



The Norfolk Natterjack

The quarterly bulletin of the
Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society



... Researching
Norfolk's Wildlife

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Cover image: European Bee-eater - *Mark Clements* - See page 7)

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Norfolk & Norwich Naturalists' Society Recorders

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Toad-in-the-hole...

The 'summer' edition of 'Natterjack' is quite varied in content although there are some marvellous bird contributions featuring Norfolk's fantastic variety and an article on Mull's sea eagles, a bird, which is being seen more frequently around Norfolk in recent years. If something less big and intimatdating is your scene then 'get your eye in' on some aphids thanks to a selection from Norwich. My thanks to all contributors and please note the last page has some important annoucements regarding membership of the Society. I look forward to receiving your reports and observations from this 'hot' summer (if it lasts).
FF

Garden Wildlife

David Nobbs

It's now five years since I left Wheatfen! I find I am doing little if any natural history now, but do keep an interest in our walled garden. We have had a pair of Hedgehogs in the garden for the last four years and usually see them at night. A couple of weeks ago, however, I was looking out of the window at about 2pm across the lawn to the wall and the strip of ground beneath it and there I saw a Hedgehog with something in its mouth. This turned out to be a baby Hedgehog, which was being moved to another part of the garden. I gather that female Hedgehogs can be seen out during the day within the breeding season. I feel so lucky to have captured these pics.



Moving time for the Hedgehog family
Images / *David Nobbs*

It seems to have been a great year for Garganey. I have seen and photographed them at Cley, Hickling and Strumpshaw Fen. Such beautiful ducks with so many incredible marked feathers making up their patterns. You just can't beat nature.



A beautiful drake Garganey

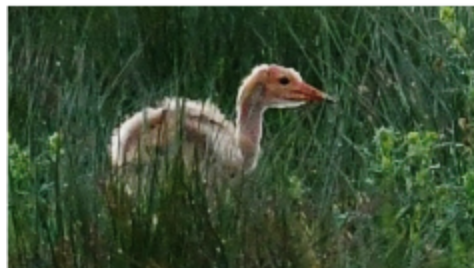
I went to Snettisham with a friend and we were lucky to see this rare bird in Norfolk, a Great Reed Warbler. It was singing so loudly in the reeds; it didn't take us to long to find it. Although a fair way off and the wind blowing it and the reeds about, I was pleased to get a photo of it singing. I did feel sorry for it as I knew it hadn't any chance of finding a mate to breed with here!!



A rare visitor - Great Reed Warbler

I am often at NWT Hickling and usually see the Cranes flying around and hear them 'bugling'. It was a cloudy day with sunny spells as I walked around the reserve very early one June morning. Scanning as always through my binoculars I spotted two cranes a long way off on the ground. Then to my surprise I noticed a little yellow fluffy chick with them! I had never seen a Crane chick before.

With my 500mm camera lens I was fortunate to be able to get a fairly decent photo. What a special moment it was. I shall look forward to seeing it around in the months to come on the reserve as it grows up and flies around with its parents. I also saw a Swallowtail butterfly



A special moment - a young Common Crane



A stunning Swallowtail

which I wasn't expecting as it wasn't very sunny. Always pleasing to the eye to see these stunning butterflies.

There seems to be a few Great White Egrets around in their full breeding plumage. Seeing a black bill instead of the yellow makes you think is it a Great or a Little Egret but then there is no comparison with the size, kink in the neck and black feet. They do look very handsome with the green colour strip near their eyes and the salmon pink legs. I saw one at NWT Holme Dunes, Hickling and RSBP Strumpshaw



A very handsome Great White Egret in full summer plumage with salmon pink legs!



A cute little mammal - the Water Vole

Fen. Hopefully will we be seeing lots more of these lovely birds around our county in the future .

I often hear a 'plop' when walking beside streams and think it's probably a Water Vole! Fortunately, this last month (June) I have been lucky enough to see some before the plop! These cute little mammals are not so common these days as they are so often predated. Mink as we know are

one of the main culprits but also, I have seen Herons taking them. That's nature in the raw and part of the food chain. I have seen them at Sculthorpe Moor, Strumpshaw Fen, Hickling and along a few streams around Norfolk so hopefully they will breed well to help bring their numbers up as it would be sad to lose them.

Grey Partridges use to be a familiar sight when I was young. Unfortunately, I don't see many around these days, or not where I live in South Norfolk. It was lovely to see these two strutting around when I was out looking for and watching Barn Owls.



