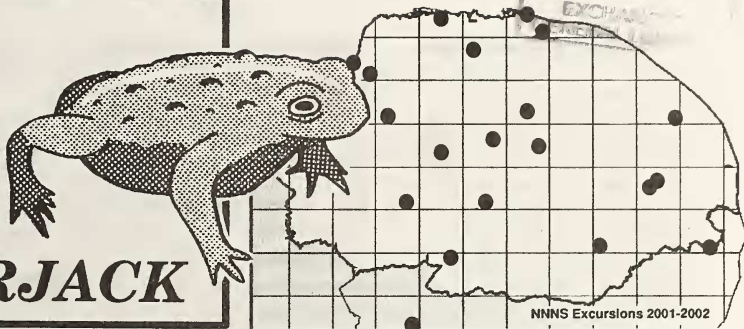


THE NORFOLK NATTERJACK



Toad-in-the-hole...

Another packed 'Bulletin' with lots of information wanted and discoveries made. My thanks to all contributors and hope 2002 brings something of interest to all members. FF

Congratulations

I am sure that all members of the Society will join with me in sending our congratulations to Ernest Daniels who celebrated his ninetieth birthday on the 11th November last.

Ernest is our longest serving member, having joined the Society in 1928. He held the office of Honorary Treasurer for twelve years; he has been a Vice-President since 1970 and was President for the year 1979/80. His natural history interests are very wide - a keen birdwatcher, joint entomological recorder for a time, and in more recent years much of his interest has centred on botany: a true all rounder.

We wish him and his wife Bessie many more years of active interest in the Society's affairs.

David Paull,
Chairman.



YOUNG NORFOLK NATURE WRITING AWARD

Cash prizes totalling £75 are being offered by Norfolk Wildlife Trust and The Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society in a new annual competition designed to revive the art of nature writing.

The competition is open to all young people under the age of 16 living in Norfolk. Entrants need to submit an illustrated diary or an essay of no more than 800 words based on personal observations or thoughts about nature or a specific aspect of it.



The prize, which will be accompanied by an engraved trophy, is being generously donated by

Sylvia Seago in memory of her late husband Michael Seago - a well known and respected naturalist who dedicated 60 years to the study of Norfolk's birds. Author of 'Birds of Norfolk', he edited the annual Norfolk Bird Report for 44 years. Readers of the Eastern Daily Press will best know Michael for

his popular wildlife column. Members of The Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists' Society and



staff from the Norfolk Wildlife Trust will join Sylvia on the judging panel. The top prize of £50 plus the title 'Young Norfolk Nature Writer of the Year 2002' will go to the best entry. There is also a second prize of £25. In addition five runners up will receive a certificate.

Entries need to be sent by 30th September 2002 to:

NWT,
72 Cathedral Close,
Norwich NR1 4DF.

Winners will be notified by 1st November and the results will appear in the April 2002 *Tern*, alongside the winning entry.

The quarterly bulletin
of the
Norfolk & Norwich
Naturalists' Society



Founded 1869
Registered Charity No. 291604

Number 76
February 2002



Winter Birds in Wells

For me, Wells in winter has a special attraction. The summer birds have gone, but so have most of the visitors. In their place have come a plethora of winter birds - and I use that delightful word advisedly! As described in a previous *Natterjack* article, the numbers of Pinkfeet Geese can be almost beyond belief, but they are not alone, though other birds can be much less predictable. For example, I have sometimes seen as many as fifteen Mergansers diving near the Lifeboat House, but this year there are none. There have been a few Eiders and, for the first time, three Guillemots. Single ones, often oiled, occasionally turn up at the Quay, but December this year (2001) produced a morning viewing of these three in the harbour channel, apparently healthy, certainly fishing actively. Didn't they realise they should have been at sea? They have a rather fetching way of turning up the points of their wings at the moment of diving.

