - A. N. WORDEN, Cromwell House, Huntingdon.
*Mammalian and
other bones* - - - DR. F. R. PARRINGTON, Zoology School, Cambridge.
Birds - - - - - C. F. TEBBUTT, The Ferns, Eynesbury, St. Neots.
Reptilia & Amphibia - H. J. BERMAN, St. Ivo School, St. Ives.
Macro-Lepidoptera - J. E. H. BLACKIE, The Bell House, Alconbury,
Hunts.
*Hemiptera
(Hepteroptera)* - - M. G. MORRIS, 34 Oaktree Close, St. Ives, Hunts.
*Ants, Myriapods
& Woodlice* - - - B. ING, 41 Queens Gate, London, S.W.7.
Flora - - - - - J. L. GILBERT, c/o The Herbarium, Royal Botanic
Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey.
Myxomycetes only - - B. ING, 41 Queens Gate, London, S.W.7.
(together with Mr. W. O. Copland, referee for leeches,
who left the district during the year)

Annual Report for 1962

(No. 15)



INTRODUCTION

The Annual General Meeting was held on Saturday, 24 March, 1962, at Huntingdon Grammar School, by kind permission of the Headmaster, when 39 members and visitors were present.

The minutes of the Meeting held on 25 March, 1961, were read and the Hon. Treasurer's Report was received and accepted. The Annual Report for 1961 was distributed, and included the Hon. Secretary's Report.

The election of Officers and referees and of members of the Committee was dealt with as listed in the present Report, except that Mr. C. M. G. Brinkworth was appointed as Hon. Social Secretary (Mr. Brinkworth resigned during the year on leaving the district and the committee appointed Mr. P. G. M. Dickinson to succeed him. The Committee also, during the year co-opted Mr. E. T. Lees as a member).

Suggestions for the programme for 1962-63 were discussed and referred to the Committee. Various suggestions were made relating to the dissemination of information to members and these too were referred to the Committee for appropriate action.

Following the vote of thanks to the Chairman, Mr. I. F. Gaunt, B.Sc., M.I.Biol. of the Department of Pharmacology and Toxicology, Huntingdon Research Centre, addressed the meeting on "Evolution in Progress: Industrial Melanisation in Moths," and this was followed by a lively discussion.

The following excursions were arranged: Wednesday, 23 May: Little Paxton Gravel Pits, (Birds and Water Flowers; leader: Mr. C. F. Tebbutt). Saturday, 9 June: Ramsey at Forty Foot Bridge, to explore the Old Course of the Nene (Leader: Mr. J. L. Gilbert). Wednesday, 13 June: Huntingdon to explore the disused railway line between Huntingdon and the second Ouse river bridge. Sunday, 24 June: Havergate bird Reserve. Saturday, 30 June: Diddington Wood, by kind permission of Mr. Furbank. Wednesday, 11 July: Little Paxton Wood, by kind permission of Mr. G. Davidson (Leader: Mr. Angel).

It is a pleasure to record that one of our members, Mr. G. E. D. Alcock, has been awarded the Jackson-Gwilt Medal by the Royal Astronomical Society, in recognition of his valuable work in the systematic search for and the observation of meteors and comets.

LEPIDOPTERA 1962

The absence of butterflies was again noticeable and I found the same state of affairs in localities all over the South of England. The migrants were scarce though the Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui* L.) was seen for the first time since 1958 and was recorded from Alconbury and Grafham. The Holly Blue (*Celastrina argiolus* L.) was again common in May and a few were seen in July. The White Admiral (*Limenitis camilla* L.) was seen in Monks Wood on July 31st by Dr. M. G. Morris, the first sighting in this county since 1955. Many formerly common butterflies, browns, fritillaries, blues and skippers were scarce or absent. It is a sign of the times that the sight of 20 or 30 Common Blues (*Polyommatus icarus* Rott.) by Mr. H. F. Tebbs at Belby Pit should be worth recording.

Among the moths the Red Underwing (*Catocala nupta* L.) made a welcome re-appearance and was recorded at Alconbury, Grafham and Ramsey. The small Elephant Hawk (*Deilephila porcellus* L.) was seen hovering over Bugle at Alconbury on June 18th. Other records were:

Small Square-spot. *Diarsia rubi* View Fletton. (H. F. Tebbs).
Mullein Shark. *Cucullia verbasci* L. Alconbury.
Double Lobed. *Apamea ophiogramma* Esp. Fletton (H. F. Tebbs).
Leopard. *Zeuzera pyrina* L. Fletton (H. F. Tebbs).
Goat Moth. *Cossus cossus* L. Fletton (H. F. Tebbs).

We need some more observers and more who will send in their records.