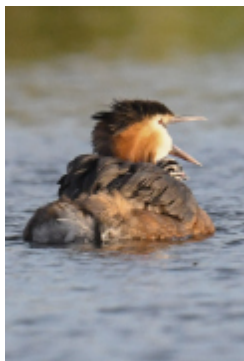
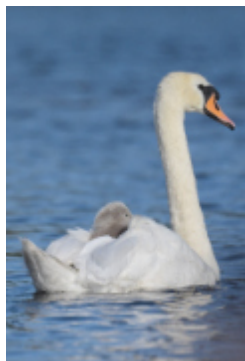
A rare sight in South Norfolk - Grey Partridge

An evening at Hickling

Lyn Clarkson

Whilst on a walk and boat trip one evening in mid-June at Hickling Broad I saw some amazing wildlife.

Firstly I was so excited to see both a Mute Swan and a Great Crested Grebe with one youngster each hitching a ride!

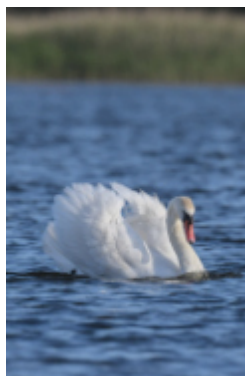


Mute Swan and Gt. Crested Gebe carrying young



Marsh Harrier with unusual fish prey

Then, to my amazement there was a male Marsh Harrier carrying a fish in his tallons to drop into a nest in the reeds... I have often seen them carrying prey, but never a fish! There was also a very defensive male Mute Swan, successfully protecting his brood from about 30 young swans. Beautifully graceful... the



Mute Swan, Emperor Dragonfly and Convolulous Hawk-moth

Emperor Dragonfly made a brief appearance as did the Convolulus Hawkmoth, a beautiful large moth which attracted quite a crowd.



A Swallow made a brief landing on a stick close by and a beautiful Egret could be seen seeing off his rivals in his territory.

Swallow at rest



There was a Little Ringed Plover at a distance as well as Shelduck chicks and 'dancing' Avocets.



Little Egret, Little Ringed Plover, Avocet and Shelduck chicks



Swallowtails - a bonus spot



A fantastic finish to a wonderful evening - feeding Spoonbills as the sun sets

The Swallowtail butterflies were a bonus as were the Spoonbills, spotted regularly throughout the day as they flew overhead and finally when they landed on the scrape.

A very successful evening...Other sightings were Cranes, Barn Owl, Red Deer, Hares and Konik ponies, however, they were all too far away to photograph successfully, but very impressive to watch.

Images / *Lyn Clarkson*

Introduced alien species and their impact on native wildlife, has been an interest of mine for as long as I can recall. I have always believed that such introductions are very unwise. This is only too obvious when one considers such introductions as Mink and Japanese Knotweed. However, other introductions have had a much less negative effect on our native wildlife, and are now accepted as part of our local nature. Rabbits are considered to have had a positive effect on some heathland species. There can also be few naturalists that do not welcome an encounter with a Little Owl, an introduced bird, now considered as British.

In April, I decided that it was high time that I tracked down another, more elusive introduction, the Mandarin duck *Aix galericulata*. It is at least two years since I last saw a Mandarin in Norfolk, even though they are now resident and breeding. One would think that this small duck, with its strikingly colourful plumage, would be easy to see. This is certainly not the case, as Mandarins are quite secretive,



An exotic duck quietly becoming part of Norfolk's wildlife



A contrasting pair of Mandarins

and spend much of their time in shady areas, where overhanging branches give them cover. Unlike most other ducks, they are quite happy in mature woodland, and are very agile fliers, easily able to dodge through the branches of trees, and perching readily on branches, aided by well developed claws. Nesting sites, in tree cavities, can be some distance from water and are often 5 to 10

metres above ground level. They especially favour lakes and larger rivers with overhanging mature trees. Felbrigg and Santon Downham are two favoured locations. The population of breeding pairs in England is estimated to be 2300, which is at least twice as many as the estimated population of that other introduction, the Egyptian Goose *Alopochen aegyptiaca*. I only wish I could see as many Mandarins as Egyptian Geese.

Images / Hans Watson

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee (Sunday 5th June) was one of lead-coloured skies and misty drizzle – a typical jubilee festive day! However, in a corner of north-east Norfolk, near the village of Trimmingham, there was a rainbow of colours. Birder, Andrew Chamberlin, couldn't believe his eyes; he was looking at not one but four European Bee-eaters *Merops apiaster* in all their finery. Word was sent out on the various social media channels and Mark Clements was one of the early birders to 'capture' an image (see front cover) of a Bee-eater sitting on the wires. The birds were busily feeding – diving off the wires to capture a 'bee' and then to return to the wires. Initially they were spread out so a group shot was not possible.