In recent winters quite large flocks of Scoters have been assembling just off-shore, forming long lines of black specks. You'd think they would be easy to see, but take your eyes off them for a moment while you point them out to a friend, and you might think you had imagined them. Firstly, they have the annoying habit of taking off and flying a couple of hundred yards; secondly, if the sea is at all agitated, they can easily disappear behind the long incipient breakers, being not very large ducks. Speaking of ducks, the Widgeon have been doing very well. Though sometimes almost literally eclipsed by the great herds of Pinkfeet, large assemblies can be seen on the Holkham fresh marshes, often accompanied by smaller numbers of Teal. In flight, the size difference is quite apparent.

Paul Banham

Wings over the Garden

Wendy and I usually have breakfast at about 8 a.m. after putting the bird food out. There is always something to watch during the half hour or so that we are sitting looking out over the garden. Earlier this winter (November 2001) I just happened to glance up as a bird passed over at about 50 feet, it was in view only for a second or two but the shape, size and jizz was unmistakable, the first Woodcock of the year.

It made me think about other bird sightings seen passing over the garden from time to time. Soaring Sparrowhawks in spring and early summer are a fairly regular thing now, also adults passing over carrying prey for the youngsters in the woods close by. Common Buzzard seen on two occasions, Herons and flocks of Waxwings and the skein of Pink-footed Geese giving the game away by their lovely high pitched 'talking' as they passed over one cold winters day.

Another time while working in the greenhouse I was thrilled by one of my favourite sounds, the calling of Bewick Swans. I watched the large herd pass across the autumn sky in an ever changing formation, always a magical experience. I have often stood outside in the garden after dark in October and November listening to the lisp flight calls of Redwings as they pass over from the north. On one occasion only have I seen a Marsh Harrier going over, probably taking a short cut, as the two major river systems in Norfolk, the Yare and Bure are only a few miles apart at Thorpe St Andrew. Grey lag and Canada Geese also use this route between the two valleys.

These are just a few casual sightings, I am quite sure many more could be added to the list with some serious watching. I remember Ted Ellis writing in one of his EDP articles that he had been sky watching one day when a large, gull like bird came into view, as it got closer he saw it was a glorious Osprey.

Tony Howes

Red Squirrels

Red squirrels are very unusual now in most of England, therefore I was pleased when somebody told me of a place where they might be seen in numbers. Last October, a friend and I were having a few days photography in the Lake District, the squirrel 'hot spot' was in the grounds of a hotel just north of Keswick. We spoke to the staff and were given permission to wander at will in the spacious grounds.



Feeders for birds and squirrels were numerous, some wrought iron free standing nut holders, full of hazelnuts, were placed on the terrace below the dining room windows. At times each of them had a red squirrel sitting inside chomping the nuts, unfortunately it rained all day making photography very difficult. As always with mammals, one turned out to be slightly more friendly than the rest. This individual would approach over the lawn almost to our feet and take hazelnuts from the grass. In good light it would have presented superb photographic opportunities, but it was nevertheless a magical few hours spent watching these wild, beautiful animals going about their business.

At one point we had seven in view at one time, a day to remember with pleasure.

Tony Howes

**Please note: Red Squirrels are the subject of a Photographic Group meeting - see programme on page 8.*

A Leaf-miner New to Norfolk?

At the end of November 2001 my son, who is responsible for the control of pests and diseases at R. H. Meredith & Son (Bressingham) formerly Bloom's of Bressingham, brought me a couple of leaves of *Helleborus foetidus* that were heavily mined. Fairly obviously the mines were of a type caused by flies and the most likely culprit was a member of the Agromyzidae. Checking the RES Handbook (Spencer, 1972) I could find nothing shown as a miner in *Helleborus*, however, in the Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica publication (Spencer, 1976) one species was listed but said to be from Finland and local but not uncommon in central Europe and also found in Corsica but not in Britain. Thinking the mining agent might be from another Dipterous group I then checked in Hering (1957) and again found just the one species, *Phytomyza hellebori*, and here the description of the mine seemed to fit very well with those from Bressingham, although my German is hardly adequate for easy translation. At this stage I began to think there must be something, somewhere that I had missed.