J. E. H. BLACKIE.

The Lepidoptera of Huntingdonshire (continued from 12th Report)

J. E. H. BLACKIE, C.B., M.A., F.R.E.S.

We seem at the moment, to be in a bad period for Lepidoptera for reasons not altogether clear, though certainly poisonous sprays have something to do with it. The group here dealt with has, ever since I came to Huntingdonshire been, with a few exceptions, surprisingly scarce and species that I used to be able to beat in dozens out of hedges and bushes in Berkshire are here met only in very small numbers. Many described as 'Common' in the V.C.H. list are scarce or even apparently absent.

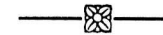
The order used is that of Heslop's *Revised Check List* (1947) with the nomenclature brought up-to-date in accordance with South's *Moths of the British Isles*, (1961 edition);

5. Notodontoidea (continued)
4. Geometridae (continued)
2. Larentiinae.
625. *Anaitis plagiata* L. (Treble Bar) Brampton Wood, Monks Wood. (V.C.H.). No record for many years though the food plant (*Hypericum*) is abundant. The heathy wastes that it likes are gone.

628. *Chesias legatella* Schiff (= *spartiata*. Herbst) (Streak) St. Ives (V.C.H.) This would only be a casual since Broom is scarcely found in Hunts.
634. *Mysticoptera sexalata*. Riez (Small Seraphim). No record in V.C.H. Holme Fen 1956 (S.W.P.P.)—the first record for the county.
635. *Triphosa dubitata* L. (Tissue) Connington, St. Ives (V.C.H.), Alconbury 1952 (rec.). Distribution quite unknown.
636. *Rheumaptera cervinalis* Scop (= *certata* Hb.) (Scarce Tissue) Somersham District (V.C.H.), Alconbury at light 1948 (rec.).
640. *Ecliptopera silaceata* Schiff. (Small Phoenix) Bevills Wood, Hermitage Wood, singly 1952-4 (rec.), Monks Wood 1958 (C.B.B.).
642. *Lygris prunata* L. (Large Phoenix) Localities unspecified in V.C.H. No record.
643. *Lygris testata* L. (Common Chevron) Wood Walton, Holme Fen (V.C.H.) Wood Walton Fen, common (F.G.S.) Holme Fen (S.W.P.P.) Woodston 1960 (H.F.T.).
645. *Lygris mellinata* Fab. (= *associata* Bork) (Spinach) Localities unspecified in V.C.H. The foodplant, *Ribes*, is rare as a native. No record.
646. *Lygris pyraliata* Scop. (= *dotata* auctt.) (Barred Straw) No record in V.C.H. Recorded for White Wood, Gamlingay just over the Cambridge border 1957 B.O.C. Gardiner.
647. *Cidaria fulvata* Forst (Barred Yellow) Common (V.C.H.) Singly in Monks Wood 1952 & 1954 (rec.) No other records. The foodplant (*Rosa*) is abundant.
648. *Electrophaes corylata* (Thnb.) (Broken-barred Carpet) Common (V.C.H.) Monks Wood 1958 (C.B.B.) No other record.
649. *Dysstroma truncata* Hfn. (Marbled Carpet) Common (V.C.H.) Stibbington 1955 (J.L.G.), Monks Wood 1958 (C.B.B.) Alconbury 1959 (rec.).
651. *Dysstroma citrata* L. (= *immanata* Haw) Dark Marbled Carpet. Common (V.C.H.) Alconbury 1948 (rec.) Ramsey Heights, Warboys Wood, Wood Walton Fen 1959 (F.G.S.).
660. *Lampropteryx suffumata* Schiff. (Water Carpet) Locality unspecified in V.C.H. No record.
661. *Xanthorhoe quadrifasiata* Clerk (Large Twin-spot Carpet) Locality unspecified in V.C.H. Holme Fen 1953 (S.W.P.P.) Fletton 1962 (H.F.T.) This very local species should be looked for elsewhere.
663. *Xanthorhoe ferrugata* Clerk (= *unidentaria* Haw) (Dark Twin-spot Carpet) Common (V.C.H.) Holme Fen (S.W.P.P.) Hermitage Wood (rec.) Stibbington (S.L.G.) Fletton (H.F.T.).
664. *Xanthorhoe spadicearia* Schiff (Red Twin-spot Carpet) (= *ferrugata* Staud) Common (V.C.H.) No record.
665. *Xanthorhoe designata* Hfn. (Flame Carpet) Bevill's Wood (V.C.H.) Monks Wood 1955-56 in a spot where *Cardamine amara* was common. Fletton 1955 (H.F.T.).
666. *Xanthorhoe montanata* Borkh (Silver-ground Carpet) Common (V.C.H.) Probably the commonest and most universal 'Carpet' in the county.
667. *Xanthorhoe fluctuata* L. (Garden Carpet) Common (V.C.H.) Almost equally common.
668. *Colostygia olivata* Schiff (Beech-green Carpet) Monks Wood (V.C.H.) No record. Not a very likely species for Hunts.
669. *Colostygia pectinataria* Kn. (= *viridaria* Fab.) (Green Carpet) Common (V.C.H.) No record.

