



# ABINGTON NATUREWATCH

The Record  
2013

Records the activities of Abington Naturewatch for 2013. Includes records of sightings of the fauna and flora in Great and Little Abington, Cambridgeshire, as noted by members and covering several sectors: Life at Granta Park and in the River Granta, Birds, Amphibians & Reptiles, Mammals, Insects, Flora





1: Sunrise: Great Abington High Street – 26 Oct. (GW)



2: Sunset: Little Abington church – 8 Dec. (PB)

### Cover photos:

Marion's pond  
Granta Park in Spring time (GW)

### Photographs (all 2013 unless noted):

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4: River Granta – April (DF)





5: Linton Road Stubble Field – October 2005 (JM)



6: Railway Cutting - July 2006 (JM)



7: Upland Walk - June 2006 (PB)



8: River Sampling at the Ford - August 2006 (PB)



9: Upland Meadow - June 2007 (PB)



10: Roman Road – July 2007 (PB)



11: Heading Home - August 2007 (IG)



12: Stubble Walk – September 2007 (IG)

## 1. IN MEMORIAM – PATRICK ELDON DAUNT (1925 – 2013)

*The 2013 edition of the Record is dedicated to the memory of Pat Daunt.*

### ***Abington Naturewatch – Pat Daunt's inspiration***

Pat Daunt, who sadly passed away in early November, had aspirations to set up a Naturewatch Group in the village a long time back. He was a passionate and very experienced botanist and had been studying the flora of the area for a long time. The opportunity came following the Abington Parish Plan in 2003 which came up with an Action Plan including Environmental Projects. At a meeting Pat described his ideas for a village Naturewatch Group and signed up 30 people who were interested in joining.

Since then the group has become established and is thriving due to Pat's hard work and commitment. It is led by a project team who are principally the recorders of flora, birds, insects, mammals, amphibians and Rivercare. The group publishes a professional annual report, *The Record*, summarising the season's observations which is distributed to members and other county environmental groups.

Pat's main interest in flora, involved many botanical outings, much enjoyed by members, recording species in the Abington villages but he also held a very wide interest in nature and took part in as many of the Naturewatch outings as he could. All this time, and up until his death, he was generating and adding to a *Flora Abingtonia*, no mean achievement for a small village like ours. I printed a few copies of it in 2009 and, in time, this will be updated with all Pat's records since then. He was very keen on teaching others about botany and the classification of plants and his winter teach-ins were much appreciated by members as were his walks in the village looking at plants in diverse habitats.

He retired from the leadership of the group in October 2011 and the group presented him with a glass engraving of one of our favourite local wild plants, and a book entitled 'Wildflower Wonders of the World'.

*(Based on Jennifer Hirsh's dedication in the Village Newsletter.)*



13: Pat Daunt on his retirement as leader (JH)





14: Moth Night - June 2008 (PB)



15: Roman Road - July 2008 (PB)



16: River Sampling: Millennium Bridge - Sept.2008 (PB)



17: Plant Walk - August 2009 (PB)



18: Fen Drayton – 16 June 2010 (JH)



19: Bees in Audrey's Meadow – May 2011 (PB)



20: Pat's retirement – October 2011 (JH)