A little later my son was talking to Andrew Halstead, from Wisley, about the mines and was told that indeed *Phytomyza hellebori* had been described as new to Britain in 1999 (Stubbs, 2000). I then found a paper by Colin Welch (2000) describing, in some detail, the mine and listing a number of gardens in and around Peterborough where it was to be found. By this time I had remembered the *Helleborus foetidus* in our own garden at Scole and indeed that was quite heavily infested with leaf-mines. After a discussion with Isobel Havercroft, a friend from north Norfolk, she confirmed that the mine was in plants in her garden which is between Sheringham and Cromer. Now I had discovered that this species relatively "new to Britain" was well established in both the north and south of the county, but in garden plants. What about in the

wild? Looking in the recent flora (Beckett and Bull, 1999) I found that *Helleborus foetidus* was growing, presumably wild, in some profusion on the Bath Hills at Ditchingham. With the kind permission and direction from Dorothy Cheyne I was able to look at a number of these plants and again all we saw were quite heavily infested with the leaf-mines. According to Galpin (1888) this was a prime site for the hellebore in his day so it has obviously been there for well over a century at least. Dorothy then showed me some slides of plants she had taken in the 1970s and as far as we could see there was no sign of the mines at that time.

Whilst there is virtually no doubt in my mind that these mines have been caused by *Phytomyza hellebori* until adults have been reared from the mines and positively identified I cannot be certain. Hopefully something should emerge in the spring of 2002 and Tony Irwin has kindly agreed to look at any Agromyzids. Until then any other records of leaf mines in the leaves of *Helleborus foetidus* would be greatly appreciated. Apparently the fly does not attack other species of hellebore.

Mike Hall

References:

- Beckett, G. and Bull, A. (1999). *A Flora of Norfolk*. Gillian Beckett, Stanhoe.
Galpin, F. W. (1888). *The Flowering Plants and Birds of Harleston in Norfolk*. Bartlett & Co., London.
Hering, E. M., (1957). *Bestimmungstabellen der Blattminen von Europa* vol. 1, 523. Dr. W. Junk, 's-Gravenhage.
Spencer, K. A., (1972). Diptera, Agromyzidae. — *R. Ent. Soc. Land. Handbk. Ident. Br. Insects*, 10, part 5 (g). Royal Entomological Society of London, London.
Spencer, K. A., (1976). *The Agromyzidae* (Diptera) of Fennoscandia and Denmark. *Fauna Entomologica Scandinavica* 5 (2): 305-306. Scandinavian Science Press Ltd., Denmark.
Stubbs, A. (2000). The hellebore leaf-miner, *Phytomyza hellebori* Kallenbach (Diptera, Agromyzidae) new to Britain. *Dipterist's Digest* 7: 33-35.
Welch, R. C., 2000. *Phytomyza hellebori* Kallenbach (Dip.: Agromyzidae), a recent addition to the British Fauna: further records in East Northamptonshire, Huntingdonshire & Cambridgeshire. *Entomologists's Record and Journal of Variation* 112: 163-16

AN EXOTIC FUNGUS ON BEESTON COMMON?

During the early months of 2001 English Nature contractors cleared trees, mostly oak, ash and sycamore, from the north-east corner of Beeston Common near Sheringham and chipped the wood on-site. It was intended that these woodchips would be incinerated at the end of the operation but foot and mouth disease precautions intervened and a 20 x 5 metre mound of woodchips still remains. On 9th August 2001, I noticed an unfamiliar fungus on the wood pile and e-mailed a photograph to Tony. I also showed a specimen to Bob Ellis a couple of days later who thought it reminiscent of *Tricholomopsis rutilans* (Plums and Custard). By mid-September the clump of fungi had all but disappeared and as I had not heard from Tony I was left with a mystery.