European Bee-eater - will it be a new breeding bird for Norfolk?

Images / Francis Farrow

A couple of days later the Bee-eaters were showing interest in the sandy face of a small quarry, southeast of Trimmingham. By the 9th June exploratory investigations and excavations were being made. On 12th June I visited the site where RSPB, the North East Norfolk Bird Club and other local birders were setting up monitoring of the site as the signs for breeding at the quarry were very positive. A select few volunteers were working 2 hour shifts for the next few days to make sure the birds were not disturbed. By 15th June there were seven birds present, which included at least two established pairs. On 16th June the news was released to the public through 'Springwatch' that evening, which was coming live from Wild Ken Hill in the west of the county. On 17th June the public were allowed on to the field next to the quarry and thanks must go to the local landowner, Mr. Gotts, for making the viewing possible. Once open to the public more volunteers from the NENBC started covering the monitoring along with additional RSPB staff members. The monitoring, as I write in the second week of July, covers 24 hrs as it was suspected that the two original pairs were sitting on eggs. Bee-eaters are near-passerines and have an asynchronous hatching strategy ie that as soon as they lay an egg they start incubating, which



means that the young will hatch at various times so will be at different ages as seen in owls. Nests can contain typically between five and eight eggs. From time to time an eighth bird has been seen and non-breeding birds will help feed the young of the established pairs that bond for life. The Bee-eaters are a delight to watch as they dive, glide, hover and dart about after flying insects. Their diet has included

various butterflies and dragonflies as well as bees. To be successful in breeding the weather will play a major part as will avoiding potential predators for the period of incubation and fledging. Young Kestrels have already been observed sitting around the nest-holes. An attempt at breeding in Nottinghamshire in 2017 ended in failure due to a combination of poor weather and nearby predators such as Sparrowhawks, Kestrels and Foxes. The same factors will apply to the Trimmingham birds but with a great deal of luck by the time you are reading this we may know if a Norfolk first has been achieved and European Bee-eaters have successfully bred. Thousands of people have visited the Trimmingham site and these exotic visitors have delighted all with their dashing flight and distinctive melodic calls.

Wensum wonders!

Dennis Willis



A day in the Wensum valley started somewhat disappointing as at three locations on the upper river I failed to see any minnows or this year's fish fry. This all changed on arriving at Norfolk Flyfishers Club lake when as entering the site we were greeted by an all-white wagtail. A first time sighting for Judy and I and with no zoom lens to get a close up photo. a short distant video, however, showed its distinctive flight. My

ornithological friends advise me it is most probably leucistic as from the photo the eyes are dark.

On departure there was another first for us when a male *Amblyjoppa proteus* landed on the windscreen of the car. A search revealed that this species is the only ichneumon wasp to parasitise the Elephant Hawk Moth caterpillar. Our friends at Wheatfen have spotted it before - ([The Legend of Amblyjoppa - Wheatfen Nature Reserve](#)).

Images / *Dennis Willis*

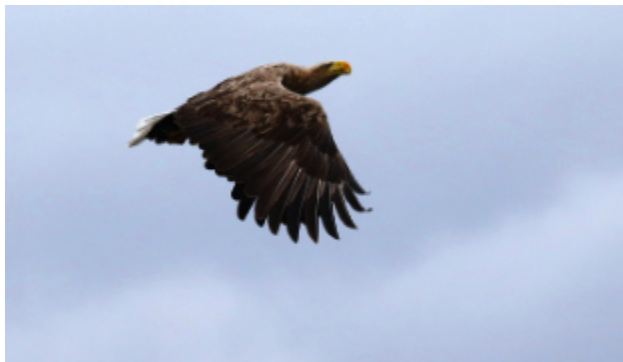


Male *Amblyjoppa proteus*

A recent week spent up on Mull in the Western Isles was very enjoyable, it also fulfilled a long awaited wish to see and photograph the majestic White-tailed Sea Eagle. This was achieved by booking a boat trip that specialises in taking you out to see these fabulous birds. The skipper Martin, has been doing these eagle trips for a number of years now, and the birds know his boat 'The Lady Jayne' and fly out to greet you in the middle of the loch, circling round until a fish is thrown from the boat. Then, in a leg dangling, awe inspiring swooping glide the fish is plucked from the water. Seeing these huge birds up close brings home to you just how large they are, with a seven to eight foot wingspan; they are true giants of the bird World. Five different eagles were seen in the course of the three hour trip, and all came down to take a fish, a truly memorable experience.