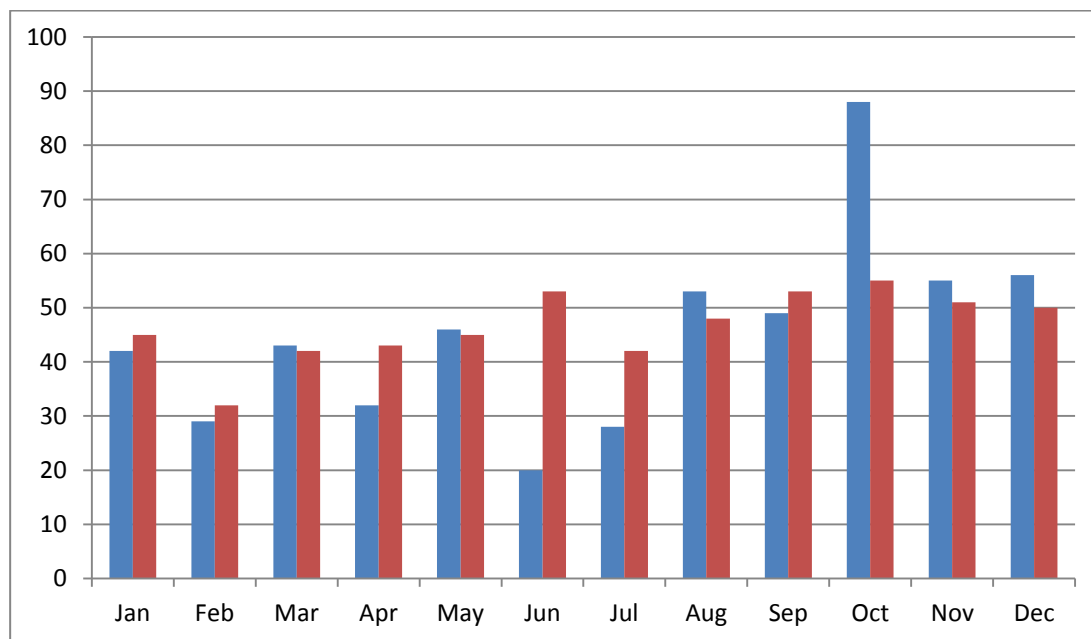
21: Butterflies at Heydon High Meadows - June 2012 (JH)



## 2. FOREWORD

### *I. 2013 Weather*

2013 has been a very different year, weather-wise, from the very wet year of 2012.



22: Monthly Rainfall in mm

Blue: Abington 2013, Red: 30 year average (1971 to 2000). Source Cambridge Botanic Garden.

Rainfall has been largely average but the largest effects on wildlife were the cold months of March and April, with temperatures only starting to rise by the end of May. In fact March had only five days where the temperature rose into double figures and we had snow in both March and April. The biggest result of this cold period was the reduced numbers of early insects which affected early bird broods and early sightings of butterflies. However the picture then changed with a warm and dry June with low rainfall continuing into July. Temperatures rose in July and August with odd days over 30 deg. C giving us large numbers of butterflies but moth numbers remained low. September was a dry month with normal temperatures but rain returned in October with nearly double the normal rainfall.

### *II. The 2013 Programme*

The Naturewatch programme for 2013 has again been very varied. On the plant side we had visits to Hildersham Woods in June, Granta Park and Fleam Dyke in July. As well as the RSPB Birdwatch, Naturewatch had its own local Birdwatch in May and a memorable visit to RSPB Lakenheath in June where the Hobbies and Swifts were spectacular. The summer of 2013 although delayed, was good for insects and we had excellent July visits to Fleam Dyke with large numbers of Chalkhill Blues, the Roman Road with Clouded Yellows and Paxton Pits where we were shown a newly discovered colony of the Norfolk Hawker dragonflies and Crested Newts. Full details of all these are in the reports.

The River sampling programme continued in April and June and confirms that the water in our river is of good quality.

In 2013 Naturewatch tried to involve more children in its activities but a visit to the Roman Road was unsuccessful. However our river event in September to celebrate World Rivers Day met with more success when we had several families visit the Institute to inspect samples of life taken from our river. Here the big attractions were the Signal Crayfish where we had both live and cooked examples.

Our autumn meeting in November saw a very interesting presentation on Invasive Species given by Dr Peter Brown of Anglia Ruskin University. Dr Brown discussed the positive and negative effects of Invasive species around the world and gave examples of local species such as the Harlequin Ladybird, Muntjac and Chinese water deer.

### ***III. Granta Park***

The area within Granta Park forms a significant part of the area of the Abingtons and up until now records of wildlife in the Park have come from Naturewatch members walking through. In 2013 Granta Park has become more interested in recording the wildlife and held discussions with Naturewatch. As a result of these, in 2014, co-ordinators in the park will be passing on their wildlife observations to Naturewatch for inclusion in the 2014 Record. This now gives us a circular area around the Abingtons for our observations and a more complete picture of our wildlife.

### ***IV. Ash Dieback***

In the autumn of 2012 there was country wide concern over ash dieback, *Chalara fraxinea*, and the effect it might have on our ash trees which form a major part of our local tree population. Naturewatch has kept a close watch on our local trees but no sign of the disease has been seen, which reflects what has also been seen nationally. However the threat could still be there and we will still need to keep a lookout.