I am ashamed to say, I did not register anything as being of particular interest from the photograph but when, a couple of months later, Francis brought me some fresh specimens after the fungus had reappeared, I realised we had something very interesting indeed.

Each clump, and in October there were at least five, consisted of dozens of small deep golden-yellow toadstools densely covered with purple scales on the cap and purple fibrils on the stem. Imagine a small Plums and Custard toadstool and you will have a very good idea of its appearance. Despite appearances, however, it was eventually located in *Gymnopilus*, although no British species has these features. Furthermore, a photograph of *Gymnopilus purpuratus* in 'Fungi of Switzerland' Vol 5 was a seemingly perfect match and was accompanied by the intriguing information that in Switzerland the species had been found only in greenhouses and that it is a native of Australia and South America.

Armed with this possible identity, Francis conducted a search on the Internet and was amazed to find 57 sites. It did not take long for him to realise that the great interest in such an obscure fungus lay in its reputed hallucinatory properties - indeed one

(Continued on page 4.)

site allowed him to calculate the mass of dried fungus needed for a level three experience! But before all you latter-day hippies head north in camper vans, read on.

In addition to our research I had also sent Reg Evans a specimen and had received a letter in early November which confirmed the genus *Gymnopilus* but indicated the specific name of *picreus* (although qualified with 'the spores maybe a trifle smaller than the type'). This now gave us two names, however, Tony had continued with his determination and consulted other experts.

I sent a specimen to Dr Brian Spooner at Kew who informed us that the fungus was actually *Gymnopilus dilepis* (as indeed was the 'Swiss' fungus), a non-hallucinogenic fungus recently described as new to Britain from a specimen growing on the compost of a *Philodendron* purchased in an Edinburgh supermarket in 1997. It subsequently transpired that the fungus had been found 'in the wild' in 1995 on Brentmoor Heath, Surrey - on a mound of woodchips generated by conservation work on the site!

So where had the fungus come from? One answer is tropical South-east Asia where it is common on woodchip mulches and oil palm debris. Another intriguing possibility is that it is a native British fungus which very rarely 'fruits' but for which woodchips provide an ideal substratum. In any case, *G. dilepis* joins a growing list of apparently exotic fungi which are seen more and more frequently on woodchips - look out for more reports of *G. dilepis*.

As a passing thought it is possible that the production of the woodchips during the winter means they are invariably wet when heaped. Such trapped moisture is seen to escape as steam, indicating an internal generation of heat and humidity which may create favourable conditions for a tropical fungus. English Nature are still intending to remove the woodchips from the Common as originally planned, however, it is a habitat worth investigating wherever they are found.

Francis Farrow
& Tony Leech

Is the *Slender Speedwell* on the way out?

Most members will be familiar with the *Slender Speedwell* *Veronica filiformis*, which often embellishes lawns, cemeteries and other grassy areas with its delightful pale blue flowers in early summer. An alien plant, originally introduced by the Victorians, it has spread all over Britain in the last half-century as an invasive weed of mown grass. But is it now on the decrease?

Ten years ago when I started on the field-work for my '*Flora of King's Lynn*' (published by the Society in Transactions, 1995) it was easy to find this speedwell on lawns all over the town. I have recently begun a similar survey in Ely (Cams.), and have only seen it in three places, and even then only in small quantity. Dr. Eva Crackles, who has just written a paper on the flora of Hull, has noted a marked decline of the species in that city (which she has known all her life), and thinks it may have lost some of its vigour.

Gillian Beckett has suggested to me that the increased rainfall in recent years may have led to this delicate plant being overgrown by coarser, strong-growing plants, and Bob Ellis wonders if the greater use of rotary mowers these days may be partly responsible.

