

# Loughborough Naturalists' Club



Kingfisher © Jim Graham; Musk Thistle, Toad, *Sinodendron cylindricum* © Steve Woodward; Nettle Pug © Graham Finch

## Annual Report 2010

# LOUGHBOROUGH NATURALISTS' CLUB

## OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE FOR 2010

**President** Mr P H Gamble

### COMMITTEE

Chairman	Mrs M Dimitrov
Vice-Chairman	Mr E Webster
Hon. Secretary	Mrs J Johnson
Hon. Treasurer	Mr J Ward
Meetings Secretary	Mrs D Webster
Membership Secretary	Mr L Hall
Members	Mr J Graham
	Mrs M Hall
	Mr P Wilkinson
	Miss H Ikin (Co-opted)
	Mrs K Ward (Co-opted)

### OTHER OFFICERS

Heritage Editorial Panel	Miss H Ikin
	Mr J Graham
	Mr S Woodward
Librarian	Miss H Ikin
Charnwood Forest Survey Organiser	Miss H Ikin
Press Liaison Officer	Mrs J Killingback
Hon. Auditor	Ms P Hardy

### Club Representatives

Peter Gamble represents the Club on the Loughborough University Holywell and Burleigh Woods Management Group.

Michael Stanley is the Club's representative on the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG).

Peter Wilkinson represents the Club on the Partnership for Environmental Protection.

### Affiliations

The Club is affiliated to the following organisations:

The British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, The Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, The National Federation of Biological Recording and Charnwood Museum.

## **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

2010, our 50th Anniversary year, has been a great success for the Club. We celebrated by mounting an exhibition at Snibston Discovery Park, which was well received by naturalists and the general public alike. Kate Ward planned it with invaluable help from the staff at Snibston, and it was set up by Kate and a trusty band of Club members. I would like to thank Kate and all involved, in particular Peter Jones for arranging the photographic exhibition.

In November, instead of our usual indoor meeting, about 50 Club members attended our celebratory dinner at the Radmoor Restaurant in at Loughborough College. The staff and students there provided a very good meal and I would like to thank them and Marian Watson and Maira Hall who organised it all. We also had a display of members' photos at the dinner, which thanks to Jim Graham, who arranged and set up it up, added greatly to the enjoyment of the evening.

This year Doreen Webster has booked and organised the Indoor meetings which continue to entertain and inform us in equal measure. Eric Webster volunteered to be Vice-chair and has ably acted in my place at meetings and will continue to serve the Club as Chair for the next two years. I extend my thanks to both of them.

Our Committee, Recorders, Heritage Editors, Survey Teams, Wednesday Walk Leaders and Refreshment Team all continue to do sterling work and I wish to extend, on behalf of the Club, our heartfelt thanks. Without these hardworking and dedicated people the Club would not have reached the 50th Anniversary.

The need for a local club to record and monitor natural history has never been greater. Pressures on wildlife habitats continue to increase from housing and development, and we all need to play our part to protect and champion the natural wonders we love so much.

Lastly can I extend a warm welcome to our new members and wish them many enjoyable years of learning and exploration in the company of the nicest, most knowledgeable and friendliest people it has been my pleasure to know. Loughborough Naturalists' Club:- probably The Best Club In The World!

**Megan Dimitrov**

## **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

This has been an extraordinary year for the Club with the 50th Anniversary celebrations taking pride of place for some time. The ordinary work of the Club has, however, progressed as usual with the regular publications of Heritage and the organising of meetings and walks.

The 50th Anniversary events were very enjoyable, thanks to all who gave time and energy to ensuring their success. Thanks also to those who cope with the ordinary running of the Club, particularly our editorial panel who work to such a high standard, Kate Ward and her team of helpers who organise exhibitions and, last but not least, to all members who send in records and help in other ways. All contributions are appreciated.

In 2010 we saw some quite major changes. The Annual Report appeared in a new format to tone with the new layout of Heritage, which was well received. A change is also under way in the Club's year. For many years we have held the AGM in March when changes may occur in the list of Officers and Committee. This has meant that the information on the programme card, sent out in January, has been rendered out of date. We have been concerned about this for some time and, thanks to Mrs Webster, matters have been taken in hand and some changes implemented. The AGM will be held in April and the Club year will from then until the next AGM. Members will receive their programme cards after the AGM. This has made things a little complicated this year but everything should be running smoothly by next year. Thanks to Mrs Webster for arranging this.

**Judy Johnson**

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## **TREASURER'S REPORT FOR 2010**

For the year ended 30 November 2010 the Club's income exceeded expenditure by £1,050.04.

Income for the year amounted to £3,908.58 with subscriptions amounting to £1,002. Sales of publications including Derek Lott's book raised £353.40, the Gift Aid tax refund was £162.18 and entrance charges for meetings, less the cost of tea, coffee and biscuits raised £142.40.

The main source of income was a grant of £2,000 from the Helen Jean Cope Trust. The Club also made a profit of £147.10 on the Anniversary meal.

The main items of expenditure for the year were as follows:-

Printing Heritage	£230.30
Postage for Heritage	£271.72
Public Liability Insurance	£158.85
Hire of the Quorn Church Rooms	£162.00
Display material for the Snibston Exhibition	£290.66
Cost of printing the Wildlife Survey of Poultney Farm and Ulverscroft Pond Booklets	£145.00
Microscope	£700.01

As at 30 November 2010 the balance available on the General & Reserve Accounts was £2,829.81 and the balance of the Publications Fund was £8,082.68.

Once again I would like to thank Patricia Hardy for auditing the Club's accounts.

**Signed: John Ward, Treasurer**

**23 January 2011**

## Income & Expenditure Account for the Year Ended 30 November 2010

	2010	2009
<u>General Fund Income</u>		
Subscriptions	£1,002.00	£1,049.00
Sale of Publications	£353.40	£303.60
Gift Aid Tax Rebate	£162.18	£161.90
Donations	£2,101.50	£105.00
Entrance Charges	£142.40	£104.60
Sale of Jam at Meeting		£25.40
Sale of Refreshments		£10.00
Anniversary Meal	£147.10	
	£3,908.58	£1,759.50
<u>General Fund Expenditure</u>		
Affiliations & Subscriptions	£88.50	£88.50
Printing Annual Report	£57.70	£70.85
Postage Annual Report	£82.38	£47.64
Printing Heritage	£230.30	£313.60
Postage Heritage	£271.72	£349.40
Printing Miscellaneous	£43.50	£49.00
Public Liability Insurance	£158.85	£158.85
Speakers' Fees	£80.00	£125.00
Hire of Room, Meetings	£162.00	£214.50
Postage Miscellaneous	£110.26	£100.06
Donations	£50.00	£10.00
Domain Name	£29.38	£28.75
Photocopying	£15.51	£10.49
Display Material	£290.66	£61.14
Testing Electrics	£41.50	£20.00
Laptop Computer		£466.96
Software & Guides	127.85	
Cable Protector	35.94	
Cashbook for Treasurer	£5.79	
Publications	£145.00	
Computer Items	£94.66	
Microscope	£700.01	
Ring Binder	£4.25	
Mount Card Exhibition Photos	£30.49	
Card for Peter Jones	£2.29	
	£2,858.54	£2,114.74
Surplus	£1,050.04	Deficiency -£355.24