671. *Colostygia multistrigaria* Haw. (Grey Mottled Carpet) Holme Fen (V.C.H.) Holme Fen before 1939 (S.W.P.P.) This should be looked for.
672. *Colostygia didymata* L. (Small Twin-spot Carpet) Common (V.C.H.) Fletton (H.F.T.) Hole Fen (S.W.P.P.) In some years it swarms in my garden at Alconbury, in others hardly seen. (rec.).
681. *Ortholitha chenopodiata* L. (= *limitata* Scop) (Shaded Broad-bar) Common (V.C.H.) My only records are for Monks Wood and Alconbury, but I imagine it is still common elsewhere (rec.).
682. *Larentia clavaria* Haw. (= *cervinata* Schiff) (Mallow) Somersham District, Woodston, Monks Wood (V.C.H.), Alconbury (rec.), Brampton (F.S.S.), Ramsey Heights (F.G.S.), Stilton (H.F.T.). Not as common as might be expected. *Malva sylvestris* is perhaps decreasing.
683. *Orthonama lignata* Hb. (= *vittata* Borkh) (Oblique Carpet) Locality unspecified in V.C.H. Fletton 5.6.54 (H.F.T.)—the first authenticated record for the county.

References: V.C.H.—Victoria County History Vol 1
 S.W.P.P.—S. W. Pooles.
 C.B.B.—C. B. Briggs.
 F.G.S.—F. G. Smith.
 H.F.T.—H. F. Tebbs.
 J.L.G.—J. L. Gilbert.
 F.S.S.—F. Stanley-Smith.
 rec.—Recorder.



FLORA

Botanically 1962 has been a poor year and very few records have been received. The weather was fine for our outings and the following are some of the uncommon plants recorded: dyke side, Ramsey, 9 June, *Brassica rapa* (Wild Turnip); disused railway track, Brampton, 13 June, *Senecio viscosus* (Sticky Groundsel), *Diplotaxis tenuifolia* (Wall Rocket), *Vulpia myuros* (Rat's-tail Fescue), *Vicia hirsuta* (Hairy Tare), *Ononis repens* (Creeping Rest-harrow), *Brassica napus* var. *arvensis* (Coleseed) and *Centaurea scabiosa* (Greater Knapweed); and disused railway track, Godmanchester, 13 June, *Diplotaxis muralis* (Sand Rocket). Nearby Mr. T. Patston spotted the very rare *Acorus calamus* (Sweet Flag) growing beneath a railway bridge, Godmanchester. Our only other current records are from Offord Darcy and St. Neots.

Undoubtedly, the greatest botanical event of 1962 was the publication of the *Atlas of the British Flora* edited by Dr. F. H. Perring and Dr. S. M. Walters. This is a brilliant compilation and great praise goes to the editors, as this is probably the most important work on British plants since the publication of Sowerby and Smith's *English Botany*.

However, botanists supervising and refereeing the scheme could have devised a more sound means to help the editors

ensure that maps dealing with seemingly overlooked and rare plants were more reasonably complete. It is with a feeling of pride though, that we can see our Huntingdonshire squares have been so well covered. But the work of the scheme still goes on and a supplement of critical plants is being prepared.

On 21 July the Botanical Society of the British Isles held a Junior Field Meeting at Holme Fen. Three cryptogams new to the county were recorded: a moss, *Leucobryum glaucum*, by J. R. Ironside Wood; a liverwort, *Riccia fluitans*, by R. B. Burbidge; and a slime fungus, *Arcyria nutans* (det. B. Ing) by A. Russell-Smith.

Lower Peat collected by Mr. C. F. Tebbutt from Connington Fen containing tree leaves shed c.1,500 B.C. was submitted to Mr. R. D. Meikle of Kew, who identified the leaves as undoubtedly belonging to *Salix cinerea* ssp. *atrocinerea*. This is the first time that ssp. *atrocinerea* has been recorded with certainty from the peat and the present day sub-species common in the fens is ssp. *cinerea*.

The following wild flowers are still unrecorded for the county: Purple Milk Vetch, Horseshoe Vetch, Squinancy Wort, Sheep's-bit, Lesser Snapdragon, Water Avens, Giant Bellflower and Mezereon. Some, if not all of these plants, must occur in Huntingdonshire and any records—no matter how ancient—would be much appreciated.

Abbreviations used for contributors of records are:

B. (J. E. H. Blackie), C.B. (C. M. G. Brinkworth), W.O.C. (W. O. Copland), J.A.T. (J. A. Thompson), T.P. (T. Patston) and Rec. for your recorder.