Ron Payne

VETERAN TREES

Ancient trees are not only a feature of the countryside that we all enjoy seeing but they also have great ecological significance because they can provide a variety of unique habitats that have a continuity down the generations.



A man who wants to know where all Norfolk's veteran trees are is Nick Coleman, a Norwich-based tree surgeon who is currently studying for a Masters Degree through Middlesex University. The data he collects for his thesis will be available to such organisations as English Nature, Norfolk County Council's countryside section, the Centre for East Anglian Studies at UEA, and the county's Landscape Archaeological Unit.

So, can you help him? Do you know of trees that, as he puts it, "*have lasted beyond their anticipated natural life expectancy*"?

If so, you can contact Nick at:

39 Catton Grove Road,
Norwich NR3 3NJ
Tel: 01603 402621
Email: Treecarenorwich@AOL.com

Mammal Records: Note the Recorder's details were omitted in error from '*The Norfolk Bird and Mammal Report 2000*', therefore please send your 2001 observations asap to: Dr. Martin Perrow, ECON, School of Biological Sciences, University of East Anglia, Norwich, NR14 7TJ or via Email: m.perrow@uea.ac.uk

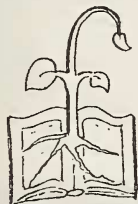
Flora Facts and Fables

The wild flowers of Britain have suffered very mixed fortunes. In early times plants and their properties were understood and trusted, but through the ages drastic changes in politics and religion meant that the study of plants has often been discouraged, sometimes to the point of having the country "wise women" destroyed for witchcraft.

During the age of the Victorians plant hunting and study again became ultimately respectable, but even then some of the knowledge of the medicinal properties of plants was deliberately hidden or destroyed.

All too soon Britain became an industrial country, fought two World Wars and then initiated a huge building programme and drastic changes in agricultural practice.

We now know that more than 95% of our old wild flower meadows vanished at this time, and wild plants from fields, roadsides and river edges were ruthlessly sprayed and slashed.



Thankfully some of the plants are now being coaxed back, for they can be replaced. What can never be replaced is the knowledge which went with those plants.

There are still those among us who remember being cured by a gipsy, a wise woman or perhaps a grandmother who had inherited the knowledge of plants. In perhaps as little as one more generation that knowledge will have gone forever.

It is vital that every possible scrap of plant knowledge is recorded now. It is ironic that only now is it being realised that the botanists and herbalists of years gone by knew exactly what they were doing, and many of the recipes and remedies they recommended have been found to be efficient and perhaps more powerful than drugs produced by industry.

May I ask the readers to please search their minds and their family bookshelves for every piece of plant information they can find. It is essential that this is done as soon as possible. Tomorrow may be too late.

Please send recipes, remedies, anecdotes, plant-lore and folklore to me, **Grace Corne**, **Flora, Facts and Fables**, **Church Farm, Sisland, Norwich NR14 6EF**
Tel: 01508 520235
e-mail: Grace@e-fs.demon.co.uk

NAME CHANGE

Further to my note on the Beeston Common harvestman (*Dicranopalpus caudatus*resco) which appeared in the November edition of 'Natterjack' (No. 75) I have since seen it named as *Dicranopalpus ramosus* (Simon) in 'The Country Life Guide to Spiders of Britain and Northern Europe' by Dick Jones. This name is the one used to describe some harvestmen observed by Colin Penny at Taverham in 1996. The article, in 'Natterjack' (No. 55), also states previous East Norfolk records from Scratby and Norwich which featured in a paper in 'Transactions' (Vol. 30, part 1. May 1984) by Rex Hancy. It is interesting therefore to speculate whether the harvestmen have moved north from the Norwich area or north west from Scratby! Maybe other members have knowledge of the species and can shed further light on its distribution. Has there been any sightings in West Norfolk yet?

Francis Farrow

OTTERS MAN HONOURED

The Sydney Long Memorial Medal, jointly presented every two years by the Society and the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, has been awarded to Philip Wayre for a lifetime of work in the conservation of wildlife and the countryside.