During the week we also saw and photographed Hen Harrier, Short-eared Owl, Great Northern Diver, Golden Eagle, Dipper, Black Guillemot, Otter, and Red Deer. The weather was typically Scottish, mist, rain, and wind, but at least we were spared the dreaded midges, our trip was too early for them. The rain had one good thing going for it, the many waterfalls on the island were spectacular, and very photogenic.

Images / *Tony Howes*



White-tailed Eagle retrieving a fish and showing off its spectacular wings

Nature Gallery

2022

Hairy Rove Beetle *Creophilus maxillosus*. This widespread but infrequent beetle was found in grass - 06 May, Gramborough Hill, Salthouse / *John Furse*



A pretty-looking fly with a nasty bite - Square-spot Deerfly *Chrysops viduatus*, 14 June, Beeston Common / *Francis Farrow*



Marsh Warbler on Beeston Common, 15 June. It was in the vicinity of the pond and spent much of the day there. This is similar behaviour to one that turned up 19 June, 2017 / *Mark Clements*

Silver-washed Fritillary gynandromorph showing normal orange male wing and brown form *valezina* female wing - Foxley Wood 04 July / *Bernard Webb*



Not quite the newcomer

Kath Claydon

I was very interested to read Cornel Howells' article 'A newcomer to Norfolk' on Yellow Buttonweed *Cotula coronopifolia* in the May 22 edition of *The Norfolk Natterjack*.

I have noted this plant around Cley Marshes NWT Reserve for many years, since at least 2013, mainly around Keeper's Marsh but it is elsewhere on the reserve. It's usually in flower in early spring, becoming much more noticeable by early summer.



Yellow Buttonweed Image / Internet

Sneezewort

Francis Farrow



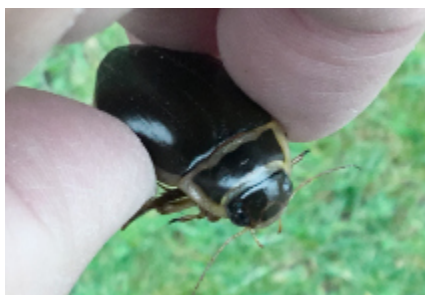
Image / Francis Farrow

Sneezewort *Achillea ptarmica* is a perennial plant that grows in damp neutral to acid grassland - a fairly restricted habitat nowadays in Norfolk. 'A Flora of Norfolk' (Becket & Bull, 1999) states that it is 'never common' also the Rev. Trimmer's flora (1866) states 'not common'. Its a plant that I have known from Beeston Common since 1986 but it may have existed at the site before then.

Diving Beetles

Tim Peet

During a brief visit to Hickling, and incidental to a few moths, light trapping produced remarkable numbers of Great Silver Water Beetle *Hydrophilus piceus*, six in one night and one *Dytiscus* sp.



Hydrophilus piceus and *Dytiscus* sp. From Hickling moth trap.

Images / Tim Peet

The reinforcement with clay of the banks around the broad seems to have provided a good substrate, and has also benefited the Fen Mason wasp.

In the last piece I wrote for The Norfolk Natterjack (on the Tasmanian Eucalyptus Beetle) I started by saying that my moth trap never seems to catch any rare moths. This was spectacularly disproved early on 29th June 2022 when I spotted an unfamiliar macro-moth perched next to the lampholder of my 80W MV trap sited next to the conservatory in my back garden at West Runton.

At first I thought it was a species of emerald (Geometridae) as it looked vaguely green and had parallel pale cross bars not unlike a Common Emerald *Hemithea aestivaria*. I didn't have any pots immediately to hand and was keen to move the trap to a shaded part of the garden, away from hungry robins and out of the rising sun. Having done this I went back indoors to have breakfast and only then did I get some pots. Back at the trap it looked at first as if the 'emerald' had flown off but then I saw that it had dropped down onto the perspex sheets. The moth was carefully potted and taken indoors for a closer examination. I decided that it had to be an emerald of some kind but was clearly none of the British species, including the adventive Herb Emerald *Microloxia herbaria* which turned up at Costessey in 2016. What to do?