## Balance Sheet as at 30 November 2010

	<u>2010</u>		<u>2009</u>
<u>General Fund</u>			
Cash at Bank	£1,176.76		£126.72
National Savings Investment Account	<u>£1,653.05</u>		<u>£1,646.35</u>
	£2,829.81		£1,773.07
<u>Publications Fund</u>			
Cash at Bank	£98.78		<u>£98.78</u>
National Savings Investment Account	<u>£7,983.90</u>		<u>£7,958.90</u>
	£8,082.68		£8,057.68
	<u>£10,912.49</u>		<u>£9,830.75</u>

<u>General Fund</u>			
Balance as at 1st December 2009	£126.72		£131.18
Transfer from Reserve Fund			<u>£350.78</u>
			£481.96
Surplus for year	<u>£1,050.04</u>	Deficiency	<u>£355.24</u>
	£1,176.76		£126.72

<u>Reserve Fund</u>			
Balance as at 1st December 2009	£1,646.35		£1,797.13
Add net interest for year	£6.70		<u>£200.00</u>
			£1,997.13
Transfer to General Fund			<u>£350.78</u>
	£1,653.05		£1,646.35
<u>Publications Fund</u>			
Balance as at 1st December 2009	£8,057.68		£9,598.42
Add Net Interest for year	£25.00		<u>£197.48</u>
			£9,795.90
Derek Lott's Book			<u>£1,738.22</u>
	£8,082.68		£8,057.68
	<u>£10,912.49</u>		<u>£9,830.75</u>

	<u>2010</u>		<u>2009</u>
<u>Reserve Fund Income</u>			
Interest on National Savings Account	£6.70		£200.00
<u>Publications Fund Income</u>			
Interest on National Savings Account	£25.00		£197.48

## AUDITOR'S REPORT

### LOUGHBOROUGH NATURALISTS CLUB

(Registered Charity No. 510799)

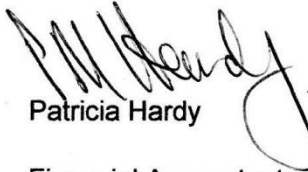
#### Auditors Report

I have audited the accounts on the foregoing pages in accordance with approved Auditing standards.

The club, in common with others, derives its income from sources which cannot be fully controlled or verified until they are entered in the accounting records.

Subject thereto, in my opinion, the accounts with the above note give a true and fair view of the Club's financial affairs at 30th November 2010 and of the results of the year then ended.

156 Leicester Road  
Markfield  
Leicester

  
Patricia Hardy  
Financial Accountant  
16.01.11

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## MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY'S REPORT

For the Year Ending 31 December 2010

This year the Club has had an increase in numbers to 120 members. We have had seven enquiries, five of whom subsequently joined. These are:

Mr D Budworth, Mr A Rose, Ms Shacklock and Mr & Mrs Whitmore.

It is pleasing to record that the number of people paying by Standing Order stands at 75.

May I again ask to all members to consider Gift Aid, as it affords a very useful source of income from the tax-man at no cost to the member.

**Leslie Hall**

# **HARRY ARTHUR BRUCE CLEMENTS**

**1928-2010**

## **AN APPRECIATION**

We were very sad to learn of the death of Harry, or 'Clem', as he was known to close friends on the 17 February. Harry was a founder member of the Club and served in various capacities during his long membership. He was Chairman in 1962, a Committee member from 1965-68, mammal recorder from 1969-92 and outdoor meetings secretary from 1992-94.

He was an active member of the Leicestershire and Rutland Ornithological Society (LROS) during the 1940' and 50's when he was also involved in bird ringing and he also served on the Council and Scientific Advisory Committee of the Leicestershire and Rutland Trust for Nature Conservation (LRTNC) during the 1960's and 70's and for a time he was a valuable member of the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG). Harry was always good at giving helpful advice in a quiet and unassuming manner.

During the late 1940's Michael Fewkes and I spent many happy hours with Clem observing the wildlife around Quorn and Loughborough and especially around Quorn House Estate and Buddon Wood. Clem was very much a countryman with a wide interest in country matters, including angling, and natural history. One of his interests was in the local distribution of beetles and bugs, which occupied his interest in the 1960's and he combined with Ian Evans, then Keeper of Biology at Leicester Museum, in producing a paper on Leicestershire Bugs, which was reprinted from the Transaction of the Leicester Literary and Philosophical Society in 1973.

During his early life Harry lived in Woodthorpe Avenue in Shelthorpe with his parents and two sisters. After leaving primary school he was educated at Loughborough Grammar School and later studied at Sutton Bonington Agricultural College where he gained his B.Sc. in Agriculture. In the early 1950's, unable to find suitable farm work in Britain, he took up a post in Aden working for the Crown Agents for the Colonies for some seven years and here he had a wealth of interesting and exciting experiences which he enjoyed relating to his friends and acquaintances. On returning home he decided to go into the coal mining industry on a manager's training course but whilst working underground he suffered a bad attack of pleurisy which prompted him to take up a job above ground working for the Ministry of Agriculture where he stayed until he retired in 1987.

Clem was buried at Prestwold Natural Burial Site, a locality in pleasant countryside outside the village, with plenty of trees and shrubs and wild flowers and, in season, a wealth of bird song. He had a minimum of ceremony, a poem read by his remaining sister, but a Robin sang loud and clear throughout. As he had requested a Hawthorn tree has been planted on his grave and a bird box and bat box have been erected in nearby trees, the Hawthorn tree bears a plaque.

A number of Club members joined other friends and family at the graveside during the simple burial ceremony and on behalf of the Loughborough Naturalists' Club we extend our heartfelt sympathies to Harry's wife Valerie, his daughter Julia, and his sister Joy.

**Peter Gamble**

## **CLUB ACTIVITIES DIARY**

### **INDOOR MEETINGS**

January 9th	Holwell Nature Reserves, presented by Ralph Johnson (Cancelled due to weather)
February 13th	Dragonflies, presented by Steve Houghton
March 13th	AGM and Members' Evening
April 10th	Bird Migration, presented by Nigel Slater
September 11th	Evening of Local Interest
October 9th	The Wildlife of Calcareous Grassland, presented by Ian Gamble
November 13th	The 50th Anniversary Dinner
December 11th	Wildlife Throughout the Year, presented by Gianpiero Ferrari, ARPS

Due to the combination of snow and ice at the beginning of the year, which made driving hazardous, particularly at night, the January meeting was cancelled. Ralph Johnson who was due to talk, was particularly disappointed but was promised a further opportunity at a later date.

In February, we were treated to a fascinating evening of Dragonflies presented by Steve Houghton whose extensive knowledge and extremely good images of the various species left us with a much better knowledge of these wonderful creatures. I must admit, as a camera user I was extremely jealous of Steve's ability to capture such difficult subjects with accuracy and good composition.

