HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA & FLORA SOCIETY

41st ANNUAL REPORT for 1988

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HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

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ANNUAL REPORT FOR 1988

No 41

SECRETARY'S REPORT

At the end of its 40th year, membership of the Society stands at 119, a reduction on last year's figures but still a large enough number for the Society to continue to function efficiently if the present members give it their wholehearted support.

To celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Society, a special publication was organized by a sub-committee consisting of John Cole, Peter Walker and Terry Wells. They assembled and edited the articles written by a number of contributors, covering the major changes in the natural history of the county since the foundation of the Hunts Fauna and Flora Society. Publication of this special report was partly financed by a grant from the Cambridge County Council and partly by donations from C G Tebbut Ltd of St Neots, W R Grace & Co also of St Neots, Peter Walker from lecture fees and Terry and Sheila Wells from plant sales. Present members of the Society received a free copy of the publication and a number of extra copies are available for sale to interested people.

Only four field meetings were held in 1988 (a fifth one being cancelled due to lack of support), in an attempt to encourage more members to take part, but I have to report that support was still disappointing and your committee will have to consider the whole future of field meetings. Attendance at field meetings varied from 8 at Castor Hanglands to 12 at St Neots Common.

Indoor meetings, held during the winter months, proved more popular, with audiences of between 13 and 30 people supporting meetings.

During the Chairman's and Secretary's absence in Australia, Colin Welch kindly deputized as Chairman while Peter Walker acted as Secretary. The Society is grateful to them for filling the gap, and to Peter Walker, John Carter and Richard Shotbolt for leading the fungus forays.

The Annual General Meeting was held on 26 March. The Chairman, Peter Walker, welcomed 31 members and friends. Twenty four apologies for absence were received. The Chairman reviewed the activities of the Society in the past year and reported on the continuing survey of Brampton Wood. In the elections that followed, Mrs Pamela Blackie was unanimously elected the second President of the Society, an office which came into being in 1967 and has been occupied by Professor A Worden until his death in 1987. Terry Wells was elected Chairman, John Clark, Barry Dickerson and Lynne Farrell were elected to committee to replace the retiring Chairman and committee members. Dr Andy Village gave an absorbing talk on his research on kestrels and the evening ended with wine and refreshments in the Monks Wood Common Room.

We were sad to note the passing away of Mr D A Davies, a founder member of the Society and Treasurer for a record 25 years. We offer our condolences to his widow and family.

Meetings

The following ordinary meetings were held during the year:

8 February	"RSPB Reserves in East Anglia" by Bob Scott
7 March	"Butterfly monitoring - its application to conservation management" by Marney Hall
27 October	"At home in the countryside" by David Garner
21 November	"Spring flowers of Corfu" by Peter Walker
6 December	"Small mammals or How long is a piece of string?" by Henry Arnold

The following field meetings were held:

8 May	Castor Hanglands NNR, for general interest. Leader Terry Wells
5 June	St Neots Common, for plants. Leader Peter Walker
24 September	Grafham Water, for fungi. Leaders Peter Walker and Richard Shotbolt
8 October	Archers Wood, for fungi. Leader John Carter

BOTANICAL NOTES

T C E Wells

1. St Neots Common, which consists of Islands Common, Lammas Meadow and part of St Neots Holt, has been an SSSI since 1954 and was re-scheduled by the NCC in 1983. The site, which covers some 85 acres, consists of a mixture of dry and wet alluvial grasslands, the wetter parts being inundated for weeks when the water level in the River Ouse is high. The site is managed by the Common Rights Proprietors, who usually take a late hay crop from Lammas Meadow followed by aftermath grazing of the whole common. I first visited the site in 1965 and noted the abundance there of several species which were rare or infrequent in the county as a whole. Since then, many changes have occurred on the Common; it has been fenced and ditched to stop unwanted car parking; the main ditch running across the common east of the lagoon area has been dug out and cleared; fertilizers have been applied to the grassland; herbicides have been used in an attempt to control thistles and nettles which arose as a result of overgrazing. It might be thought that all of these activities would be detrimental in some way to the flora and in June 1988, members of the Society visited St Neots Common to see if we could locate the more uncommon species which I had noted in 1965. It is pleasing to report that nearly all of the uncommon species found in 1965 were still present in 1988. These are listed below, together with their location and relative abundance, to encourage further surveys in the future.

   Caltha palustris - frequent in Lammas Meadow at 181609
   Carex acuta - frequent in Lammas Meadow at 181609
   Carex distans - frequent in wet areas at 1860
   Dactylorhiza incarnata - several hundred plants in flower in the Lammas Meadow and in the wet area east of the dividing hedge at 182608 and 180609
   Dactylorhiza praetermissa - 3 plants in flower, one east of the hedge at 182608 and 2 in Lammas Meadow at 180609
   Equisetum fluviatile - frequent in ditches in Lammas Meadow at 183614
   Juncus tenuis - one large patch on Islands Common at 184612
   Koeleria cristata - a few plants in flower among short grassland on a bank, in Islands Common at 184613
   Saxifraga granulata - about 100 plants in flower on the drier parts of Islands Common at 184612
   Senecio aquatilis - frequent in Lammas Meadow
   Silaum silaus - scattered in Lammas Meadow at 180609
   Stellaria alsine - frequent to west of fence line in east side of the Holt at 183614

2. Woodwalton Marsh is a small area of calcareous grassland situated at the bottom of an embankment which carries the main London-Edinburgh railway. It was scheduled as an SSSI in 1972 after I drew the NCC's attention to the site, as an example of species rich grassland developed over the boulder clay. Following the cessation of burning by the railway authorities, and the general lack of grazing by rabbits, the site has become invaded by coarse grasses, especially Brachypodium pinnatum, and scrub. In 1988, after years of negotiations, the Beds and Hunts Wildlife Trust were able to lease the site from British Rail. Accompanied by Bob Parsons, I visited the

site in June 1988 to see if any of the previously rich flora remained, prior to the Trust beginning management in the autumn of 1988. Among the 50 species of higher plants recorded, the following more uncommon species were noted, although it shold be stressed they were mostly present in only small quantity: Filipendula vulgaris, Helictotrichon pubescens, Lathyrus nissolia, Linum catharticum, Myosotis discolor, Rhinanthus minor, Silaum silaus, Sonchus palustris and Trifolium ochroleuchon. It would appear that Sonchus palustris, which was introduced into Woodwalton Fen in 1912 and has spread to a few fen dykes outside the Fen, has somehow managed to reach the wetter parts of Woodwalton Marsh in the face of the prevailing winds.

3. Other records received. As in previous years, the 100 km reference TL(52) is omitted. Initials of recorders are as follows: Miss L Farrell (LF), J H Bratton (JHB), Dr B N K Davis (BNKD), Mr R Bradley (RB).

Polypodium vulgare L. — Polypody. Three clumps on roof over church door St Ives, 310716, 19 June (LF).

Caltha palustris L. — Kingcup. Four large clumps by R Ouse, Brampton, 220703, 24 April (LF).

Cuscuta europaea L. — Large Dodder. Field margin, growing on Urtica dioica and Humulus lupinus, Easton, 141715, 17 September (BNKD). In exactly the same place where it was recorded in 1970.

Centaurea cyanus L. — Cornflower. On rubbish dump and field edge, Meadow Lane Farm, Earith, 3875, August (J Eddy and LF). This rare weed occurs spasmodically on the light, gravelly soils in this part of the county, but one is never sure it if may not be of garden origin.

Sagittaria sagittifolia L. — Arrowhead. In dyke between compartments 30 and 33, Woodwalton Fen NNR 232856, 20 July (JHB).

Hydrocharis morsus-ranae L. — Frog-bit. In dyke by entrance to Woodwalton Fen NNR, 233848, 21 August (JHB).

Platanthera chlorantha — Greater Butterfly Orchid. One plant in flower, Aversley Wood, 162820, month of record not provided (RB). Seen there in 1987 as well.

FUNGI - RECENT ADDITIONS TO THE COUNTY LIST

Sheila Wells

The following list is a selection of the more interesting fungi which have been recorded for the first time in vice-county 31 during the past four years. In each case, location, date of collection and habitat are given, together with any notable field characteristics.

Collection and identification are by the recorder unless otherwise stated. Nomenclature follows Dennis R W G, Orton P D and Hora F B (1960) New checklist of British Agarics and Boleti (in most cases).

Baeospora myosura (Fr. ex Fr.) Sing. Brampton Wood, November 1986
A small agaric with white gills and a hairy rooting base, arising from buried pine cones.

Clitocybe phyllophila (Fr.) Kummer Ladys Wood, September 1986
A medium sized, funnel shaped, white agaric. The cap is covered with a silvery-white bloom. Grows in leaf litter. Also found in Gamsey Wood and Perry West Wood the same year.

Coprinus narcoticus (Batsch. ex Fr.) Fr. Pingle Wood, August 1988
This medium sized ink-cap has a white granular cap-covering that looks brownish and scaly towards the centre. The cap edge curls upward with age and splits. There is a characteristic, strong smell of gas. Coll. Teresa Dickerson.

Coprinus tigrinellus Boud. Brampton Wood, August 1987
A minute ink-cap found growing on grass or Carex debris in a muddy patch on the main ride.

Cordyceps gracilis Montagne & Durieu Upwood, April 1985
An Ascomycete parasitic on the buried larvae of Lepidoptera. A single specimen was found in a patch of michaelmas daisies at 94 High Street.

Coriolus hirsutus (Wulf ex Fr.) Quel. Wistow Wood, June 1987
Collected by Jean Stewart from dead wood. Thicker and paler than the Many-zoned polypore with silvery hairs on the upper surface. Uncommon. Also found in Perry West Wood and Waresley Wood on October 1987.

Hygrophorus russocoriaceus Berk. & Miller Upwood Meadows, November 1987
A small, ivory coloured Hygrophorus with widely spaced, decurrent gills and a strong smell of sandalwood. Often found on lawns.

Mycena cinerella Karst. Brampton Wood, November 1986
A small, distinctly grey agaric with a hemispherical cap and a mealy smell. In troops on pine needles.

Mycena tortuosa P.D. Orton Brampton Wood, January 1988

Numerous specimens found on the underside of a dead hazel branch lying across a waterfilled ditch. This is a minute white fungus covered with corkscrew hairs on the cap and stem which are just visible under a good hand lens.

Nolanea icterina (Fr.) Kummer Ladys Wood, November 1987
A small, pink-gilled species with pale yellow cap and stem. On the ground under mixed deciduous trees.

Panellus stipticus (Bull. ex Fr.) Karst. Brampton Wood, March 1987
In tiers on dead hazel poles. A small, brown bracket-like fungus with cinnamon coloured gills.

Phaeocoriolellus trabeus (Pers.) Kotl. & Pouz. Pingle Wood, September 1987
A thin-fleshed, golden brown bracket fungus growing on elm logs. Collected by Teresa Dickerson.