### ***V. Naturewatch members***

The membership of Naturewatch has again stayed fairly stable but we are still keen to sign up new members, particularly younger ones. My thanks to all those who have reported their sightings. The results of these you will see in the Reports. The increase in mammal reports is especially pleasing. Please keep it up. Thanks also to the members of the Project Team for running the programme of events and their reports which are produced for the Record. The illness of Pat meant that we still needed to run the botanical visits and thanks are due to Jennifer Hirsh, Sally Turnidge and Lois Bull for helping with these.



23: River Granta - April (DF)

David Farrant

#### **Notes:**

1. In this document, GA stands for Great Abington and LA for Little Abington.
2. Expeditions outside the Abingtons are recorded separately in Section 11.
3. For contact details for all sectors, please refer to the back page.

### 3. WILDLIFE SUMMARY FROM GRANTA PARK

#### *I. Introduction*

Over the last few years more effort has been concentrated towards the wildlife on Granta Park. Staff from across the Park have joined in and benefited from events held by The Wildlife Trust as well as more informal arrangements. Such as volunteers meeting up to create loose piles of deadwood for use by reptiles and invertebrates or the otter monitoring group.

During 2014 we hope to expand on this further by partnering with Abington Naturewatch. Staff will be encouraged to report what they are seeing on their lunchtime walks and this in turn will be filtered back to Abington Naturewatch via several volunteers we now have in place.

#### *II. Calendar*

##### **i. June - Wildflower walk & bug hunt**

Great fun was had by those that came along to our wildflower walk and bug hunt. Laura from The Wildlife Trust led two sessions through the wildflower meadow on the Park looking at the different species. We also used sweep nets and bug pots to look at the invertebrate more closely. The first session was a group of children from our nursery who were very excited to get out on the Park and explore.



24: Wildflowers & Bugs - June

The second group was staff from across the Park. One of the highlights was finding a group of seven bee orchids. One of the attendees says 'I enjoyed it very much. It's good to give names to plants we admire every day.'

##### **ii. September – Bugs & reptiles move to Granta Park**

During September, Laura from The Wildlife Trust returned to Granta Park to run two workshops.

The first was with twenty-two children from our nursery who had great fun log rolling and searching for mini beasts. The Nursery Manager emailed us to say 'The morning with Laura was enjoyed by all the pre-school children and staff. The children had earlier anticipated what they hoped to find on the hunt and came back and painted pictures of the different types of bugs they found for their display. We have already started creating our own bug hotel in our wildlife garden and the extra information given to us from Laura was much appreciated. Thank you for an enjoyable morning.'



25: Bug hotel - September

During the second session, staff from across the Park came together to build two giant bug hotels in the woods, for use by invertebrates and reptiles. Good fun was had by those that came along and it proved a great opportunity for staff to get to know others from across the Park. The finished hotels looked very impressive for our first attempt.



### iii. November – Fungi Fun

Peter from The Wildlife Trust returned to Granta Park to run our Annual Fungi Walk. For a list of what they found, see below.

Peter has had one of the sightings confirmed as quite a rare toadstool, *Clitocybe truncicola*. It is a small white funnel toadstool that was collected from a decaying log. See photo.