He received the medal, which commemorates the Society's long-serving secretary and founder of the Trust, at the Trust's annual meeting from the president, Sir John Blofeld.

The citation noted that Philip Wayre opened a wildlife park at Great Witchingham in the early 1960s and in 1971 he established the Otter Trust at Earsham.

"The intention was to breed otters for eventual release to the wild to recolonise their original habitats. The publicity and interest in otters created by the work of that trust has had an important influence on the subsequent success of the campaign to re-establish otters in the wild."



The citation also recalled Mr Wayre's role in popularising natural history and promoting the cause of wildlife conservation through his work on wildlife programmes and films for television.

David Paul

One Hundred Years Ago

(Transactions Vol. VII p346-348)

With our recent frosty weather, icy roads and snow at about the same period as described here it seems appropriate to remember and respect such natural events. Ed.

ON THE SILVER THAW AND GLAZED FROST OBSERVED AT KING'S LYNN, 20-21ST DECEMBER, 1901

by C. B. Plowright M.D.

The phenomenon of a glazed frost was well observed at King's Lynn and its neighbourhood, on 20th and 21st December, 1901. For three or four days preceeding Friday, 20th December, we had a succession of frosty nights, and more or less sunny days without either snow or any appreciable amount of rime frost. The roads in the country were frozen hard, but they were perfectly dry, free from ice, and not in the least bit slippery. On the afternoon of the 20th I drove through the village of Castle Rising, reaching home about half-past four; the roads were then hard and good, and the horse did not require roughing. Soon after this a gentle damp wind sprung up from the south-west. About six o'clock I had occasion to walk a short distance in the town, when to my surprise I found the streets had become slippery as to be dangerous for ordinary pedestrians. Not only were the pavements extremely slippery, but the roadways were even worse, whether paved with granite cubes or macadamised. A little later a gentle rain began to fall which rendered the silver thaw more noticeable still. The suddenness with which the hard dry roads became almost impassable sheets of ice astonished everyone; the change taking place within an hour, probably in half that time, and this too before any rain actually fell. The drivers of vehicles did not realise the state of the roads in the dusk until the horses slipped and fell. People who drove into Lynn from the country during the afternoon found they could not return without having their horses

roughed. The macadamised roads were far worse than those streets paved with granite setts or rounded pebbles. One of our mainstreets (High Street) has within the last year or two had its granite-cube pavement replaced by asphalt; this is apt at times to be so slippery that many persons driving valuable horses avoid passing down it. Curiously enough this street was the least slippery in the whole town. On the Gaywood road the silver thaw was very well developed; between Gaywood corner and the East Gates, a distance of about a half-a-mile, eleven horses fell during the evening. The blacksmiths had to reopen their shops, and did a brisk business in "turning up" or "roughing" horses. During the evening two children were treated at the Hospital for scalp wounds, caused by slipping on the ice; and later a man was admitted with concussion of the brain, and a woman with a fracture of the fibula from the same cause.

During the night the rain ceased, and it again froze, so that on the morning of the 21st we had an excellent illustration of a glazed frost. It was the more noticeable owing to the previous absence of snow or ice on the roads, and for the suddenness with which the icy coating had developed upon them.

The explanation of this phenomenon is given by Mr. Scott* in these words: "The glazed frost is really the frozen surface which is occasionally produced at the beginning of a thaw if a warm wind suddenly sets in. The damp air, passing over the ground, of which the temperature is exceedingly low, has its moisture deposited in solid form, and all objects on which this deposit takes place are covered with a sheet of ice."

Instances may commonly be observed on walls where the porous

bricks become coated with ice when a long frost is breaking up, but as there is generally more or less snow on the ground, the phenomenon is not so noticeable as it was upon the present occasion. Sometimes glazed frosts cause a great amount of injury to trees by breaking their branches on the weight of ice deposited upon them.