Phaeohelotium geogenum (Cke.) Svreck & Matheis Perry West Wood, October 1987
An attractive white cup-fungus growing on a piece of mossy branch, under oak. Rare. Det. Dr Brian Spooner at Kew Herbarium.

Russula virescens (Schaeff. ex Zantedschi) Fr. Brampton Wood, 1987
A Russula with a verdigris-green cap with a rough, cracked surface. Gills crowded and white. In mixed deciduous woodland.

Trichoglossum walteri (Berk.) Dur. Upwood Meadows, November 1987
Several specimens in short grass. Col. T C E Wells. Black, flattened cylindrical or club-shaped 'tongues' with black, velvety stalks, 2-8 cm tall. This species is distinguished from the more common T. hirsutum by microscopic examination of the spores.

Tricholoma acerbum (Bull. ex. Fr.) Quel. Woodwalton Fen, October 1987
A buff-coloured agaric with a fruity smell. Cap margin enrolled and ribbed. On the ground in deciduous woodland. Col. Lynne Farrell.

LEPIDOPTERA REPORT FOR 1988

Barry Dickerson

I have received very few records this year on butterflies so most of the following report is from personal observations.

Migrants such as the Painted Lady (Cynthia cardui) and the Red Admiral (Vanessa atalanta) were common. I received several reports of Painted Lady in late April and early May from both gardens and woodland. It has been suggested that the strong winds which brought the Sahara sands into the country also brought these early butterflies. The larval food plants, thistles and nettles, are both common allowing the Painted Lady to breed successfully. The result of this was large numbers of Painted Ladies throughout the county. I made several trips to different woodlands and meadows in the county and recorded Painted Ladies on most of the sites, sometimes in reasonable numbers.

Red Admirals were not so common in the spring as the Painted Ladies but were numerous in late summer. On 29 August I had an unusual sighting of Red Admirals at Little Paxton Gravel Pits. I saw four feeding on the sap from a wound in the trunk of an oak tree which was in a well shaded area. The butterflies were flying from bright sunlight into the shade to feed.

Most of our resident butterflies were down in numbers; no records of Holly Blue (Celastrina argiolus) have been received this year and very few of Common Blue (Polyommatus icarus). The best sighting of Common Blue I had was at Little Paxton Gravel Pits when three were seen flying in the Turkey oak area. One Small Copper (Lycaena phlaeas) was seen at Woodwalton Marsh, this butterfly appears to be decreasing in numbers in the county especially from the south. I have been unable to find them on two sites near St Neots where they were common a few years ago.

The Speckled Wood (Pararge aegeria) was recorded for the first time in Pingle Wood, Warboys. Two were seen on 14 May and one on 28 May. No sightings were made during the summer so at present it is not known if the Speckled Wood is breeding in the wood. Since management of the wood started in 1985 the habitat has become much more suitable for the Speckled Wood; its larval foodplant, grasses, becoming common along the main ride along with several species of wild flowers from which the butterfly likes to feed.

TWO NEW COUNTY RECORDS IN THE MACRO MOTHS?

Matthew Rowlings ran a moth-trap in his garden at Alconbury most nights throughout the summer and autumn and was rewarded with the following new records.

Blair's Shoulder-knot (Lithophane leautieri) which he first found at Needingworth on 1 October and then took in his garden the following night. During the following three nights seven more were taken and about two weeks after these several more were taken, again in his garden.

Blair's Shoulder-knot began invading Britain in 1951 and has become locally well established in the south, its range continues to expand and occasional specimens have been recorded in Lincolnshire. The larval foodplant is Cypress and related species especially Leylandii which is now common in gardens and no doubt this relates to the increase in the moth's range.

The second of Matthew's moths was the Scarce Bordered Straw (Heliothis armigera) which was taken on 19 October. This moth is a rare immigrant and has only reached double figures on eight occasions between 1859 and 1982, the best year being 1859 when 28 moths were recorded in England.

There is a possibility that the Scarce Bordered Straw was recorded by Nancy Mason in June 1971. Nancy had several people look at the moth she collected and they agreed with her identification. Nancy then passed the moth on for confirmation but heard nothing. I have been unable to trace any reference to this moth in the county records so I would be grateful if anyone who knows anything of this moth could contact me.

The above records were confirmed by A Maitland Emmet and Paul Sokoloff to whom I am grateful.

NEW COUNTY RECORDS IN THE TORTRICIDAE

During the past few years I have been recording the micro moths of the county and have found the following new records of Tortricidae.

Brampton Wood

Blastesthia turionella on 20 June 1987
Rhyacionia buoliana on 7 August 1987

Fox Island

Apotomis turbidana on 29 June 1987
Cydia aurana on 29 June 1987

Gransden Wood

Pammene aurantiana on 6 August 1988

Perry West Wood

Rhyacionia pinivorana on 24 June 1988

The following were recorded in Brampton Wood

By A M Emmet, larvae of Cydia funebrana on 25 October 1986
By E F Hancock, Gypsonoma dealbana on 16 July 1988.

My thanks to E F Hancock for making available to me the Tortricidae records of the county and for checking the above records.

The nomenclature follows that of Bradley and Fletcher (1979) A recorder's log book or label list of British butterflies and moths.

Correction

In the list published last year on 'The moths of Fox Island 1984-1987' an incorrect moth was listed under the Tortricidae Gibberifera simplana (FvR) should read Gypsonoma sociana (Haw). My thanks to E.F. Hancock for pointing out this error.

COLEOPTERA ATTRACTED TO LIGHT TRAPS IN HUNTINGDONSHIRE, 1986-1988

R Colin Welch

In early January 1986, Mr B Dickerson showed me two colour transparencies of a beetle which had crawled over a sheet on which he placed his mercury vapour lamp whilst moth-trapping in Waresley Wood the previous May. From these I was able to identify the beetle as Blaps mucronata Latr. 'the churchyard beetle'. What was remarkable was the fact that this was only the second time that this species had been found 'in the wild' away from some form of human habitation (Welch 1987). Ten years earlier I had identified 76 species of Coleoptera collected from two Rothamsted light traps operated within and close to Monks Wood National Nature Reserve. These traps are raised off the ground on a wooden frame but still caught many unusual species, and even the occasional larva (Welch 1977). Suitably encouraged, Barry Dickerson agreed to collect any Coleoptera which came to his notice whilst operating his light trap that summer. He has continued to do this for the past three years and the 28 species collected by him are listed below. These include a number of large, flightless ground beetles which probably walked onto his collecting sheet in search of prey. Most of the Chrysomelidae also either walked, or hopped, onto the sheet from their neighbouring host plant.

The mercury vapour trap was operated at the following 11 locations. All OS references are in square TL(52).

B	Bankside	212654	27.6.86
BW	Brampton Wood	182700	27.6.86; 13.4.87
FC	Far Close	2971	6.7.87
FI	Fox Island	182615	29.6.87
GW	Gransden Wood	2654	6.8.88
PC	Pingle Cutting	314815	28.5, 9.7 and 7.8.88
PW	Pingle Wood	314814	13.6 and 26.7.86; 4.7.87; 2.9.88
PWW	Perry West Wood	1666	5.8.88
UM	Upwood Meadow	251824	2.8.87
WaW	Waresley Wood	260547	21.6 and 2.8.86; 8.8.87; 6.8.88
WiW	Wistow Wood	297821	13.6.86

CARABIDAE

Cychrus rostratus (L.) WaW, 1, 8.8.87. This, and the next three large species of woodland ground beetles are all flightless.
Carabus violaceus L. WaW, 1, 8.8.87; 1, 6.8.88.
Pterostichus madidus (F.) PW, 1, 13.6.86; WaW, 1, 8.8.87; 1, 6.8.88.
Abax parallelepipedus (Pill. & Mitt.) WaW, 1, 8.8.87.
Harpalus schaubergerianus Puel FI, 1 female, 29.6.87. Lindroth (1974) describes this as a species of open countryside, on chalk or sand, with Cambridge as the northern limits of its southern distribution.

HALIPLIDAE

Haliplus fulvus (F.) GW, 1, 6.8.88.

DYTISCIDAE

Hydroporus memnonius Nicol, B, 1, 27.6.86.
Ilybius ater (Deg.) BW, 1, 13.4.87; FC, 1, 6.7.87; GW, 1, 6.8.88.

I. fuliginosus (F.) PW, 1, 13.6.86; BW, 1, 27.6.86; B, 1, 27.6.86; UM, 1, 2.8.87; PWW, 1, 5.8.88.

HYDROPHILIDAE

Cercyon haemorrhoidalis (F.) B, 1, 27.6.86. Usually found in dung or rotting vegetable material.
Hydrobius fuscipes (L.) BW, 2, 27.6.86; B, 1, 27.6.86; UM, 1, 2.8.87.

SILPHIDAE

Nicrophorus humator PW, 1, 13.6.86; WaW, 1, 21.6.86, 1, 6.8.88; BW, 1, 27.6.86; WiW, 1, 13.6.86; FI, 1, 29.6.87. The common, all black, burying beetle.
Necrodes littoralis (L.) GW, 6.8.88. Despite its specific name this burying beetle is sometimes attracted to light inland (Welch 1968).

SCARABAEIDAE

Aphodius depressus (Kug.) B, 1, 27.6.86. A slightly smaller and less common dung beetle than the next species.
A. rufipes (L.) PW, 1, 26.7.86; WaW, 1, 2.8.86; FI, 2, 29.6.87; FC, 1, 6.7.87; UM, 4, 2.8.87; GW, 2, 6.8.88; PWW, 1, 5.8.88. The most common dung beetle attracted to light.

ELATERIDAE

Melanotus erythropus (Gmel. in L.) PW, 1, 13.6.86; B, 1, 27.6.86; PW, 1, 4.7.87; FC, 1, 6.7.87; PWW, 1, 5.8.88.
Stenagostus villosus (Fourc.) WaW, 1, 6.8.88. A 'click beetle' more commonly recorded as a larva; adults less commonly found.

LAMPYRIDAE

Lampyris noctiluca (L.) BW, 1, 27.6.86. The male 'glow-worm' is the only sex capable of flight.

NITIDULIDAE

Meligethes aeneus (F.) PC, 3, 9.7.88. A 'blossom beetle' present in vast numbers in rape and many other flowers.

Glischrochilus hortensis (Fourc.) PC, 1, 7.8.88. A species usually attracted to sap, carrion and decaying fungi.

BYTURIDAE

Byturus ochraceus (Scriba) PC, 2, 28.5.88.

TENEBRIONIDAE

Lagria hirta (L.) GW, 1, 6.8.88. One of the most common beetles at light.

OEDEMERIDAE

Oedemera lurida (Marsh.) PC, 1, 28.5.88.

CERAMBYCIDAE

Arhopalus rusticus (L.) PWW, 1, 5.8.88. Originally a northern species attacking Pinus but now widespread in southern England.