Flowering Plants:—

- 98/4 *Silene dioica* (L.) Clairv. Red Champion. Elton Furze, 15/6 (T.P. & Rec.).
- 155/3 *Trifolium ochroleucon* Huds. Sulphur Clover. Wennington Wood, July, 1925 (G.C. Druce) Hb. Kew. Omitted from V.C.H.
- 155/11 *T. striatum* L. Soft-knotted Trefoil. Nr. Chinese Bridge, Godmanchester, 1959 (F.D.S. Richardson). Miss Goodliff found it still there during 1961.
- 155/22 *T. micranthum* Viv. Slender Yellow Trefoil. Pasture, Elton Furze, 15/6 (T.P. & Rec.). Only two current records (nr. Monks' Wood & Needingworth).
- 244/1 *Smyrniolum olusatrum* L. Alexanders. Roadside banks, Yelling village, 6/5 (C.F. Tebbutt). Reported from "nr. Graveley" by Miss Anderson in Rep. 10, page 12.
- 256/1 *Conopodium majus* (Gouan) Lor. Pignut. Kimbolton Castle (W.O.C.).
- 320/2 *Erigeron acer* L. Blue Fleabane. A few plants in a clearing, Monks' Wood, Aug., 1961 (J.A.T.).

- 382/4 *Centaureum erythraea* Rafn White-flowered form. With normal flowered plants, rly bk, Godmanchester, June, 1961 (C.B.).
- 425/1 *Lactuca virosa* L. Wild Lettuce. Connington Fen, 10/9 (J.A.T.).
- 477/1 *Blackstonia perfoliata* (L.) Huds. Yellow-wort. Rly bk, Godmanchester, June, 1961 (C.B.).
- 485/1 *Galium odoratum* (L.) Scop. Woodruff. Two plants in a dense thicket of yew etc., behind the garden, Stonely Hall, 17/5 (W.O.C.). Origin unknown. Previously reported from Brampton (V.C.H.).
- 615/14d *Polygonum ruriavagum* Jord. ex Bor. (det. B. T. Styles). Abundant in barley field on site of disused gravel pit, Stibbington, 5/9/56 (Rec.). THE FIRST RECORD FOR THE COUNTY.
- 663/1 *Listera ovata* (L.) Br. Twayblade. On rly, Godmanchester. June, 1961 (C.B.).
- 669/5 *Orchis morio* L. Green-winged Orchid. Nr. Kimbolton (Mrs. Phyllida Rixon).
- 669/17 *Anacamptis pyramidalis* (L.) Rich. Pyramidal Orchid. Monks' Wood (B.).
- 672/3 *Ophrys apifera* Huds. Bee Orchid. About ½ dozen plants, rly bk, Godmanchester, June, 1961 (C.B.).
- 676/2 *Iris foetidissima* L. Gladdon. Between Alconbury & Alconbury Weston, 7/10 (B.).
- 707/3 *Ornithogalum nutans* L. Nodding Star of Bethlehem. Damp roadside, Great Paxton, 1961 (L. W. Angell).

Fungi

During May a number of fungi collected by members of the Kimbolton School Natural History Society were received from Mr. W. O. Copland and named by Dr. R. W. G. Dennis of Kew. The following two species had not previously been recorded for the county:—

- Lentinus tigrinus* (Bull. ex Fr.) Fr.—On fallen elm log, spinney nr. Tilbrook. A rare British fungus.
- Polyporus sulphureus* (Bull. ex Fr.) Fr.—On willow by River Kym nr. Kimbolton Cemetery.

The following mould was accidentally omitted from the list of Monks' Wood fungi (Rep. 14 p.15):—

- Calcarisporium arbuscula* Preuss (det. M. B. Ellis)—On *Mycena* sp.

Fungi from Woodwalton Fen

On 13 October Mr. D. A. Reid of Kew visited the southern part of Woodwalton Fen and supplied me with the following list of fungi which he found there:—

- Cyathus olla* [Batsch] Pers.
- Leptonia sericella* (Fr. ex Fr.) Barbier
- Volvariella speciosa* (Fr. ex Fr.) Sing.
- Coprinus friesii* Quéf.
- Lepista sordida* (Fr.) Sing.
- Isaria farinosa* Fr.

Apart from *Volvariella speciosa* and *Lepista sordida* recorded by Mr. R. Fraser from Gt. Staughton all are NEW COUNTY RECORDS.

Publications

H. GODWIN (1959) PLANT REMAINS FROM HARTFORD, HUNTINGDONSHIRE, *The New Phytologist*, Vol. 58, No. 1, p.p. 85-91.

W. O. COPLAND, ed. (1962) NATURAL HISTORY OF THE KIMBOLTON DISTRICT, Kimbolton School Natural History Society.

JOHN L. GILBERT.



BIRDS

A new feature in the 1962 report is a separate study by the Houghton Grange Bird Club under the leadership of Mr. B. S. S. Milne. They have done intensive watching in the St. Ives area and their interesting report is published as a separate item. One result has been to add the Little Gull to the county list. Except in a few instances, bird records in their report are not again mentioned in the general report.

Among points of interest are the low ebb of the Hinchings-brooke heronry, the continued absence of the Sparrow Hawk (now placed on the protected list), and the slight increase in Kestrels, except in the breeding months. The successful breeding of the Hobby is a pleasing item. The mysterious disappearance of the Kingfisher is disturbing. This characteristic bird of the Ouse valley and its gravel pits seemed well established as lately as 1961.