On the morning of the 21st, the ice-coating on the pebble pavements in some of the streets was found to have become detached during the night from the convex surface of the stones. This was effected by the expansion of the ice as it was deposited, lifting itself from the stone because it was unable to expand laterally, owing to the proximity of the neighbouring pebbles. These ice films were about 5 or 6 m.m. thick, smooth on the concave side where they had been applied to the stone; rough from ice crystals on the convex surface. When held up to the light and viewed from the convex side they were seen to be composed of rounded hexagonal plates, about 8 or 10 m.m in diameter, reminding one of the diagrams of squamous epithelium, figured in works of anatomy. On 22nd December a slight fall of snow enabled the possessors of snow sledges to enjoy a few hours sledging the country.



*Elementary Meteorology. Robert H. Scott, F.R.S., 4th edition, 1887, p115

EXCURSION REPORTS

Fungus Foray Foulden Common

October 7th 2001

The annual Fungus Foray was held at a new venue this year as, apart from the leader none of those present seemed to have looked for Fungi on this Common with its variety of habitats. The meeting was held jointly with the the Norfolk Fungus Study Group which was formed early in the year, this resulting in the meeting getting a notice in the British Mycological Society's Newsletter. Among those present were Drs Adrian and Lynn Newton from Cambridge who, until fairly recently had been living and working in Scotland on Scottish grassland Fungi with emphasis on the genus *Hygrocybe* (Waxcaps), as this group have been declared of Biodiversity importance in a European context, and Foulden Common is one of the more important sites in Norfolk for the genus. Lynn Newton is also an expert on the difficult genus *Entoloma* and added a not inconsiderable number of members of this genus to our final list.

The morning was spent on the chalk grassland to the south of the road, where a goodly number of specialist chalk plants such as Clustered Bellflower and Autumn Gentian were still blooming. This area also has a few pingoes scattered round the edges, the wetter ones fringed with Sallows. The pingoes were actually being investigated by members of a coachload of about 40 students whose arrival in the car park had caused a certain amount of dismay, this being quite small. We were amazed to only see one group at study on the part of the common we were visiting, the rest having melted away into the undergrowth, and they had departed by lunch time.

The Waxcaps were the main point of interest for most members of the party, and though total numbers were small, 10 species were found including several species in shades of red and orange such as *H. coccinea*, *H. chlorophana*, and the large *H. punicea*, green and yellow and slimy with *H. psittacinus*, the dry capped, fawnish orange and supposedly edible *H. pratensis*, the white *H. virgineus* and the rare brown and white *H. colemanniana*.



Amongst the *Entolomas* one of note as it is relative easy to identify being a delicate shade of green (though this soon fades to yellowish) was *E. incana*. The so-called Club Fungi were represented by one of the less common black species, *Trichoglossum hirsutum* whilst two of the *Clavaria* group were also identified, these being *Clavulinopsis cineroides* and *C. fusiformis*.

After lunch we moved across the road where the pingoes are set in woodland which has largely sprung up since the demise of the rabbits in the 1950s. Not only that, but the ground flora reveals here, we were on former acid heathland with patches of heather here and there in clearings in the trees. The list from this side of the road was fairly typical of beech/oak woodland anywhere with five species of *Russula* and three of *Lactarius* and the inevitable Devil's Stinkhorn *Phallus impudicus*. One interesting point about the afternoon's collections were the relatively high number of Ascomycetes collected and named, from the so-called Eyelash Fungus, *Scutellinia scutellata* and the small disc fungus, *Chlorociboria aeruginascens*, which is green and which turns dead wood on which it grows bright green

throughout and the disc fungus *Rutstromis infirma* to various cup fungi such as *Tarzetta cupularis*, *Peziza repanda* and the rather uncommon *Humaria hemisphaerica* plus a relative of the *Helvella* group, *Otidea alutacea*.