CHRYSOMELIDAE

Cryptocephalus aureolus Suff., PC, 1, 28.5.88.
Chrysolina polita (L.) FI, 1, 29.6.87.
Phyllodecta vulgatissima (L.) FI, 1, 29.6.87. Host plant - Salix species.
Psylliodes chrysocephala (L.) PW, 1, 2.9.88. A flea-beetle which has greatly increased in numbers since the widespread planting of rape.

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THE IRISH YELLOW SLUG (Limax maculatus (Kaleniczenko, 1851)) NEW TO HUNTINGDONSHIRE

Brian Eversham & Stuart V Green

Introduction

On 15 December 1988, during a torchlight search for the Yellow Slug (Limax flavus L.) on walls in central Huntingdon where one of us had previously recorded the species (Eversham, 1986), we encountered a strikingly-mottled keeled slug. It looked rather like the Tiger Slug (Limax maximus L.), but its pattern of blotches was definitely pale-on-a-dark-ground, and its greenish yellow mucus ruled out all but L. flavus and L. maculatus (Kaleniczenko).

A search of neighbouring walls revealed four more such slugs, along with about a dozen typical L.flavus. Subsequent close examination supported the identification as L. maculatus, the 'Irish Yellow Slug'. When a large example was killed and dissected, the characteristics of its distal genitalia confirmed the identity.

This paper describes the Huntingdon population of L. maculatus and looks at its occurrence compared with L. flavus.

Site description

The two species of Yellow Slug occur on old walls along the part of Ambury Road from Huntingdon High Street to the ring road, from grid ref. 52/237719 to 52/238720. The wall has a range of building materials, aspects and exposures. The older parts are believed to mark the former boundary of the grounds of Cromwell House, a 19th-century building on the site of the earlier manor house where Oliver Cromwell was born. The age of the wall in its current configuration has not yet been established.

For the layout of the wall, see Figure 1. South of section 1, the walls are high and of well-pointed brickwork. The western wall is painted, the eastern bare. No slugs have been found in this stretch. Section 1 is old but quite well-pointed brickwork. Sections 2 - 6 are of brick, but are more worn and with deeper crevices. Sections 4 - 6 are ivy-topped. The cul-de-sac on the western side provides a south-facing example of old, rough brickwork, again partly ivy-clad. Section 7 is a recently-built (c. 5 years old) brick wall extending toward Grammar School Walk. From section 13 onward, the wall is mostly stone with mortar. Parts of the stone are calcareous, parts sandstone. One section is brick with an excess of mortar, making the whole surface calcareous. Parts are shaded by trees (beech, Norway maple and yew). Other parts are fully exposed.

Shortly after the study began, at the end of January 1989, a 3m gap in the wall was filled (section 14). This provides a new, slug-free section of wall on which to study colonization. The new section is stone with mortar.

In addition to the slugs, many other organisms occupy the walls. The lichens and bryophytes will be dealt with in a separate paper. The following vascular plants grow on the wall: Hedera helix, Antirrhinum majus, Senecio squalidus, Chelidonium majus, Rubus fruticosus agg., Arenaria leptoclados, Cymbalaria muralis, Mycelis muralis, Epilobium ciliatum and Festuca rubra.

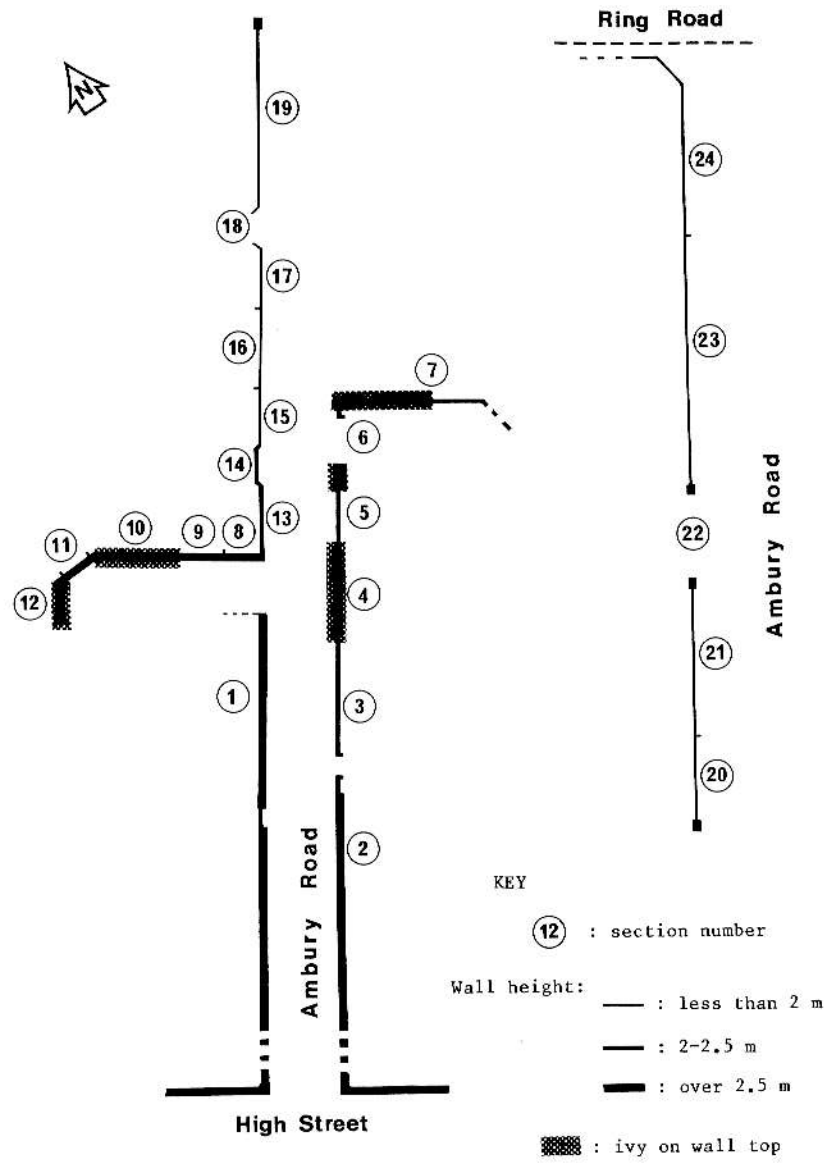


Figure 1: map of site.

Methods

Shortly after L. maculatus was found, the prominent features of the walls (trees, ivy, stone/brick type etc) were mapped, figure 1. Since then, the site has been visited by one or both authors at least once a week, between 21.25hr and 01.15hr. On each visit, the position and size-class (less than 2cm long when crawling, 2-6cm, and over 6cm) of every active slug was plotted.

Both species are, as far as is known, completely nocturnal and spend all day and some evenings at rest in crevices in the wall. Only active slugs are visible on the surface of the wall.

The air temperature at several points along the wall was measured on each visit with a Micronta digital thermometer. Variations across the site were slight, never exceeding 1°c, and were fairly constant. The parts which were colder (e.g. the new wall running east toward Grammar School Walk) were cooler than the main wall by approximately the same amount on every visit.

The site was visited by BE during daylight hours to enhance the description.

History, synonyms and known distribution of Limax maculatus

The slug now known as Limax maculatus was first noticed by British conchologists in 1968, in Ireland. By 1976 it was recognized as a distinct species, separate from the common and widespread L. flavus and apparently replacing that species in Ireland. It was formally added to the British list under the name Limax grossui Lupu (Chatfield, 1976), a species which had itself been described new to science as recently as 1970, in Roumania. Under the name L. grossui the species is mapped in the Atlas of non-marine Mollusca (Kerney, 1976). By 1978, British workers were beginning to agree that our slug differed from the eastern European animal, and the name Limax hibernicus was coined for it: it appears as 'Limax hib' on the Conchological Society's recording card. However, before Limax hibernicus could be validly described, Evans (1978a and b) described the species and compared it with L. flavus and L. grossui, following a detailed chemical study of the group. He called the slug Limax pseudoflavus, and this is the name used in the field guide (Kerney & Cameron, 1979).

As if this were not enough names for one slug in one century, in the 1980s collaborative studies between British and eastern European workers looked at the question again. The conclusion (Norris & Wiktor, 1982) was that the British and Roumanian slugs were one species, and that this had been described from the Crimea as long ago as 1851, under the name Krynickillus maculatus. Sadly, that euphonious genus has long since been 'sunk', but the species name stands.

The current state of knowledge is that Limax maculatus is native in forests around the Black Sea, in the Crimea and Caucasus, and probably also in Turkey, Roumania and Bulgaria (Norris & Wiktor, 1982). Isolated records from north-western USSR and central France may be recent introductions. In Britain, it has been found in a few scattered sites, all close to human habitation, in England, Wales and southern Scotland. It is abundant throughout Ireland in both man-made and wild habitats. Interestingly, the handful of sites in Ireland where L. flavus has been found are all in the larger conurbations (Ross, 1984). The question of whether L. maculatus is a recent, highly successful colonist in Ireland, or a native species of long standing, may never be resolved.

Whatever the case in Ireland, it seems very likely that the species has spread to and within Britain with man's unwitting assistance. The Huntingdon record, which seems to be the farthest east by over 100 miles, is more likely to be introduced than relic. More important than its origin is the fact that this may well be the only site where the two Yellow Slugs coexist in a mixed population.

Identification

The standard identification guides (Kerney & Cameron, 1979; Cameron, Jackson & Eversham, 1983) should enable L. flavus/maculatus to be distinguished quite easily from other British slugs. They are the only large slugs (up to 12cm long) with yellow or green mucus and a pattern of light and dark speckling or blotches. Both species have a combination of yellow patches and darker (grey, green-grey or brown) pigment. In L. flavus. the darker flecks are fairly small and pale, so from a distance a typical flavus may look unicolorous yellow. In maculatus the dark pigment may be very dark grey-green or brown, and is so widespread that the slug appears dark with irregular pale blotches (see figure 2).

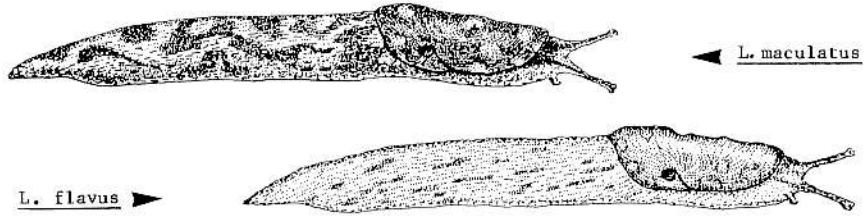


Figure 2

Examination of many individuals of both species in Huntingdon confirms the value of overall appearance in identifying half-grown and adult slugs. The colour of the tentacles (usually described as pale blue in flavus and 'cold steel blue' in maculatus) varies too much to be helpful.