Among rarities to the county are the Curlew Sandpiper from Paxton, and Grey Phalarope and Bearded Tits from the Upper Nene. Our report has always been unbalanced by scanty reports from that area and this is now being remedied by Mr. Forster and his son, who are engaged in an intensive netting and ringing programme there.

The late Spring is reflected in the late dates of many migrant arrivals.

Contributors, who are identified by their initials, are:—

G. Alcock (G.A.), D. Garner (D.G.), P. Banks (P.B.), N. Wyatt (N.W.), C. Drage (C.D.), J. Blackie (J.B.), R. Forster (R.F.), L. Angel (L.A.), W. Garnett (W.G.), Kimbolton School Nat.

Hist. Soc. (K.S.N.H.S.), Houghton Grange Bird Club (H.G.B.C.), Your Recorder (Rec.).

- Little Grebe.* Continues to increase as a breeder. New sites, moat Monks Hardwick St. Neots, and fen drain Connington. (Rec., G.A.).
- Cormorant.* April 8th, 1, Bluntisham Stauch (H.G.B.C.) c. Oct. 19th-26th, 1, Lt. Paxton (Rec.).
- Shag.* As in 1958 a widespread wreck of Shags occurred, this time in March, over parts of East Anglia and the Home Counties. In Hunts. the first was seen at Stanground on March 9th and during next 8 days others were reported from St. Ives, Brampton Mill, Needingworth, Eynesbury, and Hartford. Some birds came down on land and were caught and placed on the river. No deaths were reported. A number seemed to find inland fresh water to their liking and some were still at Stanground on May 23rd, Brampton Mill on May 7th and Lt. Paxton on May 6th. In contrast to 1958 some were adults. (G.A., D.G., H.G.B.C., N.W., C.D., P.B., Rec.).
- Heron.* A total increase of 1 nest over 1961. Hemingford Park 21 (+3), St. Neots 5 (-1), Hinchingsbrooke 2 (-1). (Rec.).
- Bittern.* Jan. 2nd 1 Paxton (L.A.), Feb. 10th 1 Fenstanton G.P., (H.G.B.C.). Sept. 7th 1 Stibbington, present to end year. (R.F.).
- Garganey.* March 18th 1 Brampton Mill (N.W.), 25th pair Lt. Paxton (Rec.), April 23rd 3 Bluntisham (H.G.B.C.).
- Gadwell.* Pair Lt. Paxton Feb. 18th, March 18th-30th 2 pairs Oct. 14th. (Rec.).
- Shoveller.* A pair nested and reared young Lt. Paxton. (Rec.).
- Scaup.* Nov. 18th, 19th 1 Lt. Paxton. (Rec.).
- Tufted Duck.* About 3 broods reared Lt. Paxton and 6 St. Ives area. (Rec., H.G.B.C.).
- Pochard.* 2 pairs bred St. Ives area. (H.G.B.C.).
- Goldeneye.* March 16th 2 Bluntisham (H.G.B.C.), Nov. 18th 11, Dec. 9th 3 Lt. Paxton (Rec.). Dec. 27th 1 Stibbington. (R.F.).
- Goosander.* Jan. first week 1 Offord (Rec.). Dec. 21st several Paxton. (L.A.).
- Shelduck.* April 24th-29th 1 Lt. Paxton. (Rec.). May 6th 1 Farcet. (Rec.).
- Canada Goose.* As in 2 previous years a pair returned to Lt. Paxton in early Jan. and nested in March. 3 goslings were reared from 6 eggs and all left in Aug. (Rec.). At Stibbington several pairs attempted

breeding, all nests but one were robbed. A brood of 5 reared. (R.F.).

Mute Swan. Since 1961 25/30 non breeders have established themselves near St. Neots bridge depending almost entirely on human feeding. (Rec.).

Bewick Swan. At Earith up to 128 in Jan., 147 in Feb. Dec. 20th 1 (H.G.B.C.). 15 Lt. Paxton Jan. 21st. (Rec.).

Common Buzzard. Odd Birds seen Kimbolton area April 6th, 15th, Sept. 21st, Oct. 30th. Salome Wood 1 June 7th. (Rec.).

Sparrow Hawk. Only 3 records, all probably migrants. c. March 15th Hilton (W.G.). April 10th Gt. Staughton, early Nov. Kimbolton. (Rec.).

Harriers. Nov. 25th Farcet, large harrier like hawk flying W. Morborne, large dark hawk with pale rump, probably Montague. (G.A.).

Merlin. Sept. 21st 1 Houghton (H.G.B.C.). Oct. 20th 1 near Pondersbridge. (G.A.).

Hobby. July 9th and after, nest found in St. Ives area, cock being frequently seen on nearby tree while hen was sitting or brooding. Aug. 7th. At least 2 young seen in nest. They are believed to have fledged safely. (Rev. Bawtry). Nov. 21st, 24th 1 Farcet. (G.A.).