March brought the AGM which proceeded with its usual smoothness and soon left us with time to gossip and enjoy the presentations by members on their particular interests.

We were presented with an in-depth exploration of the mysteries of bird migration in April. Nigel Slater's extensive knowledge of the subject made an evening of great interest where we learned things about bird migration, which made us realise how intelligent (or knowledgeable) birds really are.

When we returned back to indoor meetings in September, it was an evening of displays and presentations by ever-faithful members who are prepared to share their knowledge with us.

In October we were given what we have grown to expect over the years, another excellent, informative talk by Ian Gamble. This time it was 'The Wildlife of Calcareous Grassland' from which I am sure everyone at the meeting left believing they had just come back from another naturalising holiday.

November was the culmination of our 50th Anniversary year with a celebration dinner rounding off a week, which also saw the opening of the extremely good exhibition at Snibston Discovery Park thanks to Kate Ward and everyone who supported her. Although I was unable to be present at the dinner, I gather from all who attended that it was a very successful evening for all concerned.

In December another of our knowledgeable members, Gianpiero Ferrari, gave us an outstanding presentation of images of 'Wildlife Throughout the Year'. A succession of absolutely stunning images to delight the eye. The skill and patience, not to mention the time spent preparing for them, was quite mind bending. The only problem for me, was that I would like to see them all again, but only after being given time to digest them for the first time.

It always amazes me how so many people have such an enormous amount of knowledge, often on a very specific subject, and I am eternally grateful that they are happy to share it with us and give us so much pleasure. Thank you to all our speakers and all our supportive members.

**Doreen Webster**

## **OUTDOOR MEETINGS**

### **Wednesday Morning Walks**

January 6th	Mountsorrel Common and Castle Hill
February 3rd	Sence Valley Forest Park
March 3rd	Watermead Country Park North and Reedbed Nature Reserve
April 7th	Burrough Hill
May 5th	Cloud Wood SSSI Nature Reserve
June 2nd	Bradgate Park
July 7th	Albert Village lake and Woodland
August 4th	Saltersford Valley and Willesley Wood
September 8th	Grace Dieu Priory and Wood
October 6th	Beacon Hill Country Park
November 3rd	Bardon Hill
December 1st	Thornton Reservoir (Cancelled due to weather)

### **Other Outdoor Meetings**

January 30th	'Bryophytes' – led by Steve Woodward
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## **EXHIBITIONS**

July 10th & 11th	The Club had a stand at the Rempstone Steam and Country Fair
August 30th	The Club had a stand at the Wood Fair, Beacon Hill
November 9th	Opening of the 50th Anniversary Exhibition at Snibston Discovery Park

2010 has been a very busy year.

On July 10th and 11th we were kept busy at our stand in the Wildlife and Conservation tent at **Rempstone Steam & Country Fair**.

This was the first time that we were able to show off the new L.N.C. banners. These were purchased by the Club and designed by Jim Graham. They are easy to transport and will add to the presence of the Club at any event. Many hands-on exhibits were provided by the Club members who helped at this event.

Our thanks go to Colin Green and his team for their warm welcome and at this event.

The next event was the **National Wood Fair** at Beacon Hill on August Bank Holiday Monday.

The highlight of this occasion was the use of the new microscope. Specimens under the microscope can now be seen on a digital screen. This equipment was set up and demonstrated by Helen Ikin and Stephen Woodward. Purchased by the Club, it proved to be a great attraction. Visitors were able to view insects as they had never seen them before, as well as aquatic specimens from pond water brought in by Peter Wilkinson who also provided a second microscope. Helen Ikin and Janet Killingback brought along an interesting collection of insects.

Our thanks go to Nick Fell and his team for their organization and planning.

At both events we worked hard each day answering questions, promoting an interest in natural history and in the activities of the Club.

The LNC team for these events included: M Dimitrov, M Hall, H Ikin, J Killingback, J Ward, P Wilkinson and S Woodward. This year we were pleased to welcome Marcene Crocker to our team.

Throughout 2010 the main project was the Club's **50th Anniversary Exhibition**.

Supported by the Committee, this exhibition took a great deal of planning and hard work from a large number of people. Club members were very generous with their time and offers of help. Through Carolyn Abel and Leicestershire County Council we were allocated a time slot beginning in November to stage this milestone exhibition in the Community Gallery at Snibston Discovery Museum. November was chosen to coincide with the inaugural meeting of the Club which was held on 5 November 1960.

Carolyn Abel and the Snibston staff were helpful and welcoming. The team from Leicestershire County Council Collections Resources Centre led by Carolyn Holmes supported us throughout with professional advice and help.

The exhibition was opened on November 9th by Colin Green MBE, long-time friend and member of the Club and a well-known naturalist. The refreshments were generously funded by Marcene Crocker, a founder member, who together with Peter Gamble, President of the Club and also a founder member, cut the celebration cake. members and invited guests spent a pleasant morning browsing the exhibition.

Charnwood Forest is home territory for the Club. Information panels provided details and photographs of the Outwoods, Bradgate Park and of Beacon Hill.

Loughborough Big Meadow was especially featured. It is a Lammas meadow which goes back to the medieval open field system. Loughborough Big Meadow is the largest example of a Lammas meadow in the East Midlands.

The sites chosen from north-west Leicestershire included Bardon Hill, Dimminsdale, Grace Dieu Ruins and the Gilwiskaw Brook (a tributary of the River Mease) and the main water course of Ashby-de-la-Zouch.

The River Mease is designated a Special Area of Conservation. The lower reaches of the Gilwiskaw share the same status.

Urban habitats and canals were also represented.

Plant and animal groups included Plant Galls, researched and photographed by Angela Marmont.

Marcene Crocker obtained permission from Dr. Michael J. Roberts for the use of copies of his fine drawings of *Mastigusa macrophthalma* (the 'Charnwood Spider'). Marcene also provided access to the research papers of the late John Crocker. *Mastigusa macrophthalma* was discovered on Bardon Hill by John in 1973.

Early records of our natural history are important and of interest to the modern day naturalist.

The contributions made by the 18th century botanist, Dr. Richard Pulteney (1730-1801) to the botanical records of the county were well illustrated. The Club was granted

copyright permission by Leicestershire County Council to use copies of two water-colour illustrations and notes from his first manuscript which was completed about 1774, as well as a copy of his portrait. This panel was originally prepared in 2007 for use at the opening of the new Ashby museum.

Our members' photographic display was well received. The photographs were selected by Peter Jones ARPS. DPAGB. External funding was provided to frame each picture and the resulting display was certainly eye-catching.

Graham Finch generously gave us permission for his photographic collection of moths to be shown on a digital screen for the duration of the exhibition.

Being the 50th Anniversary Exhibition, special attention was given to the history of the Club.

A photograph of the founder members had pride of place together with a resume of the Club's present day activities, i.e. fieldwork, recording, walks, reports and publications. The value of our records and how they are used was also explained.