Juvenile flavus are, in Huntingdon at least, much darker than the adults, being blackish green with a few tiny yellow specks. By the time the slugs are 15-20mm long, flavus have usually acquired a pale yellow stripe down the keel (often persisting to adulthood), but the pale speckles are still very fine indeed, the individual pale patches being under 1mm across. At 15mm, most maculatus have a few larger pale blotches, especially around the breathing pore. L. maculatus rarely if ever shows the pale keel so characteristic of flavus.

Despite the range of identification features available, we have seen several small slugs at the study site whose identity is still in doubt. Perhaps 5% of yellow Limax under 20mm cannot at present be assigned confidently to one species. Captive rearing of the progeny of known adults may solve this problem in the next few months.

Variation in L. flavus and L. maculatus

The transition from blackish-green juveniles to paler or blotched adults is

a gradual one, and on most visits to the site, the full range of can be found. Quite distinct from this, there is considerable variation between individuals, and between different parts of the population.

L. flavus : in adults, the persistence of the pale stripe on the keel, and the development of regular bands of grey and yellow along the flanks, can alter the appearance greatly. A few individuals are so 'stripey' as to be immediately recognisible. A few are very pale overall. A small number seem (over eight weeks' observation) to be permanently dark-orange; but an orange tinge develops in captive flavus which are irritated, starved or dehydrated, so this may be a transient feature.

L. maculatus : adults at the site show a wide range of pattern and colour. The yellow-grey background is tinged more or less strongly with brown or pink, especially around the head and mantle. A similar colour form has been reported from Liverpool (Evans, 1982), but seems not to occur in Ireland. The light and dark patches on the body are arranged in lines along the flanks of some individuals: others are randomly blotched. None of the maculatus seen so far has had a pale stripe along the keel. The mantle (the oval flap of skin at the front of a slug, covering the head when at rest) has a pattern of light and dark patches. These are so variable that it is hoped that each adult slug can eventually be recognised individually, in a similar way to the Bewick's swans at the Wildfowl Trust. The sketches below (figure 3) show the range of patterns on the mantle and fore-body.

Figure 3: L maculatus (4 forms) L. flavus
(The dark pigment, shown black, is much paler in L. flavus than in L. maculatus)

In addition to the variation described above, between species and between individuals of the same species, groups of slugs may vary. One group of L. flavus, in section 24 of the wall, are all conspicuously dark green rather than yellow (almost maculatus-coloured) with the small pale patches (covering 7 or fewer contiguous tubercles) standing out strongly. This population is separated from other flavus on the wall by about 40m, and contains at least 31 individuals, of all size-classes, all of the same unusual colour.

About 2m from the unusual flavus population is a drain cover in the footway. A few flavus emerge from this to forage on the tarmac. These are all of the typical pale form.

The existence of such a distinct cluster of one colour form may mean that there is little mixing between this group and the other flavus. It will be interesting to see if the cluster remains isolated and distinct in future generations.

Vertical distribution of slugs on the wall

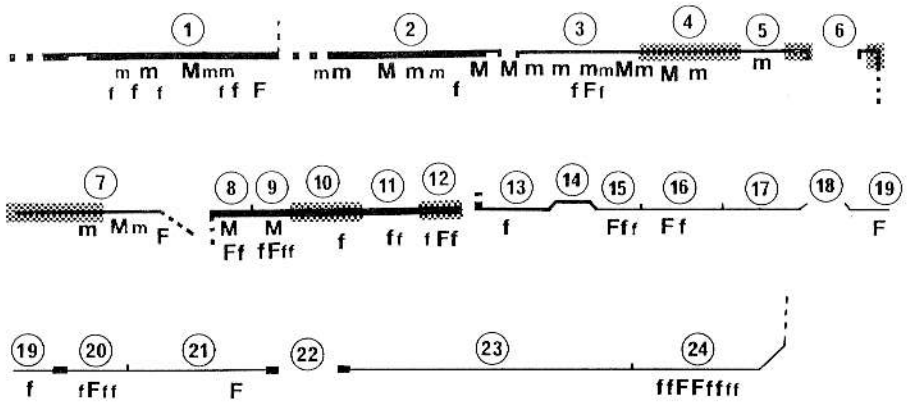
Slugs have been seen at all heights on the wall, from ground level to the top (up to 3m). Slugs of all sizes have been seen at all heights, but there is a tendency for those near the wall top to be large; and over half the very small (under 20mm) slugs have been within 1m of the ground. This applies equally to both species.

Distribution and abundance along the wall

Figure 4 summarizes the recorded distribution of the two species along the wall, divided into the three size-classes. The size classes were originally intended to define juvenile, subadult and adult (i.e. sexually mature) slugs. However, many medium-size (5-6cm) maculatus have well-developed genitalia : these may be visible as a pale creamy opaque patch under the right edge of the mantle just below the breathing pore, showing through the translucent tissues of the body wall. They can be seen without injuring the slug. On the other hand, some very large flavus (8-10cm) are immature: this has been confirmed by dissection.

By plotting the position of each slug on every visit, and noting its size-class, we were soon able to recognise particular groups and individuals.

So far, there is little evidence of long-distance movements of slugs along the wall, and only one instance (a very large flavus from section 1 to section 3) of a slug apparently crossing from one side of the road to the other.



KEY (12) : section number

Mmm : 3 size classes of L. maculatus Fff : L. flavus

Each symbol represents up to 5 slugs, eg m = 1-5 mm = 6-10 slugs

Figure 4: Distribution of slugs along the wall.

The literature contains many anecdotal references to flavus having a strong 'homing' instinct (Taylor, 1907; Quick, 1960). Assuming that most slugs stayed within one section during the five weeks of the study (January 5 to February 9), and also assuming that mortality, immigration and emigration have been negligible in the same period, we can estimate the number of slugs active on the wall. We do this by adding the maximum for each size-class on each section of the wall. For example, take the following three successive counts for maculatus on section 1:

9.1.89	1 adult	4 subadult	2 juvenile
11.1.89	2 adult	2 subadult	0 juvenile
12.1.89	0 adult	2 subadult	3 juvenile

From this, it seems reasonable to combine the three nights' maxima and conclude that section 1 has at least 2 adult, 4 subadult and 3 juvenile maculatus within it. Continuing this method for the full five weeks, the minimum population estimate for section 1 becomes 5 adult, 5 subadult and 14 juvenile maculatus (as well as 3 adult, 5 subadult and 12 juvenile flavus).

Using the same procedure for all sections gives a total population for the study site of at least:

L. maculatus	29 adult	41 subadult	35 juvenile	105 total
L. flavus	23 adult	49 subadult	47 juvenile	119 total

This compares with the following highest totals for a single evening :

L. maculatus	21 adult	28 subadult	19 juvenile	68 total
L. flavus	14 adult	37 subadult	29 juvenile	80 total

Clearly, casual visits to sites to look for slugs will substantially under-estimate the numbers present. Even under apparently ideal conditions, many slugs will be overlooked in some parts of a site.

Signs of slug activity

As well as counting active slugs by torchlight, an indirect method for estimating numbers and activity is being tried. The slime trail left by a passing slug remains for several days, or even weeks, in dry weather. The width of the trail is proportional to the size of the slug. By carefully examining patches of dry slime, it should be possible to establish roughly how many slugs of each size-class were involved, and how far each travelled. This technique has already revealed scenes of frenzied activity on stretches of wall where only a few scattered slugs have been observed directly.

It may also be possible to tell the direction of a slime trail (very helpful if fresh mucus is visible on a wall, but its owner cannot immediately be found). On a smooth, flat surface, a slug trail is fairly uniform and, as far as we can tell, non-directional. When a slug crosses a gap of any kind (even a shallow undulation or a narrow crack in the surface of a brick) the slime leaves the surface and the trail will narrow. Quite often, it is drawn out into a fine strand. Such strands are attached by a broad triangular base

to the side of the gap the slug came from, but will usually join the side of departure as a single thread, the trail resuming its full width suddenly at the edge of the crack. (see figure 5).

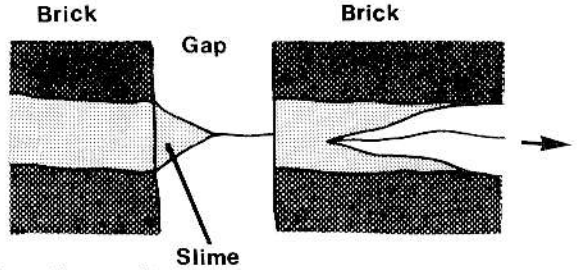


Figure 5: Slime trail across gap between brickwork.

Activity and weather

Common experience shows that more slugs are about on warm, damp evenings than on cold, dry ones. By recording the temperature on each visit, this can be quantified for each species. It would also be very desirable to record humidity. Unfortunately, no accurate, reliable, cheap hygrometers are available.

For adults and subadults of both species of slug, the pattern of activity is the same : few are active on frosty evenings, and numbers rise with temperature. The correlation is very strong over the study period.

For small slugs (less than 20mm), no such correlation was found. Even on very cold evenings, small flavus and maculatus could be found in fair numbers. For example, 7 juvenile flavus and 14 juvenile maculatus were active on 12 January, when there was a ground frost; only one adult flavus and no adult maculatus could be found.

The same pattern of activity is shown by both species. It concurs with casual observations on different kinds of slugs in different habitats. For example, in woodlands which are known to contain high densities of large Arion and Limax species, it is common to find only small Deroceras and Arion foraging on frosty nights.

The reason for small slugs being more active than large slugs in cold weather is unclear. One possibility, which would lend itself to testing in captivity, is that small slugs might be less able to go without food for several days, whereas large ones may be able to 'shut up shop' for a week or more if the weather is unsuitable for activity.

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Appendix : Time and duration of visits

The slug counts described in this paper were made at different times on different evenings. The earliest started at 21.25hr, the latest at 00.15hr. Searches lasted for between 45 and 140 minutes, depending on how closely the slugs were examined. There is no correlation whatever between either starting time or duration of search and the numbers of slugs seen. This has been tested for both species and for all three size-classes.

MAMMAL REPORT FOR 1988

H R Arnold and D J Jefferies

INSECTIVORA

Hedgehog (Erinaceus europaeus) Once again, reports of dead animals far outnumbered reports of live ones. Live animals were reported from five areas: crossing the road at Kings Ripton (TL261767) (14.5.88); walking down a path in Raveley Wood (TL244818) (28.5.88); crossing the road near Alconbury (TL183760) (19.8.88); crossing the road near Brampton Wood (TL196699) (22.8.88); and on several occasions during the mid April until September in a garden at Eynesbury (TL188587).