Kestrel. Many sightings April, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov. but none in May or June except near St. Ives and Stibbington.

Peregrine Falcon. Oct. 27th, Nov. 3rd 1 juv. near Pondersbridge. (G.A.).

Partridges. Recovery continued and in kept districts numbers now up to normal.

Moorhen. Very abundant everywhere.

Oyster Catcher. Sept. 9th 2 Orton sugar factory. (G.A.).

Lapwing. Nov. 10th Farcet. A white bird with brown patches amongst flock. (G.A.).

Lt. Ringed Plover. In one area (other than St. Ives) adults arrived April 2nd, and were displaying April 7th. Of 2 pairs one nested successfully. (Rec.).

Snipe. March 16th c. 400 Bluntisham Fen (H.G.B.C.). At Lt. Paxton, throughout year, numbers seen feeding unusually in open at edge of pools away from cover. (Rec.).

Jack Snipe. Lt. Paxton. Odd birds present up to April 23rd. Again in Nov. (Rec.).

Woodcock. Usual numbers nesting in previously recorded sites. (Rec.).

Curlew. Feb. 20th. 1 heard Farcet Fen. (G.A.).

Green Sandpiper. Lt. Paxton. First seen July 9th numbers 1-4 present to Sept. 23rd. (Rec.). Several wintering at Stibbington to end of year. (R.F.).

Wood Sandpiper. Aug. 19th. 1 Stibbington (ringed). (R.F.). Sept. 5th, 7th, Oct. 7th 1 Lt. Paxton. (Rec.).

Common Sandpiper. A late record of 1 Nov. 5th Orton sugar factory. (G.A.).

Redshank. Feb. 11th, 21st, 23rd. 1 Farcet Fen. (G.A.). Lt. Paxton non breeding pair present in Spring; others returned Nov. 18th-Dec. 1st. (Rec.). Orton sugar factory 12 Nov. 6th, 3 Nov. 17th. (G.A.).

Spotted Redshank. Aug. 7th. 1 Lt. Paxton. (Rec.).

Greenshank. Lt. Paxton. Numbers increase. First July 22nd and 1-4 continuously present to Sept. 29th. (Rec.).

Little Stint. Nov. 5th/6th, 4 Orton sugar factory. (G.A.).

Dunlin. Lt. Paxton. Spring migration March 30th-May 6th (max. 3). Return Aug. 2nd-12th (max. 2). (Rec.). Winter flocks. Bluntisham Fen Jan. 7th 18. Jan. 28th 14 (H.G.B.C.). Lt. Paxton Nov. 18th 3, after severe N. winds. (Rec.).

Curlew Sandpiper. Oct. 7th. Lt. Paxton 1. Last County record 1839. (Rec.).

Ruff. Aug. 12th 1 Lt. Paxton. (Rec.). Nov. 5th 2 Orton sugar factory. (G.A.).

Grey Phalarope. Aug. 14th/15th 1 Stibbington. (R.F.). Last county record 1916.

Gt. Black-backed Gull. A possible migration movement of birds flying N.E. at dusk N.E. Hunts. April 21st-29th. (G.A.).

Herring Gull. Now regularly accompanying daily winter gull flights. Up to 60 on Lt. Paxton rubbish tip. (Rec.).

Little Gull. April 23rd. 5 adults with 2 juv. arrived with terns, Meadow Lane, St. Ives. (H.G.B.C.). A first county record.

Black-headed Gull. In St. Neots area all daily winter flights now are to and from Bedford direction. (Rec.). Jan. 2nd. Farcet spectacular E.N.E. flight of at least 20,000 in 3 waves during hard weather (G.A.).

Kittewake. Feb. 18th. 1. Bluntisham Stauch. (H.G.B.C.).

Black Tern. April 23rd. 2. Lt. Paxton. (Rec.).

Little Tern. April 23rd. 1. Lt. Paxton. (Rec.).

Puffin. Sept. 8th. 1 juv. picked up Buckden-Perry road. 20th. Another found at Eynesbury. (Rec.).

Long-eared Owl. Early Nov. 1. Kimbolton Woods. (Rec.).