26: Fungi Fun - November

#### LIST COMPILED BY PETER WALKER

SCIENTIFIC NAME	ENGLISH NAME	COMMENTS
<i>Auricularia auricula-judae</i>	Wood Jelly Ear	on dead branches
<i>Auricularia mesenterica</i>	Tripe fungus	on stumps & logs
<i>Agrocybe molesta</i> = <i>dura</i>	Bearded field cap	In soil among grass in wood
<i>Collybia cirrhata</i>	Piggyback Shanklet	Tiny on old <i>Inonotus hispidus</i>
<i>Coniophora puteana</i>	Wet Rot	Resupinate on dead branch
<i>Coprinus atramentarius</i>	Common Ink Cap	On grassy bank
<i>Coprinus disseminatus</i>	Crumble Cap /Fairy Ink Cap	Masses on stumps & buried roots
<i>Coprinus flocculosus</i> ??		On rotten log (not Sure)
<i>Coprinus micaceus</i>	Glistening Ink Cap	In litter in woodland
<i>Crepidotus cesatii</i>	? Oysterling	On twig
<i>Daldinia concentrica</i>	King Alfred's Cake	On fallen Ash branch
<i>Entoloma serceum</i> var <i>cinereopacum</i>	Silky Pink Gill	Dark brown in grass
<i>Galerina laevis</i> ??		Small grooved & orange in grass
<i>Galerina marginata</i> = <i>autumnalis</i>	Funeral Bell	On dead wood
<i>Hebeloma crustuliniforme</i>	Poison Pie	In grass
<i>Lepiota castanea</i>	Chestnut Dapperling	Small with brown scales & ring on stem
<i>Lipista nuda</i>	Wood Blewit	Violet blue very small specimen
<i>Meripilus giganteus</i>	Giant Polypore	Base of dead stump tufted brackets
<i>Mycena acicula</i>	Orange Bonnet	Tiny orange bonnet in mosses on stump
<i>Mycena flavo-alba</i>	Ivory Bonnet	Small white on logs in moss
<i>Mycena galericulata</i>	Common Bonnet	Trooping on logs
<i>Mycena hiemalis</i>		Tiny tan colour in moss on trees & logs
<i>Mycena olida</i>	Rancid bonnet	Tiny white in moss on tree trunks
<i>Mycena vtilis</i>	Snapping Bonnet	Greyish in litter
<i>Nectria cinnabarina</i>	Coral Spot	Pink blobs on twig
<i>Pluteus leoninus</i>	Lion Shield	Yellow cap pink spores on wood
<i>Pluteus umbrosus</i>	Velvet Shield	Dark crinkled velvety cap on wood
<i>Polyporus squamosus</i>	Dryads Saddle	Tan bracket on stump
<i>Psathyrella conopilus</i>	Conical Brittle-stem	In grass in wood
<i>Rhytisma acerinum</i>	Sycamore Tar Spot	On leaves
<i>Trametes vesicolor</i>	Turkey Tail	On dead wood
<i>Clitocybe truncicola</i>		decaying log

**iv. Throughout 2013 – Otter checks**

A small group of staff from the Park have continued to carry out a weekly check of several points along Granta Park's section of the river. Photos have been uploaded to our flickr page – <http://www.flickr.com/photos/grantaparkbiodiversitygroup>

We have also managed to capture a photo and several short videos using a motion camera. These files have also been uploaded to the flickr site.

**v. Owl boxes**

Early July, Peter Wilkinson (barn owl licence holder) visited the bird boxes on Granta Park. Unfortunately it didn't look like the Kestrel boxes had been used but a barn owl had definitely been visiting our A-frame box. We found a huge amount of pellets but unfortunately none of these had yet been shredded, leading to the conclusion it was not intended for nesting this year but just visiting. Our hopes are high for next year that it may decide to nest in this box.

Peter also found a baby stock dove feather inside a box that we know has previously used by stock doves for nesting. A new box for this site has now been erected due to the previous box falling apart.

Peter also gave us some useful advice with regard to the smaller bird boxes, many of which are in bad repair. New boxes have been ordered and a workshop was arranged for early 2014 to put them together.



27: Building bird boxes for 2014



28: Caseless Caddis – 27 April (PB)



29: Olive Mayfly (Baetidae) – 27 April (PB)



30: Minnow – 27 April (PB)



31: Olive Mayfly (Baetidae) – 27 April (PB)



32: Olive Mayfly (Baetidae) – 27 April (PB)



33: Olive Mayfly (Baetidae) – 27 April (PB)



34: River Sampling – 25 June (PB)



35: River Sampling – 25 June (PB)





## 4. RIVERCARE


### I. Overview

*Abington RiverCare* has two main interests: looking after the ‘home’ stretch of the river Granta and surveying its flora and fauna. *RiverCare* is a member of the national *RiverCare* organisation <http://www.rivercare.org.uk/> (see below).

On the last Saturday of each month, we take a walk along the river through the cricket and recreation fields and check its condition, while picking up litter along the bank and, if possible, from the river itself. [Volunteers are always welcome at the road bridge at 9:30 a.m.] The national *RiverCare* organization provides equipment, *BTCV* insurance and safety guidelines. They can also help us to arrange clearance of larger debris by the *Environment Agency*, which is responsible for the river through Abington. They usually respond quickly to requests to clear fallen trees and other blockages.