One dead hedgehog was found on the main ride in Pingle Wood, Warboys (TL313814) (7.8.88); and road casualties were reported from Great Paxton (TL212644) (28.4.88); Old Hurst bypass (TL296772) (14.5.88); East Perry (TL1566) (15.5.88, 7.6.88, 30.7.88 and 11.8.88); Cromwell Road, Eynesbury (TL185591) (21.5.88); Abbotsley (TL234566) (21.5.88); near Offord (TL217653) (4.6.88); Cromwell Road, Eynesbury (TL191590) (6.6.88); Berkley Street, Eynesbury (TL186593) (19.6.88); Priory Farm, near Kimbolton (TL118682) (19.6.88); Great Paxton (TL211642) (7.8.88); Berkley Street, Eynesbury (TL185598) (9.8.88) and (TL183590) (11.8.88); Eaton Ford (TL178603) (12.8.88); Cambridge Street, St Neots (TL194603) (22.8.88); Little Paxton (TL184625) (24.9.88); Andrew Road, Eynesbury (TL188588) (16.11.88) and Potton Road, Eynesbury (TL187591) (22.11.88).

Mole (Talpa europaea) Reports of dead animals also outnumbered others for this species. Fresh molehills were seen in Gransden Wood (TL262550) (2.4.88); Brampton Wood (TL180702) (3.4.88); Waresley Wood (TL263547) (21.4.88); Bankside (TL212654) (14.5.88); Wistow Wood (TL297821) (28.5.88); West Wood, Grafham (TL130678) (24.9.88); Shepherds Close, Easton (TL133707) (25.9.88); Toseland Wood (TL237633) (2.10.88) and Pingle Wood, Warboys (TL313814) (27.11.88). Road casualties were reported from near Leighton Bromswold (TL121760) (30.5.88); East Perry (TL1566) (7.6.88) and near Houghton (TL2872) (23.8.88). Dead bodies were found at Shillow Hill, Bury (TL289823) (20.5.88) and (TL288823) (22.5.88); Perry West Wood (TL133666) (22.5.88); the Sludge Lagoons, East Perry (TL1566) (25.5.88); Brampton Wood (TL182703) (27.5.88); Eaton Ford (TL178600) (2.6.88) and Raveley Wood (TL245819) (12.8.88). Of these, the 20 May record at Shillow Hill was possibly the most interesting. This animal was found at the end of the drive to Windyridge, and all that was found was the skin - the body appeared to have been neatly removed through the mouth! Apart from a slight enlargement of the mouth opening, the skin was otherwise undamaged. Some of the leg bones remained but the body and skull were missing. Has anyone an explanation for this?

Common Shrew (Sorex araneus) Dead animals were found at the following three sites: the Sludge Lagoons, East Perry (two animals at different places) (TL1566) (11.8.88); Wansford, Peterborough, found on a pavement, probably killed by a cat (TL073993) (26.8.88) and near Toseland Wood (TL240632) (2.10.88).

Pygmy Shrew (Sorex minutus) One was found dead in a garage inspection pit at St Neots (TL182602) (17.6.88), and another at Brampton Wood (TL180704) (19.6.88). At Grafham Reserve Hide (TL135676) (10.9.88) Mrs Lovell watched a Pygmy Shrew apparently building a nest. It was gathering pieces of grass, leaves etc from the floor of the hide and taking them into a gap behind a piece of board.

CHIROPTERA

Pipistrelle (Pipistrellus pipistrellus) Colonies were reported at Chatteris (TL392849) (19.6.88); Holywell (TL338707) (23.6.88); West Perry (TL147671) (13.7.88); Eaton Ford (TL176605) (16.7.88); Eaton Socon (TL168587) (24.8.88) and Papworth Everard (TL290629) (2.9.88).

Long-eared bats (Plecotus sp.) Colonies were reported near Diddington (TL177662) (20.3.88); at Willingham (TL402702) (16.6.88) and at Hilton (TL295662) (18.6.88).

LAGOMORPHA

Rabbit (Oryctolagus cuniculus) Rabbits were seen on many occasions during the year at Shillow Hill, Bury (TL2882).

Brown Hare (Lepus capensis) Hares were seen on several occasions during the year behind Windyridge, Shillow Hill (TL2882) but on 2 June one was actually seen in the garden, close to the house (TL288823). Hares were most often seen during the spring, before the crops had grown up. Around Sacrewell Farm, Wansford (TF079003) a population explosion of hares was reported, with many young hares being seen where hardly any had been seen in previous years. Hares were also seen crossing the roads between Elton and Haddon (TL113927) (10.10.88); between Ufford and Upton, near Stamford (TF114027) (16.7.88) and near Leighton Bromswold (TL121761) (30.5.88). One was also seen at Yaxley Brick Pit (TL182932) (30.4.88).

RODENTIA

Wood Mouse (Apodemus sylvaticus) Two were live-trapped in a house in Wansford, Peterborough (TL073993) (30.3.88). Wood mice visited the bird table at Windyridge, Shillow Hill (TL2882) on several occasions during the later part of the year, feeding from the hopper in the roof of the table.

Bank Vole (Clethrionomys glareolus) Three were trapped in a house in Wansford, Peterborough (TL073993) (29.3.88). This is quite an unusual species to find inside a house. Bank voles also paid visits to the bird table at Windyridge, Shillow Hill (TL2882) in the later part of the year, but were not as adventurous as the Wood Mice and fed at the food tray at the bottom of the table!

Grey Squirrel (Sciurus carolinensis) Grey squirrels were seen throughout the year at Priory Park, St Neots (TL193614), and sporadically at Shillow Hill, Bury (TL2882). They were also seen at Brampton Wood (TL179702) (3.4.88); Longthorpe near Peterborough (TL156984) (18.4.88); Pingle Wood, Warboys (TL313815) (14.5.88), and in a garden at Wansford near Peterborough (TL073993) on three dates (15.06., 30.08, 25.09.88). Sightings at Woodwalton Fen have increased this winter (October-December) with 14 in 18 visits - compare October-December 1987 with 4 in 18 visits, a typical frequency. Squirrels have been seen regularly in the vicinity of Biggin Lane, Ramsey this winter, whereas previously sightings have been rare. On 26 January 1988 Lynne Farrell saw a black Grey Squirrel in Hemingford Grey (TL293706) the first she has seen at that site for two years. Barry Dickerson saw another black one at Abbotsley (TL229566) (6.8.88).

Brown Rat (Rattus norvegicus) Two were seen dead on the road at East Perry (TL1566) on 5 and 6 March 1988. Several were seen dead on the roads between Wistow and Monks Wood during the autumn. At Shillow Hill, Bury (TL2882)

from October onwards a Brown Rat (and on a few occasions two) visited the bottom of the bird table at Windyridge to feed on bird seed. This was in broad daylight, but sometimes at night one would be there, occasionally climbing to feed on the table.

Coypu (Myocasta coypus) On 17 October 1988 a coypu was seen swimming in the River Nene near the Orton Longueville Station site. The long running battle against coypu was thought to have been won, and the Coypu Control Campaign has been wound up. But MAFF have never declared the coypu extinct, and a few stragglers are bound turn up from time to time. MAFF were informed of this sighting.

CARNIVORA

Badger (Meles meles) Six road casualties during the year have been reported to us: near Lolworth (TL3764) (19.3.88); at Godmanchester (TL256706) (17.6.88); between Wansford and Alwalton (TL19) (15.7.88); near Milton Golf Course (TL139984) (30.7.88); near Monks Wood (TL27) (8.9.88) and east of Castor (TL132983) (14.10.88). On 18 September, ten days after he found the dead badger near Monks Wood, Mr Marriott found a set of muddy badger footprints crossing the road some hundred yards from where the body had been. He showed these footprints to HRA two days later when they were still clearly visible, and remained so for several more days. These footprints were probably so durable because of the clayey soil and the dry weather.

Weasel (Mustela nivalis) One was watched crossing both carriageways of the A1 near Peterborough (TL142939) (15.1.88). It made it! Another crossed the road just outside the gate to Monks Wood Experimental Station (TL202797) (5.9.88), but one that tried this in East Perry (TL1566) didn't make it and was seen dead on 12.9.88. One was seen crossing the road near Morborne (TL117912) (10.10.88) with something in its mouth. Another crossed the road near Lutton (TL126879) (21.10.88) as did one at the Broughton/Little Raveley crossroads (TL205786) (11.11.88). One was seen foraging in the drive at Windyridge, Shillow Hill (TL288823) (30.10.88).

Stoat (Mustela erminea) Three road casualties have been noted this year; near Cold Harbour, near Morborne (TL121906) (26.6.88); at East Perry (TL1566) (14.8.88) and between Easton and Stonely (TL120692) (25.9.88). Live animals were seen twice at the Sludge Lagoons, East Perry (TL1566) on 18 July and 11 August 1988.

Fox (Vulpes vulpes) One was seen crossing the road at Hemingford Grey (TL307707) (24.1.88) and another dead on the road near Wyton Airfield (TL283755) (27.11.88). One was sighted crossing a field near Peterborough (TL140938) (1.2.88) and foxes were seen at the Sludge Lagoons, East Perry (TL1566) on three occasions - single individuals on 7 May and 11 June 1988, whilst on 4 June 1988 a fox was first seen being mobbed by two magpies. Later on what was thought to be the same animal was seen being mobbed by lapwings. It tried to catch a mallard, then disappeared into willows and reappeared on the bank with two well grown cubs. They sat for some minutes and then went off. Foxes were present at Shillow Hill, Bury. One was seen several times on the evening of 17 May 1988 - this appeared to be a young cub that was lost, since it was calling quite a lot. On 23 June 1988 agitated calling by moorhens on the pond revealed a young fox apparently stalking the young birds.

Otter (Lutra lutra) An otter was seen at a St Ives gravel pit (TL27) (21.9.88). Almost certainly not a resident animal.

ARTIODACTYLA

Fallow deer (Dama dama) One dark form was seen in Monks Wood on 14 May 1988.

Roe deer (Capreolus capreolus) On November 17 and 25 1988 deer were glimpsed in Wistow Wood (TL297822) which appeared to be larger than Muntjac. On 11 December a cast antler was found there which proved to be from a Roe deer. The animal would have been at least three years old. On 11 November 1988 a dead Roe was found in a layby on the A1, close to Coppingford Wood (TL182804).

Muntjac (Muntiacus reevesi) Muntjac were seen on many occasions during the year at the Grafham Water Nature Reserve (TL1367). Up to five were seen at a time. On 13 and 16 January 1988, a Muntjac was seen in the garden at Windyridge, Shillow Hill (TL288823). It was apparently feeding on the numerous windfallen apples. A young female, thin, but with no other signs of the cause of death, was found on Top Ride, Monks Wood NNR (TL292799) (10.3.88). Another deer was seen running along the road at Shepherds Close, Easton (TL133707) (5.9.88) and a road casualty was found near Monks Wood (TL206797) (26.10.88). Another was injured on the road near Raveley Wood, and later died (TL2481) (22.12.88).

Chinese Water Deer (Hydropotes inermis) A road casualty found near Bevills Wood was treated by a local veterinary surgeon but did not respond to treatment and had to be put down (TL203796) (7.9.88).