The entrance to the exhibition was marked by a specially arranged display which included a curlew, the inspiration for our logo, together with the Club's landmark publication, Charnwood Forest: A Changing Landscape. Gillian and Phillip Carpenter provided maps, note books, collecting tubes and hand lens, field guides, binoculars and a camera to illustrate the equipment used by the dedicated naturalist.

Exquisitely presented collections of insects made by past and present Club members were provided by the Collections Resources Centre.

The mammals and birds on display were chosen to reflect their increasing or declining status at the present time.

Beautifully presented herbarium specimens were also on show. Eye-catching panels together with the Club's new banners drew further attention to the exhibition.

Having taken a year to plan, the exhibition was taken down on the snowy morning of January 4th.

I wish to express my personal thanks to every one for their special help in this Anniversary year and for the commitment they have given to all our previous exhibitions.

After twenty five years involvement in Club exhibitions this is my final exhibition report. Exhibitions have always played an important role and I hope that they will continue to be a part of the Club's agenda.

### **Contributors from the Club**

Press Release Team: C Green, B Forgham, D Webster, E Webster, J Ward.

Provision of Club Information leaflets: M. Dimitrov, D. Webster.

Assembly Team: G Carpenter, P Carpenter, B Forgham, J Graham, B Hope, H Ikin, J Killingback, J Ward, D Webster, E Webster, P Wilkinson.

Contributors of display photographs: H Ikin, P H Gamble, J Graham, P Jones, S Woodward, D Webster, E Webster, P Wilkinson.

Event photographers: E Webster, G and P Carpenter.

Members' Photographic Display: G Carpenter, P Carpenter, M Crocker, P Darby, I B Gamble, P H Gamble, M Gamble, J Graham, L E and M Hall, P M Hardy, J Haynes, H B Hope, P Hipkin, J Lowe, R Lowe, J M Stanley, M Vincent, P Wilkinson, S Woodward.

## **Our Acknowledgements also go to the following contributors from Leicestershire County Council**

Robin Clarke, Community Development Officer – Support and advice and with additional materials such as the picture frames and the digital picture frame.

Alexandra Davy and Sara Nichol, Collections Access Officers - Help with the hanging of the members photographic display.

Caroline Lockwood, Curator Conservation – advice on content and installation of display cases.

David Wilford - Snibston interactive team.

Alan Joyce, Open House Team – loan of animals.

Helen Moore and other Natural Life Volunteers.

Anona Finch and Geoffrey Hall.

Carolyn Abel and the Snibston front of house team.

Carolyn Holmes, Senior Curator Natural Life Communities and Well-being Adults and Communities Department – for her constant help and support in so many ways.

**Katherin Ward**

## **The 50th Anniversary Dinner**

On Saturday 13 November, 50 or so members, both past and present, attended our 50th Anniversary Dinner organised by Maira Hall and Marion Watson.

This was held at The Radmoor Restaurant in Loughborough College, where the catering students learn their trade in all aspects of hotel and restaurant work.

Earlier, Jim Graham had set up a display of photographs taken by members on all aspects of natural history. We had had such a tremendous response to the invitation to send in photographs for our Snibston exhibition, that there were far too many for the space allocated. We were very glad to show these extras pictures to members at the dinner.

In addition there was a small display of photographs brought in by members featuring Club activities over the years.

It was a great pleasure to wander round, drink in hand, chatting to people and admiring the displays before and after the dinner.

After an excellent repast, speeches were heard: Peter Gamble, President, thanked Kate Ward for her work in organising the exhibition at Snibston Museum and presented her with a large bouquet of flowers. He also spoke about the founding of the Club and his memories over the 50 years. Megan Dimitrov, Chairman, thanked Marion, Maira and Jim for arranging the event and everyone for attending, especially those who had come from as far away as the north of Scotland and Dorset.

The event was a great success and we all left for our beds at about 10.30pm. But it didn't end there. On reaching my car, I was assailed by an agitated and apologetic Restaurant Manager.....in all the excitement we had forgotten to pay the bill!

Needless to say this was soon rectified by John Ward, our Treasurer, but it was very embarrassing at the time!

**Megan Dimitrov**

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **A wildlife Survey of Poultney Farm and Ulverscroft Pond**

By Stephen Woodward, Helen Ikin and Peter Gamble

This year saw the publication of the Poultney Farm and Ulverscroft Pond report by Stephen Woodward, Peter Gamble and Helen Ikin which is a summary of the survey work carried out here over two years by the authors and other Club members and friends. The report was well received by the owner of the land, Kim Turner, and we are grateful for her donation of £100 to the Club. The report was made available as a printed copy, as a CD including a spreadsheet of the records or as an electronic copy.

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## **HERITAGE EDITOR'S REPORT**

The editorial team of Helen Ikin, Steve Woodward and Jim Graham has continued and, with Jim's invaluable advice, some changes to the layout of Heritage have been made and black and white photos introduced. On the whole, members seem to have approved of the changes. Heritage was offered electronically, with colour photos, but only two members preferred this option so we decided not to continue with it.

Dorothy Jones was unable to write up the Reptiles and Amphibians when she went into hospital and Tony Onions stepped into the breach. We are pleased to say that Dorothy is now home again and much better but is leaving Tony to carry on with the reports. Dorothy has written up the Reptiles, Amphibians and Fish for the last 35 years and we are most grateful for all her hard work.

Our thanks go to our stalwart team of writers who never fail to produce interesting reports despite the paucity of records this winter.

**Helen Ikin**

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## **FARMING & WILDLIFE GROUP (FWAG) REPORT**

### **Adviser's Report**

Stewart Holm reported that Leics. & Rutland submitted 14 Higher Level Schemes which covered 3500 hectares of land. Encouraging statistics for some of the options included 261 km of hedgerow restoration, 313 hectares of arable options, 230 hectares of improved grassland and 30 km of footpaths and bridleways. A woodland grant scheme involving 27 hectares of tree planting was submitted for land at Cold Overton. A new project for the year was Nature's nest, which was a tree planting scheme for free range egg production suppliers for Morrison's Supermarkets. This involved 14 free range units and resulted in 20,000 trees being planted. FWAG has also been bidding for tenders to deliver Farm Advisory Training for Coombes Meadow at Stathern.

Stewart Holm has now left FWAG after 11 years and has taken up a post as Woodland Creation Manager for Central England for the Woodland Trust.

## **Presentation of Trophies**

The judges for both competitions were Chris Johnson, Wendy Stanley and Chris Glenn.

The Barn Owl Trophy was presented to Geoff Johnson of Friars Well Estates at Wartnaby. This trophy is awarded to the farm that has a proven track record of environmental best practice linked with a commercially successful farm business and is made on a whole farm approach to encourage conservation.

The Chairman's Award recognises a single feature of wildlife or landscape merit which is retained rather than newly created. This was presented to Hawley and Sons, who impressed the judges with its retention of many original features of conservation value such as ridge and furrow grassland, flood meadows, hedgerows and pond supporting a wide diversity of species. Also impressive was Julia Hawley's knowledge of the natural world and her willingness to engage with the wider public with farm walks and visits.