Olive Crescent trapped at West Runton
Image / Andrew Duff

It's an interesting commentary on modern times that my first instinct was to take a photograph of the moth and ask for opinions from friends on social media. I posted a slightly blurry photo to a local moth-ers WhatsApp group saying that the moth was some kind of emerald which didn't match anything in our field guides. Fortunately my friend Richard Eagling was on the ball and quickly identified it as an Olive Crescent *Trisateles emortualis* which he thought could be new for Norfolk. I went back to my field guides and there it was, hiding in plain sight near the end of the book in the family Erebidae (tigers, footmen, fan-foots and allies) and despite its frail appearance having nothing whatever to do with the geometers. The moral of this story, actually two morals, are: 1. always have pots to hand when first checking a moth trap; and 2. faced with something unfamiliar, first check your field guide thoroughly rather than taking the lazy option of rushing to social media!

I found watching the following slightly gruesome episode fascinating. It took place on the flat earth at the top of the steps by the bunker at Walsey Hills NOA, on 17th June. The four photos show, variously, 1 - the Red-banded Sand Wasp *Ammophila subulosa* carrying/dragging the Noctuid moth larva (Hebrew Character) across the ground; 2 - leaving the near-dead larva (ie paralysed), whilst it digs a hole; 3 - pulling it in backwards and finally 4 - the hole completely concealed. This took about ten minutes from start to finish. The paralysed caterpillar will contain an egg from the wasp and remain alive so that the wasp larva on hatching will have fresh food.



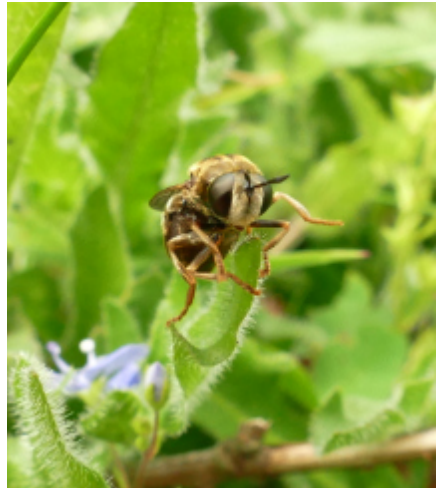
Red-banded Sand Wasp preparing nest

Readers of the 'Norfolk's Wonderful 150' book will have encountered the item regarding the hoverfly *Microdon devius*. We are very fortunate to have a colony of this scarce hoverfly at Foulden Common in West Norfolk; see also Jeremy Bartlett's item in Natterjack August 21.

This hoverfly has an interesting association with, and dependency upon, the nests of the yellow ant *Lasius flavus*, with the larvae of *Microdon devius* feeding upon the ant larvae and pupae.

On the 15th of May we visited Thompson Common prior to the Norfolk Fungus Study Group foray to be held there. Whilst there we noticed a number of impressive ant mounds.

During the foray on the 21st May, Tony Moverley pointed out to Gill an interesting looking fly crawling amongst the grass on an ant nest. Gill immediately recognised this specimen as being a *Microdon* hoverfly and called me across to look at it. These are not particularly active insects so we were able to capture some nice photos.



Thompson Common Fungus Foray turns up scarce hoverly - *Microdon devius*

We were fairly confident of the field identification of *Microdon devius* as we were able to see the important distinguishing features and had previously observed them at Foulden Common.

This find prompted us to look carefully at the ant nests in the vicinity which to our delight produced a total of 12 specimens.

Images / Steve & Gill Judd

At home we were able to check our provisional identification against our books and online resources. Our identification was confirmed by both Roger Morris and Chris Sellen of the British Hoverfly Recording Scheme.

Having checked with the county recorder and the NBN atlas, as well as the British Hoverfly Recording Scheme, we have found no previous record of this hoverfly at Thompson Common.

This hoverfly is listed as being both nationally scarce and near endangered, in particular in light of its dependence upon these ant nests which are vulnerable to changes in grassland management.

It is heartening to find a scarce hoverfly species in a previously unrecorded location and appearing to have a reasonable population. This being a Norfolk Wildlife Trust reserve, it is likely to continue to be sensitively managed.

References:

Ball S. and Morris R. Britain's Hoverflies. A Field Guide (second edition) WILDGuides. Princeton University Press, Princeton & Woodstock.

Stubbs A. and Falk S. British Hoverflies. (second edition) BENHS.

NNNS 2021, Norfolk's Wonderful 150. Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists Society, Norwich.

NNNS 2021, Natterjack (154). Norfolk and Norwich Naturalists Society, Norwich.

Morris & Sellen 2022. Personal communication and confirmation of ID from Roger Morris & Chris Sellen via the UK hoverflies Facebook group.

Hodge 2022. Personal communication from Tim Hodge.