We have received the following report on deer from Lynne Farrell and Dr A S Cooke.

Woodwalton Fen Analysis of sightings of Chinese water deer for the 12 winters 1976/7-1987/8 indicated that apparent survival and recruitment had an equal influence on winter numbers. Note that survival represented adult deer recorded at Woodwalton from one winter to the next and did not allow for any emigration or immigration. Throughout this 12 year period the population remained remarkably stable with a difference of little more than two-fold in the ease with which deer were recorded. There was evidence that a density-dependent factor (or factors) was operating. Observations from October-December 1988 suggested that the population level did not change significantly during 1988.

Muntjac have been establishing a population in the Reserve since 1980 and in 1987/8, winter sightings increased three-fold to 52. Of the 105 sightings within the confines of the Reserve during the 1980s, 85 (81%) have been to the south of dyke 10. This build-up of Muntjac in the south of the Reserve does not yet seem to have affected water deer whose relative distribution has remained unchanged. The signs are that Muntjac numbers in 1988/9 will not be quite as high as last winter.

Monks Wood Mean numbers of Muntjac recorded per hour have declined since January-May dusk walks were started in 1986: 1986, 22.5; 1987, 19.0; 1988, 14.1. In 1988, 49% of deer seen clearly were adult bucks, so recent recruitment may have been poor. For Chinese water deer, overall numbers seen per hour were: 1986, 0.7; 1987, 1.6; 1988, 1.1.

Holme Fen Both species of deer appear to have increased roughly two-fold, comparing overall numbers seen per hour on spring dusk walks for 1986 and 1988 (no visits in 1987):

Muntjac: 1986, 1.4; 1988, 2.6
Water deer: 1986, 1.7; 1988, 3.4

The increases were, however, not statistically significant. As at Woodwalton, deer have proved more elusive October-December, with overall sightings per hour for 1988: Muntjac, 0.7; water deer, 1.3.

LIST OF CONTRIBUTORS

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ANALYSIS OF OWL PELLETS FOUND IN TEBBUTTS YARD, EYNESBURY

Teresa Dickerson

Several unusually large owl pellets were collected in June 1988 at Tebbutts Yard, St Neots by Peter Johnstone who passed them on to me for dissection. The owl pellets were black with a light sheen on them; because of the size and colour it is thought that they must have been produced by a barn owl, but none of the staff at Tebbutts have reported seeing one.

I recorded the length and diameter of the pellets and then dissected them. I removed the skulls and identified them with the help of an identification key.

The results are shown in the chart below.

Owl pellets collected in June 1988 at Tebbutts Yard Eynesbury

Owl pellet	Length	Width	Contents
A	46 mm	30 mm	Three field voles
B	62 mm	29 mm	Four field voles
C	64 mm	37 mm	Three field voles, three common shrews, one house mouse
D	50 mm	29 mm	Three field voles, one common shrew
E	94 mm	33 mm	Six field voles, two common shrews
F	48 mm	29 mm	Three field voles
G	78 mm	30 mm	Five common shrews, three field voles
H	64 mm	31 mm	Six field voles, one common shrew
I	63 mm	29 mm	Five field voles
J	55 mm	26 mm	Three field voles, one pigmy shrew
K	43 mm	25 mm	Two field voles

Total: 41 field voles, 12 common shrews, 1 pigmy shrew and 1 house mouse. Overall 55 mammals.

The size of some of the pellets was exceptionally large as the sizes given in the literature is length 40-83 mm by diameter 21-35 mm with an average contents of three to six small mammals.

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Key to the identification of small skulls (source unknown).

BIRD REPORT FOR 1987

J S Clark

This report concentrates on the more noteworthy events and species recorded during 1987.

To some extent conditions in January approached those in February 1979, easterly winds and subzero temperatures resulting in a similar widespread arrival of Red-necked Grebes and Smew. Heavy snow on the coast displaced a number of species including Brent Geese and Lapland Buntings both of which were recorded at Grafham Water. The hard weather also caused a large movement of Lapwing especially on the 10th.

Cool and unsettled weather in the spring disrupted migration contributing to some unusual records. In May, for example, Night Heron, Honey Buzzard and Red-footed Falcon were all recorded; the falcon, a magnificant male, was the first record for Hunts. The cold weather continued into June reducing breeding success, a large scale movement of Swifts in early summer suggesting that many had abandoned breeding altogether.

In October an intense low pressure system rapidly developed in the Bay of Biscay on the 15th bringing overnight stormforce winds and heavy rain. This resulted in an unprecedented inland wreck of Sabine's Gulls, presumably displaced from Biscay, as well as Grey Phalaropes, Great Skuas, Pomarine Skuas and Little Gulls. At least ten Sabine's Gulls were recorded, yet another first for Hunts. A continuation of the stormy conditions in November caused a further wreck of seabirds, this time involving Little Auks weakened by prolonged disturbance of their feeding grounds.

Despite the cold spell in January the year was noteworthy for the low numbers of some winter visitors particularly Short-eared Owls, Great Grey Shrikes and genuinely wild grey geese. The mild winters of 1986/87 and 1987/88 also contributed to record numbers of over-wintering Chiffchaffs.

Breeding successes within Hunts were rather mixed, with Sparrowhawk, Hobby and Black Redstart enjoying considerable success whilst species such as Barn Owl and Tree Pipit continue to show a decline. Other species are more problematical; the Willow Tit, for example whilst clearly holding its own in some localities seems to have decreased in others. On the other hand the presence of both juvenile and adult Cetti's Warbler near Peterborough may have indicated breeding success, which if confirmed, would have been the first for Hunts.

I would like to take the opportunity to thank the contributors who have compiled records for 1987. As well as contributing to the present report the data will also be published in the Cambridgeshire Bird Report, the Rare Breeding Birds Report, the Rarities Report and in numerous other surveys.

SYSTEMATIC LIST

The list follows the sequence and scientific nomenclature of Professor K H Voous (1977 List of Recent Holarctic bird species). Abbreviations: GP (gravel pit), BP (brick pit), NNR (National Nature Reserve), BBRC (British Birds Rarity Committee) m.o. (many observers), et al. (and others).

NB In accordance with changes proposed by the British Ornithologists' Union Records Committee the Rock and Water Pipits are now treated as separate species.

Red-throated Diver (Gavia stellata) An adult at Grafham Water on 14 March, possibly a British breeder on return passage (NMB).

Black-throated Diver (G. arctica) A single at Ferry Meadows from 10-18 December appeared during foggy, anticyclonic weather (AD, TPD, GFW).

Red-necked Grebe (Podiceps grisegena) A widespread arrival during January but not on the scale of the 1979 influx. Single birds reported on the R Nene at the Dog in a Doublet from 23 January-1 February (RJD et al.); at Ferry Meadows from 21 February-6 April (TPD, GFW et al.); at St Ives GP from 17-18 January (RF) and from 12 March-5 April (DJG, DMG et al.). At Grafham Water a single from 17-18 January, 3 from 22-31 January and up to 4 on 1 February; 2 on 14 March and a single in summer plumage on 25 April (NMB, JRG, PBL, MPS et al.). A further small scale influx occurred during the latter part of the year with singles at Marsh Lane GP from 11-13 December (AJWC, NBM) at St Ives GP on 19 December (DJG, DMG) and Grafham Water from 17 October to 6 December (NMB et al.).

Slavonian Grebe (P. auritus) Singles on the R Nene at Peterborough from 15-16 January (AD, CS, GFW); at Grafham Water on 25 January (NMB); Little Paxton GP on 20 March (per TGG); Fletton BP on 30 August (AJL) and Ferry Meadows on 5 October (TPD).

Black-necked Grebe (P. nigricollis) Passage birds in full breeding plumage were much in evidence on 5 April with one at Ferry Meadows (ARF, AEP, CS, GFW) and 3 very agitated birds at Grafham Water (NMB). A single autumn passage bird: the Nene at North Bank on 11 October (RGC).

Cormorant (Phalacrocorax carbo) Unprecedented numbers at Grafham Water with a peak of 240 in December (JRG et al.). Peaks in previous years (6 in 1980, 27 in 1981, 45 in 1983 and around 120 in 1985-6) reveal the scale of this increase. The majority of Grafham birds used to roost at Fen Drayton but after the destruction of the island roost site most birds transferred to the Heronry at Little Paxton GP where counts of 130 in February, 144 in March and 145 in December were soon to be doubled in 1988 (TGG, RAH, MPS).

Shag (P. aristotelis) A second winter bird at Grafham Water from 5-12 December (NMB) and again on 28 December (AP).

Bittern (Botaurus stellaris) Singles at Stibbington NR from 8-23 January (AD); Marsh Lane GP from 17 January-15 February (per AJWC); Earith GP on 19 June, 25 October and 7 November (RCMu) and Woodwalton Fen NNR on 4 November (NCC).

Grey Heron (Ardea cinerea) Near the Dog in a Doublet sluice on 7 June a single bird was seen to swoop from about 8 metres and catch a large fish which it consumed on the bank. No reference to this behaviour pattern could be found in available literature (SH and PDS).

Nigh Heron (Nycticorax nycticorax) An adult flushed from willow carr at Ferry Meadows on 13 May (GFW). This record is being considered by the BBRC. A possible immature at Woodwalton Fen some time in July could not be confirmed (NCC).

Brent Goose (Branta bernicla) A marked influx associated with severe weather: 2 at Drysides GP from 17-18 January (RJJ, GFW); Grafham Water 16 on 17 January; 17 on 18 January and 5 from 25 January-1 February (NMB, MB et al.); 1 south-west at Needingworth on 25 January (MB) and a single at Ferry Meadows on 9 February (TPD). Also recorded in December at St Ives GP with 4 on 12 (DJG, DMG) and a single at Grafham Water on 24 (RAH, MPS).

Egyptian Goose (Alapochen aegyptiacus) Three at Bury Fen from 8-23 March (MB) moved to St Ives GP with a pair remaining from 23 March-4 July, Display was observed but there was no evidence of breeding. They reappeared at the end of the year (JSM et al.). A single at Ferry Meadows on 21 April and 4-10 May (KJD). Probably the same bird appeared at North Bank GP on 14 May (TPD).

Blue-winged Teal (Anas discors) A single female or immature at Little Paxton GP was first located on 13 September (TR). It was subsequently seen on 15 and 16 (RLa, PPe) but successfully eluded many observers as it roosted on a very small pit near the main works. The record has been accepted by the BBRC and represents the third record for Hunts of this North American species.