## **Coombes Meadow, Stathern**

Yet another spring drought extending into July led to a certain amount of overgrazing but, due to the herb-rich area being fenced off, a fair amount of plants were to be found. Tormentil and Betony did well. Wendy Stanley counted in excess of 400 Common Spotted Orchids but, sadly, this was the last time she would be counting them, due to her death in November 2010. Buzzards were common in the area and throughout the woods to Belvoir. A fair range of warblers were present – mainly Chiffchaffs, Willow Warblers and Blackcaps, Redwing and Fieldfare fed on the good crop of hawthorn berries. Most of the common butterflies were to be seen and grasshoppers could be heard in the un-mown meadows.

**Michael Stanley**

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## **GRACE DIEU UNIT SURVEY**

In autumn 2010 the Rhododendrons in Grace Dieu Wood were cleared by an imposing and very noisy machine which ground them up and spread them over the surrounding area. This has made the wood into a different place and it will be interesting to be able to monitor the changes that this will produce in the flora and fauna. We were able to cooperate with the contractors and Natural England by setting up exclusion zones around the rare plants in the wood where the machines did not venture. Under the Rhododendrons were a number of features that we had never seen before including what looks like an old lake bed. The planned late winter felling of the Sycamores has been postponed until autumn 2011.

We have continued to record in the area this year and plan to extend the survey for another year, making a total of four years fieldwork. 1181 recorder hours have been spent at the site and the database now contains 8674 records of 2311 species. The highlight of the year was the rediscovery, by Steve Woodward, of Toothwort which was last recorded in the wood before 1933.

Thanks to all the members and friends who have taken an interest in the survey and have accompanied us on our rambles around the area in winter and summer.

**Helen Ikin and Stephen Woodward**

## CLASSIFIED RECORDS

It is not intended to reproduce a full and comprehensive account of submitted records for the year here but simply a brief overview and account of the highlights or the general state of the species and any unusual activity that may have been noted.

### MAMMALS

Thanks to the 16 members and friends who contributed records of 19 mammal species this year. We have had some interesting observations on behaviour which makes the reports more readable.

Moles, Rabbits, Grey Squirrels, Muntjac, Foxes and Badgers seem to be doing very well. Other species are more difficult to assess but there are more Brown Rats than our records indicate and Wood Mouse, Field Vole and Bank Vole populations are probably very good. Shrews, Weasels and Stoats are rarely seen and we have only the occasional sighting of Mink. Despite fairly regular reports of small numbers Brown Hares, there is cause for concern for this species, in Charnwood at least.

It is interesting to speculate when Wild Boar will reach Leicestershire.

Remember that we have thriving Bat and Badger Groups in the county if members are keen to learn more about these species.

The last quarter was interesting as we could see, by the footprints in the snow, which mammals had been around when we were not there.

Helen Ikin

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### BIRDS

A **Whooper Swan** stayed in the Cossington/Wanlip area through the first quarter. Ten flew over Swithland Reservoir on 9 February and two were seen there and at Cropston Reservoir during March. A skein of 160 **Pink Footed Geese** flew over Deans Lane on 26 September and in October four different skeins numbering over 800 birds were noted migrating in the skies around Loughborough. At Wanlip North in January there were 420 **Greylag Geese** and in November 507 were seen at Swithland Reservoir. Three **Egyptian Geese** were at Wanlip North on 21 February.

There were a few double-figure counts of **Mandarins** with an impressive 79 at Blackbrook Reservoir on 29 July. A male **Pintail** spent most of the first quarter around the Soar Valley and there were five at Watermead Park during that period. A **Garganey** was found at Cropston Reservoir on 15 August and two were at Swithland Reservoir from 26 August until early September. **Red-crested Pochards** were getting increasingly common with birds seen in all seasons. A pair of **Smew** was at Swithland Reservoir in January and two males at Watermead Park in late January. At the same site two females spent some time from early February. In December there were three at Swithland Reservoir and one at Wanlip North. A female **Red-breasted Merganser** was at Swithland Reservoir in mid-April. A reduction in **Ruddy Ducks** was noticed with only nine birds recorded throughout the year.

**Grey Partridge** numbers were drastically low with the only observations at Cossington where there were three in January, Lockington and Sproxtton with two each in mid June. On 7 October there were six at both Netherfield and Lockington. In July there were four **Quail** calling at Appleby Magna and one at Congerstone.

On 4 April a summer plumaged **Red-necked Grebe** was present at Thornton Reservoir.

There were double-figure counts of **Cormorants** in all but the second quarter with a maximum of 120 at Swithland Reservoir in September. Three **Bitterns** were present at Watermead Park in January. **Little Egrets** are continuing to become more common with a maximum count of 12 at Lockington in the third quarter.

Single passage **Honey Buzzards** were over Wanlip North and Groby Pool in September. **Red Kites** were noted in all seasons, mostly in the Belvoir area but they were seen in small numbers irregularly all over the county. A female or juvenile **Marsh Harrier** was in the Cossington/Watermead area in September. **Common Buzzards** are now exactly that and young birds were seen in seven separate places. An **Osprey** was over Watermead Park on 28 March and an autumn migrant was over Groby Pool in September. The only **Merlin** of the year was seen at Cossington Meadows on 19 October. **Hobbies** appear to have had a good year with young birds being seen at Watermead Park, Groby Pool and Oakthorpe. Likewise **Peregrines** are now reasonably well established in the area with regular sightings especially around the known nesting sites in the summer months.

Early in the year there were at least seven **Water Rails** at Watermead Park and six at Cossington Meadows. At Kelham Bridge one regularly fed under the bird feeders in the cold spells early and late in the year. A juvenile or first-winter **Spotted Crake** was found at Cossington Meadows on 27 August.

**Golden Plover** were scarce in comparison to other years, 250 were at Six Hills and Cossington early in the year and there were 500 over Watermead Park in August. The only record late in the year was 800 at Eaton on 25 October. There was a similar situation with **Lapwing**, 300 being at Lockington in January, the same number at Watermead Park in February and 260 at Cossington in July. The highest count after that was 121 at Cropston Reservoir on 5 November. Single **Jack Snipe** were at five locations in the first quarter. A **Black-tailed Godwit** stayed at Wanlip Meadows for three days in March and up to 11 were at Cossington Meadows in July. A **Whimbrel** flew over Albert Village on 29 April. The only **Spotted Redshank** record of the year came from Cossington Meadows on 9 September. **Wood Sandpipers** were at Wanlip Meadows on 10 May and Cropston Reservoir a week later. Another was at Cossington Meadows on 19 July.