Red-veined Darter

Francis Farrow

As I walked through the central valley marsh of Beeston Common, near Sheringham on June 8th a very pale dragonfly fluttered up from the reeds and flew a short distance before landing on a grass stem. From its very tentative flying ability and its glossy wings I suspected that it had only recently emerged, probably from one of the small marshy pools. I managed to move so that I could get a side view and clearly saw the two tone - red and blue eye and that the thorax showed pale blue panels. This and the pale colour confirmed that it was a female



Red-veined Darter

Image / *Francis Farrow*

Red-veined Darter. Cream stripes on its legs also indicated that it was an immature insect. Adrian Parr (British Dragonfly Society) commented that it was the first locally-bred individual to have been reported in Britain so far this year.

In the late afternoon of 5th May, I visited my 'patch', Gramborough Hill, Salt-house, for the second time that day. Approaching what I've named the 'Bowl' (it is a semi-circular dell and contains some mature trees), I noticed an unfamiliar insect with distinctive antennae, which I supposed was a Bee ! (Before readers start to scoff and titter at my acknowledged ineptitude, I will quote from the species account in *British Soldierflies and their Allies* (Stubbs & Drake, 2nd ed. 2014): "a good mimic of a hive bee").

It was on a leaf of one of the few fully-grown Alexanders in this area of the site that had not been deliberately trampled by a wrong-headed local. My procedure is as the cowboy's maxim: 'shoot first, and ask the ID later'. I took two bursts of shots, then shifted slightly for a different angle, at which it flew away, not to be seen again, despite a brief check of the immediate environs. At this point, I had (obviously) not realised the 'importance' of obtaining further photographic evidence. Its ID was emailed to me later that evening.

Long-horned General *Stratiomys longicornis* (a male and a Soldier Fly) – only 4 previous records for Norfolk. The 2nd for East Norfolk with the nearest previous record some 40 miles away. (1st record nationally for 2022.).

Needless to say, I searched thoroughly the next day, without success. I have seen Flecked General *S. singularior* on Alexanders several times, over several years, within 20 metres of where I found this rare beast. On reading, I learn that it frequents saltmarsh, grazing meadow and brackish pools – the latter two of which are nearby.

For those who have not seen them, Steven Falk's fabulous Flickr photos (of many groups of Insects) are invaluable: e.g. [Stratiomys longicornis \(Long-horned General\) | Flickr](#)



Long-horned General *Stratiomys longicornis*

My thanks are due (locally) to Nick Owens and Tony Irwin for their ID percipience and alerting me to this marvellous creature's rarity, and to Mark Welch and Martin Harvey (further afield).

As part of my ongoing efforts to observe and record wildlife around Norwich, I have recently turned my attention to aphids, of which around 680 species are currently known to occur in Britain. Aphids have multi-stage (and sometimes rather complicated) life cycles - many species can reproduce both sexually and asexually with a mixture of winged and non-winged forms occurring. Quite a few aphid species also host alternate, meaning they can be found on different plants depending on the time of year.

I found that by focussing on plants with relatively small numbers of associated species and using resources such as the book "Aphids on deciduous trees" (Dixon and Thieme) and the excellent Influential Points website: (https://influentialpoints.com/Gallery/Aphid_genera.htm) I have begun to build up a reasonable city aphid list, many of which have been seen on my daily walks into work and back. I have included pictures and some basic details of ten of the species I've seen recently to both illustrate the diversity of form and to highlight species that other naturalists might wish to seek out. My thanks go to Dave Appleton, Vanna Bartlett and county recorder J.I. Thacker for suggesting that I look for some of the species listed here.

1. Italian Alder Aphid *Crypturaphis grassii*



Whilst there is a winged form of this species, it is easiest to record by looking for round flattened insects on the host tree, which could easily be overlooked as scale insects. Of these round forms, viviparous apterae (the wingless form) are pale yellow with rows of spots, whilst oviparae (egg-laying females) have an orangey base colour and brown stripes. Italian Alder (*Alnus*

cordata) is frequently planted as a street tree around the city, as well as in some wetland habitats such as around Whitlingham Great Broad.

2. Common Lime Aphid *Eucallipterus tiliae*



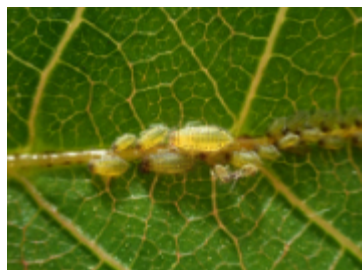
A striking species found on the Lime trees (*Tilia* sp.) that are commonly planted as street trees around the city. The body is pale yellow with black markings, and the eyes are bright red. Winged females are particularly distinctive with their long wings and black patches where the veins meet the wing edge.