Red-crested Pochard (Netta rufina) During the first half of the year single males were recorded as follows: Maxey GP from 1 January-7 March (MESR, RCET), St Ives GP from 15-19 January (DJG, DMG, BSM); Somersham GP on 11 February (AH); Earith GP on 22 February (AP); Bury Fen on 5 April (MB) and Barleycroft GP on four dates from March-May (AP). Many of these records clearly refer to the same individual. Autumn records included a female seen intermittently at St Ives GP from 24 in July - 20 September (DJG, DMG, JSM); a male at Bainton GP on 13 September (RCET) and a female at Little Paxton GP showing signs of hybridization with a Pintail (RAH). The year ended with a small influx of males with singles reported from Grafham Water on 14 November (PJT) and 8 December (RL, MPS) and at Ferry Meadows on 14 November (TPD).

Ferruginous Duck (Aythya nytoca) A single female or immature male at Grafham Water from 18-25 January (NMB) coincided with the arrival of birds at three other sites.

Tufted Duck (Aythya fuligula) At Grafham Water, from 1982 onwards, a serious decline in invertebrates associated with the appearance of the blue-green alga Microcystis resulted in a dramatic decrease of invertebrate feeders such as Tufted and Goldeneye. The mean regular counts of Tufted reflect this: 1150 (1972-6), 1100 (1977-81), 280 (1982-87) representing an average decrease of 75% (ASC). The 1987 counts were the lowest for many years and even when smaller waters were frozen over in January Grafham numbers did not rise above 165, a figure comfortably exceeded at 4 other sites including 588 at Drysides GP and 546 at Little Paxton GP.

Scaup (A. marila) An influx during severe weather in January: at Grafham Water a male and female from 17-25 January (NMB, JRG) and a male and 2 females from 1 February (NMB, PBL, MPS). On the R Nene at North Bank a female on 5 February (RJD) and a male from 22 February-15 March (RJD, ARF, AEP, GFW). Single males at Little Paxton GP on 11 January, 8 February, 1 March and a female on 22 March (TGG).

Eider (Somateria mollissima) After the long staying individual (of doubtful origin) at Grafham Water from November 1983-August 1986, a first winter male and 2 females recorded from 18-25 January 1988 were considered to be genuine

vagrants. An immature male was also present from 5 April-2 July (NMB, BEC, DGD, SAS).

Long-tailed Duck (Clangula hyemalis) An adult female appeared at Grafham Water during foggy anticyclonic conditions on 28 November and remained throughout the winter (NMG).

Common Scoter (Melanitta nigra) A female at Ferry Meadows from 28 January-3 February (TPD, GFW) and 2 females on 19 November (TPD). At Grafham a male and female on 16 July (NMB) and at Little Paxton GP a female on 8 November (PBL).

Velvet Scoter (M. fusca) Two at Ferry Meadows on 8 March (per GFW).

Goldeneye (Bucephala clangula) At Grafham Water, in common with Tufted Duck another invertebrate feeder, a significant decline has taken place. The mean regular population counts were 99 (1972-6), 105 (1977-82) but only 53 (1983-7). Although a high peak of 140 was recorded on February 1987 this was unusual and by the end of the year only 12-30 were present (ASC).

Smew (Mergus albellus) Weather conditions in January caused a widespread arrival almost on the scale of the 1979 influx with maxima of 15 on the R Nene on 16 January, 13 at Little Paxton GP on 15 February and 10 at Buckden GP on 14 February. Altogether a total of ten sites was involved.

Red-breasted Merganser (M. serrator) Single female or immature at Grafham Water and Little Paxton GP on 7 February (PBL) and at Ferry Meadows on 30 December (TPD).

Honey Buzzard (Pernis apivorus) A single passed high over Hilton on a northerly course on 16 May. It was noted to flap almost continuously, a characteristic of this species when on passage (JSC).

Red Kite (Milvus milvus) One east over Upwood mobbed by 2 Carrion Crows on 6 March (RIH).

Marsh Harrier (Circus aeruginosus) At one site an adult male made a brief appearance on 6 April accompanied by a male Hen Harrier. A second male, an immature, displaying over the reedbeds on 7 May was joined by a female on 14. A further passage bird was located on 14 June (NCC). On 30 May a female passed over Little Paxton GP (PBL). During the autumn passage there were some 20 records of individuals from as many sites: a male at Crowland Wash on 2 July and a female on 23 August (RCET). Single females or immatures were recorded at Sawtry on 10 August (ARF, CS); Drysides GP 10-16 August (GFW); North Bank GP 14 August (GFW); Thorney 10-25 August (RJD); Peterborough 14-15 August (KJD); Farcet Fen 16-22 August (AJL, RCET), Holme Fen NNR 22 August (AJL); Woodwalton Fen NNR, 2 August, 28-30 August (2), 7-13 September (NCC); Conington 3-5 September (RJJ); Flag Fen 28 August (AEP). Doubtless many records involved the same individuals. There was only one record from the south of the region: at Earith on 15 August (RCMu).

Hen Harrier (C. cyaneus) At the main roost, Woodwalton Fen NNR, monthly peaks were 5 (2 males) January; 7 (4 males) February; 6 (3 males) March; 4 (2 males) April with the last on 18. One in October; 2 (1 male) November; 5 (1 male) December but by 31 only one bird was left, the mild weather influencing their dispersal (NCC). At Holme Fen NNR singles noted from January-March; a male on 6 December almost certainly used the Woodwalton

roost (NCC). A male at Farcet Fen on 12 February, a ringtail on 14 March and a male on 21 March (AJL); a male and female at Thorney on 29 January (RJD); ringtail at Kings Ripton on 26 April (RF, JSM) and at Grafham Water from 31 January-1 February (NMB, PBL).

Goshawk (Accipiter gentilis) Single females at Godmanchester on 10 April (LC, PP) and Marsh Lane GP on 24 December (JSC). The latter may have had jesses but this could not be confirmed.

Sparrowhawk (A. nisus) At least 11 pairs raised young.

Buzzard (Buteo buteo) One at Grafham Water on 1 February (RL). Spring passage noted at Holme Fen NNR with a single on 8 April (NCC) whilst there were six reports of birds on autumn passage: Wansford 8 August (per GFW); Woodwalton Fen NNR from 21-24 August (NCC); one soaring over the centre of Peterborough on 29 August (per GFW); a single at Grafham Water mobbed by Grey Herons, Kestrels and Crows on 11 September (IPR, MPS); Ferry Meadows 14 September (per GFW) and Holme Fen NNR from 25-30 October (NCC).

Rough-legged Buzzard (B. lagopus) One flying south over Holme Fen NNR on 19 October was also reported by two local gamekeepers (NCC).

Osprey (Pandion haliaetus) One north over Buckden on 11 June was climbing strongly from the Ouse valley (GDE). One 28 August a single, previously seen over Fen Drayton GP, flew west over St Ives GP (NJW). At Woodwalton Fen NNR one fishing on 28 August may have been the same individual seen sporadically until 13 September (NCC). A single at Grafham Water on 5 September (NMB).

Peregrine (Falco peregrinus) A male at St Ives GP on 3 April (DJG, DMG) and another at Warboys from 12-13 September (DF). An adult flew west at Marsh Lane GP on 3 October (AJWC).

Kestrel (F. tinnunculus) The RSPB organized the first live urban Kestrel watch in Britain at Peterborough Cathedral where visitors could see young being fed using closed circuit television.

Red footed Falcon (F. vespertinus) A male, first seen at Little Paxton GP on 23 May (PBL), subsequently supplied many observers with excellent views during the sponsored bird watch on the following day (TGG). It was last seen on the 26 (GDE). The record, the first for Hunts has been accepted by the BBRC.

Spotted Crake (Porzana porzana) A well-watched juvenile at Ferry Meadows from 7 September-30 October (AD, AEP, RCET, GFW).

Dotterel (Charadrius marinellus) Noted earlier than normal at a regular site south of Peterborough where 4 on 18 April increased to 15 on 29 April finally declining to 2 on 2 May (AJL). Four at Tick Fen on 25 April (RF); 7 from 3-7 May at Ramsey (RF, DJG, DMG).

Grey Plover (Pluvialis squatarola) Recorded at Grafham Water on 24 January (RAH) and 27 July (MPS); Ferry Meadows a single 1-3 April (AD, TPD, CS) and Earith GP on 31 December (RCMu). Two in full summer plumage at West Bank GP on 14 May (TPD).

Knot (Calidris canutus) A total of at least 10 individual recorded in the Peterborough area and 2 at Grafham Water.

Sanderling (C. alba) An average year with a total of 13 recorded.

Little Stint (C. minuta) A very poor year with Peterborough providing the only records, mainly singles from 23 July-29 August peaking at 3 on 19 August (AEP, CS).

Temmincks Stint (C. temminckii) Single from 21-29 May at Ferry Meadows (RGC, TPD, CS, RCET).

White-rumped Sandpiper (C. fuscicollis) A possible at Peterborough on 27 August (RJD). The record has been submitted to the BBRC.

Pectoral Sandpiper (C. melanotus) Single at Peterborough from 4-5 September (KJD).

Curlew Sandpiper (C. ferruginea) A succession of records at Peterborough from 22 July-6 September with peaks in August of 7 on 3, 6 on 19, 8 on 29 (AEP, GFW), 1-2 at Drysides GP from 31 July-15 August (GFW).

Purple Sandpiper (C. maritima) One by the dam at Grafham Water on 27 October (NMB) represents the fourth record for this site the previous records being in 1969, 1973 and 1978.

Bar-tailed Godwit (Limosus lapponica) Two flying south at Little Paxton GP on 25 January (TGG); one 24-25 April at Ferry Meadows (TPD) and 2 at Grafham Water 25 April (PBL).

Spotted Redshank (Tringa erythropus) At least 6 individuals recorded at 5 sites.

Turnstone (Arenaria interpres) A total of 6 recorded at 4 sites.

Grey Phalarope (Phalaropus fulicarius) At Grafham Water 15-20 Phalaropes, presumed to be this species, were seen in the middle of the reservoir at around 1600 hrs on 16 October (TR), an exceptional flock for an inland locality. On the 17 there were several unsubstantiated claims of small parties but probably only one slightly oiled individual remained until at least the 21 (m.o.). One at Little Paxton GP on 17 October (RAH).

Pomarine Skua (Stercorarius pomarinus) A record total of 7 were driven inland by the hurricane. A subadult resting on the water at Marsh Lane GP had departed by 1530 hrs on 16 october (AJWC). At about the same time 2 adults and 2 juveniles were detected resting at Grafham Water; all 4 departed west with another adult still resplendent in full summer plumage which arrived from the east (JSC). On 17 a juvenile was observed flying over flooded fields at Brampton pursued by gulls (BEC, DGD, SAS).

Arctic Skua (S. parasiticus) A typical overland movement of a juvenile at Ferry Meadows on 13 August (TPD).

Great Skua (S. skua) A record total of 9, all but one forced inland by the October hurricane. Overland passage noted at Warboys on 13 September when one flew east (DF). A single passed over St Ives GP on the 16 October at around 1530hrs (JSM). At Grafham, just before the Pomarine Skuas departed, 5 arrived at Grafham Water where they remained resting on the water (JSC). These were later seen circling at a great height; when 4 departed, leaving one bird still harrying gulls at dusk (TR). Presumably the same bird was located resting on the water on the 17 but had departed by 0820 hrs (NMB et al.). Two at Ferry Meadows on 16 October (TPD).