<i>Short-eared Owl.</i>	Early Nov. 1. Lady Grove, Kimbolton. (Rec.).
<i>Kingfisher.</i>	Was in perhaps higher than usual numbers 1961, followed by a spectacular unexplained drop in 1962. Only reports are of 1 St. Ives. Sept. and Dec. (H.G.B.C.) and 2 Stibbington, Aug. (R.F.).
<i>Rook.</i>	Sample rookeries still declining. St. Neots 27 (-34). Lt. Paxton 62 (-17), Diddington 150 (-14). (Rec.). In contrast nests in rookeries 2 mile radius of Kimbolton increased from 248 in 1957 to 263 in 1962. (K.S.N.H.S.).
<i>Magpie.</i>	Still rare except in St. Ives area where at least 3 pairs nested. (H.G.B.C.).
<i>Bearded Tit.</i>	Dec. 22nd/23rd. 4. Stibbington. (R.F.). Second record for county this century.
<i>Com. Redstart.</i>	Nested Holme Fen. (R.F.). Alconbury (J.B.) and probably Kimbolton Park. (Rec.).
<i>Gt. Grey Shrike.</i>	Jan. 6th. 1 Lt. Paxton. (Rec.).
<i>Siskin.</i>	Oct. 16th. Several Holme Fen.
<i>Redpoll.</i>	Sept. several Salome Wood. (Rec.).
<i>Bullfinch.</i>	The large winter (1961-62) population undoubtedly did severe damage to fruit and flowering trees in early Spring. By nesting time numbers were greatly reduced and by autumn were down to normal.
<i>Crossbill.</i>	Oct. 6/7 were seen in Lady Grove and Dudneys Wood, Kimbolton and again at end of year. (Rec.).
<i>Chaffinch.</i>	Slight increase in numbers. (Rec.).
<i>Girl Bunting.</i>	Feb. 2nd, 10th. 1 Gt. Gidding. (G.A.).
<i>Snow Bunting.</i>	Jan. 2n. 6, Brampton. (L.A.).

WOODWALTON FEN

Of the 42 nest boxes 24 were used by Tree Sparrows, 1 by Gt. Tits, 1 by Blue Tits, and 1 by Grey Squirrels. There was a great deal of predation of eggs by animals small enough to enter by the entrance holes, probably mice. This year late visits were made to see if third nests were being attempted. Of the 22 boxes examined on July 23rd, 7 were either re-lined or had eggs, but of a sample dozen of these seen on July 31st and August 7th all had been deserted. B.T.O. Record Cards were filled in for all clutches.

The unusually large numbers of Water Rails reported for 1961 persisted up to the end of 1962. One pair of Magpies nested in the Fen. The usual number of Siskins was present in the Autumn and up to the end of the year.

I gratefully acknowledge the help of the Warden, Mr. Gordon Mason, in making these records.

MIGRANT DATES, 1962

<i>Lt. Ringed Plover.</i>	April 2nd. (Rec.). Otc. 11th. (H.G.B.C.).
<i>Golden Plover.</i>	April 28th. Staughton Moor. Sept. 20th. Staughton Moor. (Rec.).
<i>Turtle Dove.</i>	May 8th. Paxton. (L.A.).
<i>Cuckoo.</i>	April 10th. Tilbrook. (Rec.).
<i>Swift.</i>	April 26th. Paxton. (Mr. Packer). Aug. 16th. St. Neots residents left. (Rec.). Sept. 9th. Stibbington. (R.F.).
<i>Swallow.</i>	April 11th. Paxton. April 22nd. Paxton residents. Sept. 14th. Paxton residents left. (L.A.). Nov. 5th. Warboys. (H.G.B.C.).
<i>Housemartin.</i>	April 27th. Paxton. May 5th. St. Neots residents. (Rec.).
<i>Sandmartin.</i>	April 2nd. Paxton. (Rec.).
<i>Fieldfare.</i>	Oct. 12th. Staughton Moor. (Rec.).
<i>Redwing.</i>	April 1st. Paxton. Sept. 27th. Paxton. (L.A.).
<i>Wheatear.</i>	April 17th. Denton Fen. (G.A.). Sept 24th. Brampton. (N.W.).
<i>Nightingale.</i>	April 22nd. Brampton Wood. (Rec.).
<i>Grasshopper Warbler.</i>	April 24th. Woodwalton Fen. (Rec.). St. Ives. (H.G.B.C.).
<i>Reed Warbler.</i>	May 5th. Paxton. (L.A.).
<i>Sedge Warbler.</i>	April 20th. Stibbington. (R.F.). Paxton. (L.A.).
<i>Whitethroat.</i>	April 22nd. Stibbington. (R.F.).
<i>Lesser Whitethroat.</i>	April 24th. Stibbington. (R.F.).
<i>Willow Warbler.</i>	April 14th. Paxton. (L.A.).
<i>Chiffchaff.</i>	March 26th. Paxton. (L.A.).

Spotted Flycatcher. May 7th. Paxton. (Rec.).
Yellow Wagtail. April 20th. Paxton. (Rec.).