3. Large Cat's-ear Aphid *Uroleucon hypochaeridis*



Members of this genus are fairly large, often red-dish-brown and are associated predominantly with various composite flowers (i.e. the daisy family). They can often be found in large groups along the stems of their host species. Although this species appears to be common on Cat's-ear (*Hypochaeris radicata*), two other *Uroleucon* species have also been recorded on that host so care is needed with the ID.

4. Large Walnut Aphid *Panaphis juglandis*



Only three aphid species are known to feed on Walnut (*Juglans* sp) in the UK, and of the three this one is easy to distinguish thanks partly to its long shape and brown markings, but also its habit of lining up along leaf veins on the upper-side of leaves, which is unusual for aphids. So far I have only found it on one churchyard Walnut tree in the city centre.

5. Woolly Beech Aphid *Phyllaphis fagi*



These pale yellow aphids are quite distinctive when seen on Beech on account of their ability to produce large amounts of white 'wax'. Large colonies can cause the leaves to curl downwards, giving an extra pointer to finding them. This species seems to prefer fairly young trees or hedge planting rather than mature trees.

6. Black-tailed Bamboo Aphid *Takecallis arundicolens*



There are five aphid species associated with Bamboo in the UK, three of which are in the genus *Takecallis*. This species appears to be the commonest locally. It is a very pale yellow with a black-tip to the cauda, giving it a black-tailed look. Of the other two, *T. arundinariae* has black marks along the back, whilst *T. taiwana* is apparently a rare species in the UK, mostly associated with young Bamboo shoots. I found *T. arundicolens* on Bamboo in a garden in Lakenham

7. Dogwood-Rosebay Willowherb Aphid *Aphis salicariae*



This species is a pinkish aphid with a slight pale 'bloom' and short black siphunculi (tubes on the rear of the abdomen) that gently curve outwards. Early generations occur on Dogwood, but I found it on the secondary host Rosebay Willowherb, where large numbers could be found on the underside of leaves lined up on either side of the midrib.

8. Black Willow Bark Aphid *Pterocomma salicis*



A black aphid with pale powdery spots and bright orange, swollen siphunculi. It occurs in colonies on young willow branches (apparently 2 year old growth is preferred). This species is common nearby at Whitlingham C.P. but I have also seen it at Wensum Park, at both sites occurring on long-leaved *Salix* species.

9. Tansy Aphid *Macrosiphoniella tanacetaria*



One of several common species associated with Tansy. A pink form does occur, but usually this is a green species with powdery white bloom along the ridges of the abdomen segments and a greyer look towards the head. The eyes are bright red and the antennae, legs and siphunculi are all black. I've seen it on Tansy in Wensum Park, along Marriott's Way and on Aylsham Road.

10. Tulip Tree Aphid *Illinoia liriodendri*



Four species of aphid have been recorded on Tulip Tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*), three generalist species and one specialist, *Illinoia liriodendri*. This species is a pale yellowish-green with a pointed cauda at the rear. The antennae and siphunculi are both dark along most of their length with the exception of paler bases. I found this species on a Tulip Tree on Pottergate in October 2021.

Dennis Willis has been conducting a project for the management of the parasite *Argulus* in a trout fishery in Norfolk for four years. The technique, developed by officers of the Environment Agency, involves putting black plastic pipes in the lake for the species to lay eggs upon. The pipes (100cms long x 110mm diameter) are retained in an upright position over wooden posts driven into the bed of the lake. The incubation period before the eggs hatch is water temperature dependant so the pipes are recovered every fourteen days and the eggs removed before hatching. It is a somewhat laborious task and whilst it would be virtually impractical to eradicate the parasite a significant reduction in the numbers of trout showing irritation by them has been observed.

The pipes however have attracted other species to use the surface for laying eggs upon and amongst these were red mites, limpets, and snails. Certain clusters of 'green' coloured eggs remained unidentified. A sample was brought to the Earlham Institute for DNA barcoding and with success was proven to be a species of Mayfly commonly known as a Pale Watery (*Baetis fustcatus*). Usually, this species tends to prefer a running water environment and its larvae had previously been found in the river Wensum flowing nearby so it came as somewhat of a surprise to find the eggs in a lake.