Mediterranean Gull (Larus melanocephalus) An adult at Grafham Water on 22 October (NMB). An interesting record of a pair of full adults displaying at a suitable breeding site on 5 April. They were later seen to fly towards the Grafham Water roost. At least one was present at this site on 11 April (MO, JLFP).

Sabine's Gull (L. sabini) A total of at least 10, 9 adults and a juvenile, all at Grafham Water. Initially all observations were from the south side so that birds resting along the north shore may have been overlooked. On 16 October an adult was seen at 1500 hrs (JSC) and 2 adults and a juvenile around 1600 hrs (TR). At 0800 hrs on 17 3 adults departed west (perhaps to Ditchford, Northants where 3 arrived later on) leaving at least one adult and a juvenile. 7-8 recorded on the 18 suggested a further influx but by 20 this had decreased to 2 adults and one juvenile. These remained until 25 with insubstantiated reports of a single bird seen until the end of the month (m.o.). These records constitute the first for Hunts.

Glaucous Gull (L. hyperboleus) A first winter bird was located in the Fletton GP gull roost from 6-10 January (KJD).

Sandwich Tern (Sterna sandvicensis) The only record received was a storm driven bird at Grafham Water from 17-21 October (m.o.).

Little Auk (Alle alle) The 3 individuals recorded were part of a countrywide wreck probably cased by prolonged gales affecting their feeding grounds. One at St Ives GP on 24 November flew quite strongly from the bank and was last seen swimming in the middle of the pit (JSM). An exhausted bird at Ramsey St Mary's on 27 November was released on the coast after treatment but another found at Parklands Estate, Eynesbury on 9 December disappeared before it could be rescued (per JSC).

Woodpigeon (Columba palumbus) An interesting observation of a small party 'rain bathing' in strong winds and heavy rain at Thorpe Meadows on 26 March; these were lying on their sides at right angles to the wind with one wing lifted and tail fanned allowing the rain to strike their undersides (GFW).

Ring-necked Parakeet (Psittacula krameri) One at Wyton RAF Station from 2-4 November (VC).

Nightjar (Caprimulgus europaea) The only report received was of a male churring at Marholm Crematorium on 1 June (per GFW).

Hoopoe (Upupa epops) Singles by the rowing course at Peterborough on 2 May (CD) and in the main works area of St Ives GP on 7 November (per AP).

Rock Pipit (Anthus petrosus) Singles at Thorpe Meadows on 30 March (GFW) and Ferry Meadows on 27 October (TPD).

Water Pipit (A. spinoletta) Singles reported at Grafham Water on 18 January (NMB) and at Thorpe Meadows on 1 and 6 April (GFW).

Waxwing (Bombycilla garrulus) A total of up to 7 recorded in the Peterborough area during January, some perhaps fresh arrivals with northerly winds preceding the cold spell, others possibly derived from the 1986 influx. Orton Goldhay 3 on 3 (RGC); Boongate one on 11 (RJD); Dogsthorpe 2 on 17 (RGC) and one at Ferry Meadows (per RJJ).

Black Redstart (Phoenicurus ochruros) Singing males held territory at 5 sites in the Peterborough area. Song was recorded at Site A in May and June

(RGC, CS), Site B in May (ARF), Site C during May and June (GFW), Site D in May (RGC) and Site E several times in April and May (KJD, ARF). At St Neots a poorly marked male was heard singing in May (GDE). Spring passage was noted as follows: male at Nene Park on 12 April (TPD); female at St Ives GP on 17 April (JSC, JSM) and a female at Orton Waterville on 22 April in the observer's garden (RGC). A single autumn passage bird at Castor Hanglands NNR on 7 November (TPD).

Ring Ouzel (Turdus torquatus) Spring records from Thorpe Meadows with a female on 23 April (TPD), from Sutton Heath where there was a male on 25 April (MESR) and Woodwalton Fen NNR (date unknown) a male and female roosting on the Fen (ML).

Cetti's Warbler (Cettia cetti) A total of 4 recorded in the Peterborough area. At Woodston singles recorded on 5 dates from 30 July-14 August with 2 on 17 August (CB, GFW). A single calling at Orton Meadows, just a kilometre away, on 2 August was probably one of the Woodston birds (GC). A third very vocal bird was located at a site near Peterborough from 9-10 August (AEP). On 16 September another bird, found at Drysides GP, could be distinguished from the Woodston and Peterborough birds by a pale yellow wash down the centre of the breast and belly making this the fourth individual; this bird was last seen on 15 December. Three of the four were definitely juveniles suggesting breeding either in the Peterborough area or perhaps in neighbouring Northamptonshire.

Wood Warbler (Phylloscopus sibilatrix) One pair were believed to have bred at a traditional site. Singing birds also recorded from Thorpe Meadows on 24 April and from 30 April-4 May (ARF, GFW); Thorpe Road Peterborough 11 May (GFW) and Grafham Water on 25 April (NMB).

Firecrest (Regulus ignicapillus) A male at Woodwalton Fen NNR first reported on 15 November 1986 remained until 11 March roosting in sallow/hawthorn areas (NCC). Possibly the same bird was seen at nearby Upwood Meadows on 3 April (NCC). A single at Grafham Water on 21 November (NMB, RL, MPS, KJD) and a dead individual found in Peterborough city centre sometime in November (per MRC).

Pied Flycatcher (Ficedula hypoleuca) At Woodwalton a male on 26 April and another bird reported on 9 September (NCC). A male was seen on 24 and 28 May by the edge of a woodland glade at a site where breeding has previously been suspected (NCC).

Golden Oriole (Oriolus oriolus) A male was heard calling and was seen from 12 June-16 July at Site B where breeding has probably occured in the past.

Red-backed Shrike (Lanius colluria) A female or immature on 29 August at Ferry Meadows (CB).

Great Grey Shrike (L. excubitor) One seen from a London-bound express train on 18 February at a railway cutting in Huntingdon was still present on the return journey (RJD).

Twite (Carduelis flavirostris) The only record received was of 2 seen briefly in the observer's rural garden at Thorney on 21 December (RJD).

Crossbill (Loxia curvirostris) Recorded at Castor Hanglands NNR during September (DC).

Lapland Bunting (Calcarius lapponicus) At Grafham Water 2 males and a female were discovered on the south shore on 17 January remaining until the 18 (NMB, RAH). Perhaps a fourth bird was seen flying south on the west side of the reservoir on 17 January (NMB).

Snow Bunting (Plectrophenax nivalis) A small influx in November with singles at Grafham Water on 18 (RL) and Buckden GP on 22 (GG).

List of contributors 1987

R I Allison
M Busby
N M Bulter
C Butterworth
L Capper
D Carstairs
J S Clark
R G Clark
B E Cleary
M R Coates
A S Cooke
G Cowley
V Cozens
A J W Crowle
K J Daniels
T P Davnt
R J Davis
C Dawn
A le F Dobson
D G Duff
G D Elliot
M Evans
M J Everett
W Fendley
A R Frost
D Frost
R Frost
D J Garner
D M Garner
J le Gassick
C J Gibbins
G Greenaway
T G Gunton
J R Guthrie
S J Hayhow
R I Harold
A Hitchings
D Hughes
R A Hume
R J Jones
C A E Kirtland
A G Lack
A J Lamb
R Lakin
J D Limentani
M Lovell
R Lovell
P B Lufkin
K D Mason
B S Milne
J S Milne
N B Milne
P Misseldine
A J Moores
R C Murfitt
E C B Newman
M Otsu
A Payne
A E Parker
J L F Parslow
P Peacock
B Pope
P Prince
I P Robinson
T Robson
M E S Rooney
S H and P D Slack
C Small
M P Smout
S Stirrup
R C E Titman
P J Tizzard
G F Walthew
D Waterfield
G Welch
N J Westwood
I Wyllie

MEMBERSHIP LIST AMENDMENTS

The following membership changes have taken place during 1988:

New members

Mr G E D Alcock, "Antares", 55 Broadway, Farcet, Peterborough PE7 3AY
Ms S Lambert and Mr P Kirby, 118 Saltmarsh, Orton Malborne, Peterborough PE2 0NW
Mr and Mrs P Smout, 10 Hawkins Close, Perry, Huntingdon PE18 0DQ
Miss K Tomblin, 134 Broadway, Yaxley, Peterborough PE7 3JD
Mr P Waring, Nature Conservancy Council, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA

Resignations and lapses

Coates, M
Peacock, Miss D M
Watson, Mr and Mrs C
Wedgewood, Mr and Mrs J

Change of address

Heap, Ms J, 7 The Thorpe, Hemingford Grey, Huntingdon, Cambs PE18 9DA
Scott, R E and E A, 8 Woodlands, Priory Hill, St Neots, Cambs PE19 1UE

THE HUNTINGDONSHIRE FAUNA AND FLORA SOCIETY

(The County Natural History Society)

The Society exists to promote the study, preservation and recording of wildlife by the encouragement and publication of the results of research, the holding of meetings and such other activities as may forward the above mentioned purposes of the Society within the former county of Huntingdon and Peterborough.

Membership is open to all who are interested in natural history, for a subscription of £5 payable on 1 January each year.

The affairs of the Society are conducted by a Committee consisting of a President, a Chairman, a Treasurer, one or more Honorary Secretaries and eight ordinary members (exclusive of co-opted members), elected by the members of the Society at the Annual General Meeting, usually held in March. The committee annually elects recorders to assist with the identification of specimens and to prepare contributions to the Annual Report, which members receive free.

The Society holds field meetings at sites of interest at regular intervals during the summer and autumn, and indoor meetings during the winter.

If you are interested in the work of the Society and would like to join, please contact the Secretary or Treasurer.

GUIDELINES FOR CONTRIBUTORS

All contributions should, if possible, be typed, double-spaced, on A4 paper with margins at least 3 cm wide. Top copy only should be submitted but a carbon or photocopy retained by the contributor.

Tables are very expensive to typeset and should be kept simple and to a minimum.

When localities are named the National Grid reference should normally be given as 10 km square, tetrad, 1 km square or eight figure references eg TL37, TL37B, TL31-71-, or TL315718.

References in text should be cited as (Smith, 1976) or Smith (1976) states ..... and in the references at the end of the paper in the form Smith, A., 1976. Plants of Pingle Wood. Rep. Huntingdon. Fauna Flora Soc., **30,** 20-25 in the case of a paper or Smith, A., 1976. Plants of Pingle Wood. 320 pp., 5 pls, 10 figs. London in the case of a book.

Drawings should be in black waterproof ink, enlarged, but not more than twice the size to be reproduced.

All material for publication should be submitted to the Editor not later than 31 December.