An **Arctic Skua** passed over Cropston Reservoir on 26 April. Single **Mediterranean Gulls** were seen occasionally, mainly at Albert Village Lake, but there were singles at Thornton Reservoir and Cossington Meadows in autumn. All other notable sightings of gull species were at Albert Village Lake. **Black-headed Gulls** peaked there at 6000 in the early part of the year and this increased to 6500 in December. The most **Common Gulls** were 365 in November. There were at least nine different **Yellow-legged Gulls** during the third quarter and a few more in December. Up to three **Caspian Gulls** were usually loosely with the Yellow-leggeds. A second-winter **Glaucous Gull** stayed for two weeks in January. Other maximum counts were 1600 **Lesser-black Backed Gulls** on 4 November and 250 **Great-black Backed Gulls** on 14 January. In September six **Black Terns** were at Swithland Reservoir with odd ones at Thornton Reservoir and Watermead Park. Thornton Reservoir also had a **White-winged Black Tern** on 3 October. A single juvenile **Arctic Tern** stayed for a few days at Cropston Reservoir in October.

The only calling **Turtle Doves** were at Plungar in April and June and a passage bird at Watermead Park on 29 August.

A **Long-eared Owl** was located at Eaton on 20 January and there were up to four **Short-eared Owls** at Cossington Meadows throughout the first two months of the year.

**Lesser Spotted Woodpeckers** were found at three sites in Charnwood and one in the Vale of Belvoir in the spring and there were sightings at Swithland Reservoir in spring and in September and November.

Two **Wood Larks** flew over Deans Lane on 30 September. **Yellow Wagtails** were only found at five sites in spring with a highest count of three together. Only three

individual **Waxwings** were reported in the early part of the year but this was made up for, mostly in December, when flocks of well over a hundred tuned up all around the county. A **Common Redstart** was at Thornton reservoir in mid-April, there were three in Bradgate Park and one at Buddon Brook Meadows in August. There were no spring **Whinchat** records but birds were seen at Syston, Blackbrook Reservoir and Charnwood Lodge on autumn passage. In early January six **Stonechat** could be seen in Bradgate Park and there were pairs at Dishley Pool and Charnwood Lodge in late summer. There were no reports after one at Charnwood Lodge on 2 October. Of the spring passage **Wheatears** observed, nine were at Warren Hills and six at Branston Cross Roads in late April or early May - some being of the Greenland race. Only three individual birds were noted on the autumn migration. It was a poor year for **Ring Ouzels** with only six birds seen in spring and one in autumn. Large numbers of **Fieldfare** and **Redwing** passed over Deans Lane in October with over 1000 of the former on the 21st and just over 2000 of the latter on the 10th.

Two **Cetti's Warblers** were in the Soar Valley throughout the first quarter and singing could be heard at Watermead Park in May. There were two later in the year at Watermead and two at Cossington Meadows in November. A **Wood Warbler** stayed around Deans Lanes for two days from 16 May. Single **Firecrests** were found at Deans Lane, Swithland Woods and The Outwoods in late June and two were at Barlestone on 23 December.

There was slightly better news of **Spotted Flycatchers** this year with three pairs in Bradgate Park, four pairs in Swithland Woods and also birds at Bardon Hill and The Outwoods. Family parties were seen later in the year and other birds at eleven different sites. A migrant **Pied Flycatcher** was at Groby Pool on 8 August. Up to five **Bearded Tits** were in the reed bed at Cossington Meadows in late November and early December.

**Ravens** were located at nine sites in the spring some in suitable nesting areas. Later in the year they were reported from all over Charnwood and further afield.

In the Vale of Belvoir, 35 **Tree Sparrows** were at bird feeders at Easthorpe Bridge in January. A pair bred in a nest box at Watermead Park and nine were seen at Walcote in May and six at Normanton in December. **Brambling** were scarce in the early part of the year and sighting in the autumn were mainly passage birds over Deans Lane. No other count was in double figures. **Siskins** were well in evidence in January and February with 100 at Sence Valley Forest Park and 160 in Buddon Wood and good numbers in other places. In the latter part of the year the highest count was 60 at Swithland in December. Flocks of **Linnets** numbered 125 at Easthorpe Bridge in January and 124 at Cossington South Lakes in February. Later in the year there were 200 at Cropston, 160 in Loughborough and 150 at Cropston Reservoir. Two **Twite** flew over Deans Lane on 11 October. **Lesser Redpoll** observations in the first quarter of the year were 100 at Norris Hill in February, 60 in Loughborough also in February and 50 at Sence Valley in March. There were lots of double-figure counts in the autumn with 200 in Bradgate Park and 120 at Cropston Reservoir in November. Up to 36 **Crossbills** were in Benscliffe Wood throughout the first quarter of the year and 13 were in Bradgate Park in July with two at Swithland Reservoir on 3 November. A total of six individual **Hawfinches** flew past Deans Lane on three dates in October. A **Lapland Bunting** was with pipits and larks at Sence Valley on 5 March. All **Corn Bunting** records amounted to ten at Shenton in February, eight at Appleby Magna and two at Oakthorpe both in July.

**NB:** These records are taken from *Heritage* reports and do not purport to be a full county record. Jim Graham and myself thank all members for their records over the last year and ask for your continued support in the future. Our thanks also go to Ken Goodrich and LROS for co-ordinating the records.

**Bas Forgham**

## AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES

In the two years or so since I have been writing reports for the 'Heritage' Bulletin the most notable factor affecting our wildlife has been the extreme weather. For the last year or two, we have experienced long, hard winters and cool, wet summers; and of course, this is bound to have had an impact on our cold-blooded wildlife. While this may seem perhaps self-evident, needless to say it is not quite so easy to quantify this in any meaningful way. As a comparatively small club, it seems to me that we do not really collect enough data to be able, generally speaking, to draw any significant conclusions. This is an issue to which I shall return later!

The good news is that the more common amphibians seem to be doing well, turning up regularly in people's gardens. It seems that **Frogs *Rana temporaria*** and **Toads *Bufo bufo*** are reassuringly abundant! We have also had a number of reports which suggest that the more common reptiles are also doing quite well. In particular, it seems that **Grass Snakes *Natrix natrix helvetica*** are relatively common to the north of Leicester, in the Watermead and Birstall area. Given that many members of the general public seem to suffer from a "snake phobia", I personally find this very reassuring.

Looking back through reports from past years, I find that back in 2003 we had three sightings of **Adders *Vipera berus*** in Bradgate Park. During the last two years we appear not to have had any reports at all, and this brings me back to my first point. This lack of reports raises an obvious question: do we take this lack of reports to mean that the Adder population in Bradgate Park has suffered as a result of the bad weather we have experienced in recent months? Or does it just mean that our members have not spent very much time in Bradgate Park in recent months? As I said at the beginning we have to be wary of drawing conclusions from our relatively small quantities of data! Most of our sightings seem to come from a relatively small number of sites, and it would be nice if we could find ways of producing sightings from other, less well explored parts of the county. It occurs to me that perhaps one way to do this would be to enlist the help of our friends and neighbours. Many people these days carry mobile phones with a built-in camera: perhaps if we were to explain to the people we know what the Club is all about, we could persuade them to help us out by taking a photograph of anything interesting or unusual which they come across on their travels! I am not sure how realistic this idea would be in practice, but it might perhaps be one way to increase our numbers of records?