This use of pipes is a technique that would indicate another means of collecting samples of freshwater creatures. Caddis, leeches, algae, zooplankton, and chironomids have also been found on the pipes feeding on the various eggs and algae attached.



Clusters of green eggs

Strings of *Argulus* eggs

Other unknown white eggs

Plastic pipe used to collect the parasite *Argulus* eggs

Image / Dennis Willis



Successful field event at BCP

Mark Collins

Sunday 10th July was a glorious day for a field event at Broadland Country Park, and two dozen naturalists greatly enjoyed an introduction to this NNNs priority research area. Maps of the park's 16 ecological compartments and five study transects were handed around, together with a list of the five main ecosystems and an impressive account of the rarities and new records found there.

Sarah Burston, the Park Manager, warmly welcomed the group, which was led by Dave Weaver in a three-hour ramble through some of the hotspots. Beginning at the heathland, Dave explained that despite only having been cleared of pines nine years ago, it was already attracting nesting Nightjars and Woodlarks. There are plans for the reintroduction of the Silver-studded Blue butterfly in coming years, but first of all, we need to know more about the density of



Dave Weaver pointing out the 'new' heathland colonies of the brown ant *Lasius niger*, which tends the caterpillars.



Damsel and Dragonfly watching at the two-year old pond

Dave introduced his reptile refugia that were laid along the transects, already attracting Common Lizards and Slow-worms. Adders and Grass Snakes are also increasingly being seen.

Members enjoyed watching the many damselflies and dragonflies that are well-established in a pond dug out

just two years ago. Entomologists also had very good views of Small/Essex Skippers in the mire area, Silver-washed Fritillaries in the deciduous woods and some rare longhorn beetles, amongst many other species.

John Crouch, mammal specialist, pointed out fox footprints at the pond and described the many bat species found in the woods, noting how important old trees were for roosting and breeding. Of great interest were John's cut-open tennis balls, used for surveying nesting Harvest Mice.

Images / Hans Watson

Society Notes

Safeguarding Policy

This policy is in place to prevent harm coming to young people and vulnerable adults through activities of NNNS. The Lead Trustee for Safeguarding is Joe Harkness joe.harkness@live.co.uk who, along with the Chair tonyleech3@gmail.com, should be contacted by anyone with safeguarding concerns. A full statement of policy and procedures can be found on the Society's website.



Events Planning

If you are interested in contributing to the planning of NNNS events (talks, field meetings etc.) please contact NNNS Chair Tony Leech by email, tonyleech3@gmail.com from whom more details can be obtained.



Are you missing out?

When we get a list of events we sometimes enter the dates in a diary or add to the calendar but then as we are all busy we often as not forget to check or have mislaid the list. There is a way to receive an event reminder or other notification and many of the NNNS membership have signed up for it. This is to give an email address, which can then be used to speedily send out information about the Society such as up and coming events. To send your email address go to the NNNS web page (www.nnns.org.uk) click on Social Media then Email and follow the on-screen instructions or alternatively copy the following link into your browser: <http://nnns.org.uk/wp/email/#main> which will open at the email page. If you wish to skip all the "explanation" and just link directly to the email form enter: <https://tinyurl.com/email-nnns> Fill in the three line form, click the permission box then the subscribe box and you are done. For information about NNNS privacy practices please visit the website.





The next issue of 'The Norfolk Natterjack' will be
November 2022

Please send all
articles / notes and photographic material
to the editor as soon as possible by
October 1st 2022 to the following address:

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

Email: francis.farrow@btinternet.com

All photographs / images are very welcome, especially to accompany an article or document a record, occasionally however, because of space limitations, preference may have to be given to Norfolk-based images, or to those subjects depicting interesting or unusual behaviour, or are less commonly (or rarely) seen in print.

Membership subscriptions

The N&NNS membership year runs from 1st April to 31st March.
During this time members will receive four copies of the quarterly newsletter, 'The Norfolk Natterjack', and annual copies of the Transactions of the Society, and the Norfolk Bird & Mammal Report. A full summer programme of excursions and a winter programme of talks are also organised annually.

New memberships and renewals can be made by credit card or 'PayPal' by visiting the Society's website at www.nnns.org.uk

Alternatively a cheque payable to
'Norfolk & Norwich Naturalist's Society' can be sent to:

Jim Froud, The Membership Secretary, Westward Ho, 4 Kingsley Road,
Norwich NR1 3RB

Current rates are £20 for individual, family and group memberships
(£30 for individuals living overseas).

The FSC - Forest Stewardship Council - label indicates that materials used in the production of this bulletin are recyclable and sustainably sourced.



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