Altogether an excellent day, the rain holding off until just as we returning to the cars in the afternoon with a total of 125 species identified.

Alec Bull

RECORDS GALORE

October 13th 2001

Two small groups of members were given a fascinating electronic tour by John Goldsmith of the newly established Norfolk Biological Records Centre at Gressenhall. We were shown a presentation on the purpose of the centre - very simply, to build up a huge bank of records from which trends can be identified and action plans drawn up where the evidence shows that species are under threat. We were also shown how records are entered into the data bank - 200,000-plus so far, with a target of two million.

Later, several members said they regretted they had not come along, either because they had other commitments or because they thought the sessions would be oversubscribed. If you did miss out, you have not missed your chance. John has kindly said he is happy to arrange one or more further sessions, if there is the demand.

If you would like to take up John's offer, please contact me and I will try to fix a convenient date.

David Paul
- 01603 457270



Hoppy's Miscalculation

As I sat having breakfast one morning last November various birds were doing likewise on the bird table outside the window. Among them was 'Hoppy', a wood pigeon that we have known here for three years, he limps badly due to a damaged left leg, otherwise he is fine. Suddenly he took off from the table and flew down the garden towards the woods beyond, but much to my surprise and horror he flew straight into one of the shed windows. The glass smashed from the impact and the pigeon seemed to turn in his own length and flew off over the bungalow roof. The force of the hit was considerable but he went off strongly and didn't seem to be injured in any way. I shall keep watch for him with tremulous anticipation, maybe he will be wearing glasses as well as limping when I see him next.

He must have flown over that shed hundreds of times, what miscalculation occurred to cause such an accident this time? That I was actually watching when it happened is also very strange.

Tony Howes

NNNS MEETINGS

February - April 2002

Indoor meetings to be held at Room 7,
The Sports and Leisure Centre, Easton
College, Easton, Norwich. 7.30 p.m

Tuesday 19 February

"The Natural History Slides of Ted Ellis"
David Nobbs

Sunday 10 March

Full-day Field Meeting
for mosses at Hockering Wood
Robin Stevenson
Meet 1100hrs at entrance on 'one-way'
lane (ie from east to west) at north
edge of wood TG072150

Tuesday 19 March

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
followed by
"Flowers in the Alps"
Ken Durrant



Sunday 14 April

Full-day Breckland Field Meeting
mainly for spring flowers
Alec Bull

Meet 1100hrs at Ramparts Field
car park, West Stow 'TL788716

See next panel for details of the
Photographic Group meetings

PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP MEETINGS

The photographic group welcomes any body within the society who has an interest in capturing, with a camera, wild life in its many forms. Whether your particular interest is birds, flowers, insects, mammals or the environment generally, you will find knowledgeable people to talk to, we all learn from one another. So come along to Easton College and have a pleasant evening, see how others tackle the delicate task of getting nature onto film.

Guest speakers show us their work and tell us about their equipment and methods. Hope to see you at the next meeting.

Monday 25 February

Through the Lens:
Galapagos Magic
Illustrated talk by
Julian Bhalerao

Monday 25 March

Red Squirrel:
Beautiful and on the Brink
Illustrated talk by
David Stapleford

Tuesday 16 April

PHOTOGRAPHIC GROUP LECTURE
A Celebration of the Seasons:
Winter

April meeting Room 7,
All others Room 4
All starting at 7.30pm

A note to CONTRIBUTORS.

The next 'Natterjack' will be in May. It would be much appreciated if any correspondence or disc could be sent to the editor at the following address, as soon as possible by April 1st 2002, or by e-mail to: francis.f@virgin.net

Francis Farrow
'Heathlands'
6 Havelock Road
Sheringham
Norfolk
NR26 8QD

FF



Garth's
Corner

WHY THE FUNNY VOICE
FRANK... GOT A FROG IN
YOUR THROAT?

MUKN!MUNK!