C. F. TEBBUTT



ST. IVES GRAVEL-PITS

During the year the recently formed Houghton Grange Bird Club started an intensive survey of the bird-life of the gravel-pits in the St. Ives area. Fieldwork was concentrated on Meadow Lane Pits, St. Ives, which offer the widest choice of habitat and due to their close proximity to the river are best sited for migration studies. The pits at Marsh Lane, Hemingford and West End, Fenstanton were also extensively covered, particularly in the autumn when a comparative study of migration at the three groups of pits was made. It is intended to continue this study in 1963 again concentrating on Meadow Lane, where a ringing group will also be operating. Given below are details of some of the more interesting records for the year:—

Cormorant—An immat. bird June 20th was found dead on 23rd, Meadow Lane.
Shag—1 March 10th, Meadow Lane.
Bittern—1 February 10th, Fenstanton.
Garganey—Pair May 4th, Meadow Lane.
Gadwall—Pair March 18th, September 15th–16th, Meadow Lane.
Wigeon—Maximum count Meadow Lane floods, 250 January 13th.
Pintail—Maximum count Meadow Lane floods, 400 January 14th.
Tufted—6 pairs bred successfully at two sites.
Pochard—2 pairs bred successfully.
Goldeneye—1–3 October 10th–25th, Meadow Lane.
Goosander—1 March 18th–30th, 2 November 10th, Meadow Lane.
Shelduck—1 April 24th, September 15th–16th, Meadow Lane.
Canada Goose—A pair in the St. Ives area April 19th–late May were seen at various pits but there was no evidence of breeding.
Bewick's Swan—7 March 3rd, 6 on 4th, 21 December 23rd, Meadow Lane.
Hobby—1 May 26th, Meadow Lane.
Merlin—1 December 9th, Meadow Lane.
Water Rail—The wintering bird at Meadow Lane was last seen on January 13th. 2–4 November 4th–December 31st, Meadow Lane.
Ringed Plover—1–6 many dates April 14th–May 19th, Meadow Lane.
1–5 many dates August 7th–September 13th, Fenstanton.
Little Ringed Plover—4 pairs bred at three sites. Seven clutches of eggs were found but only seven young were hatched and of these only three reached flying stage. These

young remained in the area for several weeks and were last seen on October 1st. Numerous records of passage birds at Marsh Lane and Fenstanton, including a family party in late July at Fenstanton.

Turnstone—1 April 28th, 6 May 2nd, 2 on 6th, Meadow Lane.
1 August 8th, 15th, October 13th–14th, Fenstanton.
Curlew—1 July 16th, Fenstanton. A flock calling at 02.30 hrs. July 27th,
1 August 19th and September 30th, Meadow Lane.
Green Sandpiper—The wintering bird at Meadow Lane was last seen on January 7th. 1 April 10th, Meadow Lane. Up to 7 June 26th–October 4th, Meadow Lane and Fenstanton.
Common Sandpiper—1–5 April 20th–May 19th. Continuously present July 7th–September 22nd, with maximum of 18 August 17th.
Spotted Redshank—1 April 8th, Meadow Lane.
Greenshank—1–5 many dates July 29th–September 9th, Fenstanton and Marsh Lane.
Dunlin—1 February 18th, Meadow Lane. 1–2 many dates April 19th–May 16th with maximum of 7–13 May 8th–12th, Meadow Lane and Marsh Lane. Up to 4 many dates July 16th–September 16th, Fenstanton and Marsh Lane. 1 October 7th, Meadow Lane.
Sanderling—2 May 28th, Meadow Lane.
Ruff—1 July 30th, Fenstanton and Marsh Lane. 1 September 9th, Marsh Lane.
Little Gull—A party of 7 (5 adults, 2 immat) arrived with the first Terns of the spring on April 23rd, Meadow Lane. (First County record).
Black Tern—2 May 1st, Fenstanton. 2 June 5th, Meadow Lane.
1–2 many dates August 17th–September 30th, but 12 on August 20th at Meadow Lane.
Common/Arctic Tern—Numerous records of up to 8 birds on many dates between April 23rd–September 30th.
Kingfisher—1 September 2nd–13th, Fenstanton. 1 December 29th, Meadow Lane are the only records.
Lesser Spotted Woodpecker—1 May 26th, Meadow Lane.
Ring Ouzel—1 (male) May 6th, Meadow Lane.
Grasshopper Warbler—1 singing April 24th, Meadow Lane.
Rock Pipit—1 October 20th, Meadow Lane.
White Wagtail—1–3 April 7th–27th, Meadow Lane. 1 September 13th, Fenstanton.
Grey Wagtail—The wintering bird at Meadow Lane remained until March 25th. Up to 5 in October and 2–3 in November and December at Meadow Lane.
Siskin—2 January 14th, Meadow Lane.
Redpoll—1 April 14th, Meadow Lane.
Brambling—2 March 26th, 1 April 14th, 1 October 14th, 3 November 10th, 1 on 25th, 4 December 30th, Meadow Lane.

Snow Bunting—2 November 18th, Fenstanton. 1 November 18th, Meadow Lane.

B. S. MILNE



REPTILIA AND AMPHIBIA

My only peculiar record of Amphibians or Reptiles is of a very good specimen of Mexican "Giant" Newt (*Axolotl*) (*Siredon mexicana*) (*Abystomidae*) found in St. Ives on Boxing Day, 1962. Unfortunately it was frozen into the ice. I can only suppose that it had been in the Warners Park pond for some time as it is far larger than specimens I have in captivity. Circa 11 inches long. Found by David Prior of St. Ives and brought to me by Peter Pupins of Needingworth 26th December, 1962.

HENRY J. BERMAN.