My final thought for this report is that I just hope we will have a better summer this year than we have had for the past two years!

**Tony Onions**

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## FISH AND CRAYFISH

The comments made in the section on "Reptiles and Amphibians", concerning the cold weather in recent months and its effects on our sightings, hold equally true for this group. It is hardly surprising that we have had so few sightings when our lakes and ponds and canals have been frozen over for days on end! Having said that, our few sightings, added to the sightings from non-members, and information gleaned from elsewhere, all combine to paint a generally satisfactory picture of the state of our fisheries. That is not to say that there are no problems: there will always be problems, including, of course, our old enemy – incidents of pollution. However, it seems that in the main our rivers and streams continue to enjoy good health. In particular, it seems that the **Chub *Leuciscus cephalus*** is increasingly finding its way into comparatively small streams: essentially, anywhere where there is sufficient food and holes or roots where they can escape predators or the full force of the current. In many ways, Leicestershire's lowland streams and rivers are ideally suited to the Chub, which is very tolerant and adaptable. It is happy in both fast- and slow-flowing streams, and is remarkably temperature tolerant (for a *Cyprinid*), in that it will feed all year round even in temperatures almost down to freezing point. Anyway, after

what seems like a very long winter, we find ourselves in another year with spring approaching, and to repeat the words used in the Section on “Reptiles and Amphibians”, we can only hope that this summer will be a better one!

Tony Onions

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## **DRAGONFLIES AND DAMSELFLIES**

As with other genera of invertebrates, the poor summer weather had another dramatic effect on Odonata with just 247 records received during the whole of the 2010 season. This equates to a reduction of almost 20% over 2009. Once again, despite the lack of records, all 16 of the county’s most common species were covered by 13 recorders who visited some 73 sites, 11 less than last year. The main omission was the **White-legged Damselflies *Platycnemis pennipes*** for which no records were received in the year.

Other than nymphs, the first record of newly emerged insects did not occur until mid-May when two **Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*** were noted at Loughborough Big Meadow on the 14th. By the end of the month six damselfly species had been located including **Large Red *Pyrrosoma nymphula*** and **Blue-tailed *Ischnura elegans***.

Into June and damselfly numbers began to increase with significant populations of **Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*** and **Red-eyed Damselfly *Erythromma najas*** located on the Grand Union Canal at Quorn on the 16th, with 200 of the former and 160 of the latter. It was encouraging to note other observers remarking about increases in their numbers. There were also double-figure counts of all damselfly species in the month excepting **Common Blue *Enallagma cyathigerum***. That feat was not achieved until 21 July when 50 were at Puddledyke. Double-figure counts of **Azure Damselfly *Coenagrion puella*** came from two sites where maxima were 50 at Kayes Plantation Lake, Quorn on the 22nd and 40 at Aylestone Meadows on the 2nd. The larger dragonflies including skimmers and chasers also started to emerge during the month. Seven **Broad-bodied Chaser *Libellula depressa*** were at Aylestone Meadows from the 2nd and subsequently at 11 further sites. Two **Four-spotted Chaser *Libellula quadrimaculata*** exploiting temporary pools created by forest machinery at Grace Dieu on the 12th was the only record of this species during the year and an adult male **Emperor Dragonfly *Anax imperator*** was utilising the same temporary pools. It was not until later in the month that **Black-tailed Skimmer *Orthetrum cancellatum*** began to appear, the first at Dishley Pool on the 21st and a further nine sites into July. **Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis*** was first seen at Ulverscroft on the 23rd and subsequently noted at 24 sites during the season.

The first record of **Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*** was on 3 July at Quorn and subsequently seen at a further 17 sites with the first **Ruddy Darter *Sympetrum sanguineum***, found on the Grantham Canal some two weeks later. The first **Southern Hawker *Aeshna cyanea*** of the year were 14 emerging from a Markfield pond on 1 July but it was a full three weeks before the first **Migrant Hawker *Aeshna mixta*** was recorded on the Grantham Canal.

There were just two records for **Emerald Damselfly *Lestes sponsa*** both in August. The first was at Dadlington on the 8th followed by New Lount NR on the 21st.

What was surely the Odonata highlight of the year was the unexpected find of a male **Black Darter *Sympetrum danae*** at Grace Dieu Wood on 15 August. This species was first confirmed in the county in 1965 at Charnwood Lodge and there have been less than ten positive records since then. This goes to prove that spending time in the field has its rewards.

There were no adult insects noted in April but records were received from 17 in May, 24 in June, 26 in July, 15 in August, just five in September and nine in October. The

final record and only one for November was of a **Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*** ovipositing at Puddledyke on the 6th.

Confirmed or probable breeding records were received for just nine species and involved 14 widespread sites.

The species with the most number of records was **Brown Hawker *Aeshna grandis***, with 31 followed by **Banded Demoiselle *Calopteryx splendens*** and **Blue-tailed Damselfly *Ischnura elegans*** with 26 each.

The areas with the most number of species were Grace Dieu (various locations) with 13 followed by Watermead Country Park (various locations) with 12 and Quorn (various locations) with ten.

A special thank you to all members who took the time to look for and report dragonflies during 2010.

**Jim Graham**

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### **GRASSHOPPERS AND CRICKETS**

Thanks to the members who sent in records of Orthoptera – there will be a report for the year in Heritage 200.

**Helen Ikin**

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### **OTHER INSECTS**

Another poor summer weather-wise for many invertebrates, hoverflies in particular were scarce or absent from many gardens until the invasion of the **Marmalade Hoverfly *Episyrphus balteatus*** in the latter part of July helped to alleviate the problem, bringing with it several other species such as the **Pied Hoverfly *Scaeva pyrastris*** which turned up in the county in above average numbers. A few interesting species were observed, but the most interesting for me was a male ***Leucozona glaucia*** in my city garden, briefly around the comfrey bed, a slender species with two large yellow quadrate spots clearly visible with the naked eye, a wood-edge species, and local. Quite what it was doing in my small city garden is anyone's guess.

The **Tree Bumblebee *Bombus hypnorum*** continues to expand its range in the county, a more than welcome addition to our Bumblebee fauna, of the many solitary bees recorded in Heritage, a special mention could be made of the rather attractive ***Osmia bicolor*** recorded at the Ketton Quarry NR last summer, which is one of three species that uses empty snail shells for nesting purposes. We are waiting to have this confirmed as a county record. This species needs warm limestone soils to thrive, and in this county limestone soils are rather few and far between.

Many other species from under-recorded groups were received during the year, among them, the Robberflies ***Machimus atricapillus*** at Grace Dieu and ***Dioctria linearis*** from Misterton Marshes.

Finally, the little red and black Hemipteran bug ***Corizus hyoscyami*** was recorded twice in the county in 2010, yet another species advancing northwards from southern counties.

**Howard Bradshaw**

## **BUTTERFLIES**

On the whole this was a disappointing year for our butterfly fauna, especially so in our gardens where favourite butterfly plants such as Red Valerian and Buddleia flowers remained largely unattended for days on end by these insects.

However, in the countryside some species did reasonably well and in the spring the **Orange-tip *Anthocharis cardamines*** was pleasantly frequent and apparently **Green Hairstreak *Callophrys rubi*** was frequent at Warren Hills. Also, spring and summer generations of the **Comma *Polygonia c-album*** did well and were widely reported and both the **Gatekeeper *Pyronia tithonus*** and **Ringlet *Aphantopus hyperantus*** were present in satisfactory numbers during the summer. It was good also to receive reports of **Brown Argus *Aricia agestis*** for 11 well-spread localities during July and August and of **Purple Hairstreak *Neozephyrus quercus*** and **White-letter Hairstreak *Satyrium w-album*** for the Grace Dieu/Cademan Wood area during the same months. With plenty of mature Common Oak and Wych Elm present, the larval food plants of these butterflies, both species may be found to be locally frequent here.

Migrant **Red Admiral *Vanessa atalanta*** and **Painted Lady *Cynthia cardui*** butterflies were rather scarce this year and no **Clouded Yellow *Colias croceus*** were reported.

With the late spring no butterflies were recorded until the middle of March and in the autumn, although ten species remained active into October, only one **Red Admiral** and one **Peacock *Inachis io*** made it into early November.

Again some 16 or so members contributed records during the year to whom, on behalf of the Club, our thanks. Please continue this valuable work during 2011.

**Peter Gamble**

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## **MOTHS**

Predictably, there were very few records to start the year off with, and if we thought the beginning of 2009 was poor for moths, then 2010 was not looking any better. Yet as soon as the conditions improve, amazingly, most of the species that should be on the wing miraculously appear, and this was the case at Charnwood Lodge at the end of February. Weeks of icy weather and no sign of anything flying, then again as soon as the temperature rises we recorded over 200 moths here.

The disappointing weather continued through April and May and we had to wait until the latter half of June and first half of July for things to pick up. August was cool with heavy rain throughout and September with clear cool days and nights. The final quarter dwindled into very moth unfriendly weather, but finished with a similar occurrence of February, again at Charnwood Lodge. After record breaking cold weather conditions, the first mild night in December, and within a small area in Gisborne's Gorse another 200 moths were recorded, many paired up and already in cop.

Looking through the list of species recorded for the year, you would hardly think the weather had been so bad, most of the species we usually record were there. With the exception of **Juniper Webber *Dichomeris marginella*** only recorded at two sites and ***Epiphyas postvittana*** noticeably well down in numbers and this seems to have been the trend nationally for the latter species. **Silver Y *Autographa gamma*** was another species conspicuous by its absence, many members commented on the scarcity of this species during the year. The daytime flyers of May and June **Chimney Sweeper *Odezia atrata***, **Mother Shipton *Calisteges mi***, **Burnet Companion *Euclidia glyphica*** and **Straw Dot *Rivula sericealis*** were all widespread and in good numbers.

A few surprises for the second quarter included several members recording **Chocolate-tip *Clostera curtula*** in their gardens and the sighting of a single **Orange-**

**tailed Clearwing *Synanthedon andrenaeformis*** from Howard. This is definitely worth a follow up, as the only other recent record for this is when a single specimen was attracted to VES pheromone lure by Keith Tailby at Tinwell, Rutland in 2005. A solitary **Red-necked Footman *Atolmis rubricolis*** turned up at Cloud Wood and was the only record of this species for 2010. **Orange Footman *Eilema sororcula*** has had an extremely good year, now being recorded in several member's gardens, unheard of at one time.

The third quarter delivered an impressive species list living up to its reputation of being the most diverse period. The **Horse Chestnut Leaf-miner *Cameraria ohridella*** was widely recorded, and although the Club has been recording it for several years, it was suddenly noticed by the masses and even attained stardom in the media. Just a few other highlights can be mentioned here, **Lilac Beauty *Apeira syringaria*** was a welcome sight at the Outwoods. **Hummingbird Hawk Moth *Macroglossum stellatarum*** was seen by many members throughout the county. A single migrant **Dark Sword Grass *Agrotis ipsolon*** was at Loughborough, a fantastic total of 82 **Dotted Clay *Xestia baja*** at Bardon Hill, but it seems like we are still waiting for **Merveille du Jour *Dichonia aprilina*** to be recorded from members' gardens.

Only a single member contributed to the last quarter and only a few nights were suitable for continuation of the Charnwood Forest Survey. Together with some late Geometer moths, the usual Orthosia, several species in the larval stage and approximately 40 species of leaf miners we were able to add interesting records for an important calendar period, a period which tends to be somewhat under-recorded.

Only a fraction of members' records can be included into Heritage and the Annual Report. Rest assured all records are passed onto the County Recorder for inclusion into the County Database, so every record is valuable. Many thanks to all contributors, please keep it up.

**Graham and Anona Finch**

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## **FLOWERING PLANTS AND FERNS**

A very cold start to the year meant there was quite a delay in plants starting to flower and it was nearly the end of March before records really began. Plants recorded for the first quarter were mainly flowering times for common species but records for the second quarter were in abundance, including some very interesting ones. Some of which were a first record for **Toothwort *Lathraea squamaria*** since 1933 for Grace Dieu Wood and The **Whorl Grass *Catabrosa aquatica*** first found in 1997 is still present at Grace Dieu. **Viper's Bugloss *Echium vulgare*** was found at Eaton, a plant which is rarely found in our county although mainly in the east. On the down side the **Subterranean Clover *Trifolium subterraneum*** at Castle Hill, Mountsorrel and the **Mousetail *Mysosurus minimus*** could not be found this year at its site near Loughborough. PHG reported **Wall Rocket *Diplotaxis muralis*** growing in pavement cracks in Loughborough. He first recorded this thirty years ago, which reminded me of a record I made in the early sixties of the same species growing in a small front garden in the centre of Loughborough and was still there in the late nineties but I have not seen it since.

The third quarter brought more interesting records. The fact that the **Violet Helleborine *Epipactis purpurata*** is still doing well in Sheet Hedges Wood and another two plants at Groby Quarry. Records for three other plants, which are rare in our area, are **Dittander *Lepidium latifolium***, **Imperforate St. John's Wort *Hypericum maculatum*** and **Fragrant Agrimony *Agrimonia procera***.

The fourth quarter was very quiet but had a reassuring record of the fact that the **Rough Horsetail *Equisetum hyemale*** was still in good health and quantity.

Altogether an interesting year with many other records too numerous to mention so many thanks to the members who record and report their findings. Please keep up the good work despite the weather and the best of luck for the year to follow.

**Eric Webster**

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### **OTHER GROUPS**

We are always pleased to have records for groups such as Fungi, Galls, Algae, Stoneworts, Lichens, Bryophytes, the smaller insect orders and other invertebrates. Although we do not have writers for these sections we do try, briefly, to list the records that we receive.

**Helen Ikin**