**Group Photos**



**About Abington RiverCare Group**

Abington Rivercare group carries out regular litter-picks along the River Granta in the parishes of Great and Little Abington; any more serious issues are noted and the appropriate authorities alerted. The group aims to enhance the river and its immediate surroundings both for the enjoyment of local people and for the benefit of wildlife. It also conducts regular flora, fauna and fish surveys.

The group meets at the ford (road bridge) at 09.30 a.m. on the last Saturday of each month. New members always welcome.

Abington RiverCare Group

Please Note: Location information is provided by Abington RiverCare Group's RiverCare Manager.

RiverCare members also take part in the Cam Valley Forum, a voluntary group, established in 2001, which works to protect and improve the environment of the River Cam and its tributaries – see <http://www.colc.co.uk/cambridge/cam.valley.forum/>.

### II. General news from the river

#### i. Access shoal

After discussion with the district council's Ecology Officer, Rob Mungovan, an application was submitted to the Environment Agency for Flood Control permission to construct an access shoal just upstream of the Millennium Bridge. This was approved in January and is likely to be constructed next summer.

#### ii. Trees

One or two trees on the river bank appear to be in need of attention and will probably be felled or trimmed back in the Spring.

### **III. River Sampling 2013**

This year we did all the sampling at a 30m stretch of the River Granta beside the Abington Cricket Meadow (as agreed with Rob Mungovan). Grid ref: TL534490.

3-minute kick-shuffle sampling technique:

- (a) 1 minute in riffle area with dark green mossy weed and large stones;
- (b) 1 minute in fast-flowing stony area with light green weed;
- (c) 1 minute in shallower gravel area

The Riverfly Partnership 'abundance' figures are as follows:

1 – 9	category A = (based on a quick count)
10–99	category B = (+ estimated number to nearest 10)
100–999	category C = (+ estimated number to nearest 100)
over 1000	category D = (+ estimated number to nearest 1000)

#### **i. Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> April 2013 10:30 – 11:30**

Cool and overcast with rain showers, river level = medium-high and fast-flowing

The following were identified from the sample:

#### **Riverfly Partnership species**

Freshwater shrimps gammarus – c. 20-30, all similar size of about 1 cm (B)

Mayfly ephemeridae 0

Blue-winged olive mayfly 25 (B)

Olive mayfly 50 (B)

Flat-bodied mayfly 0

Stoneflies 0

Caddisfly (cased and caseless) 0

#### **Other species**

Brown trout 1 – ca. 7 cm long, netted at (a) above

Beetle larvae 30

Leech 1

Snails 0

Dragonfly larvae 0

Damselfly larvae 0

#### **ii. Tuesday 25<sup>th</sup> June 2013 (evening)**

Recorded by: Anne Dunbar-Nobes and Peter Brunning

River low; fine, dry weather, cool

#### **Riverfly Partnership species**

**Cased caddisfly:** (A) Estimated number 2

**Caseless caddisfly:** (A) Estimated number 9

**Mayfly:** (A) Estimated number 2

**Blue-winged olive:** (B) Estimated number 50

**Flat bodied up wings:** Nil

**Olives:** (B) Estimated number 50

**Stoneflies:** Nil

**Gammarus** (Freshwater shrimp): (B) Estimated number 90

Hatches seen: 1 caddis fly

**Other species:** Riffle beetle, Signal crayfish (c. 10, about 1 cm long; 2 larger ones caught in separate dip in the river); White-clawed crayfish (?) (c. 5, about 1 cm long); various leeches

Interesting non-sightings (we've usually found these when monitoring elsewhere in the river): water snails, damselfly larvae, hairworms

**iii. Saturday 31<sup>st</sup> August 10:30**

Records not available.

**IV. Other Events****i. World Rivers Day**

World Rivers Day (<http://worldriversday.com/>) is celebrated each year all round the world. This year it was officially on 29th September but Naturewatch celebrated it on Saturday 28th September, while the Abington Institute was open for Jeremiah's Café.

The main objective of the day was to introduce the fauna of the river to younger members of the community and the event seemed pretty successful – we were even asked to repeat it! We had a steady stream of young visitors between 10:00 and midday.

We had maps of the local stretch of the River Granta and various leaflets and reference books. We had samples of creatures, taken from the river that morning, in trays and specimen pots to examine with magnifying glasses and a microscope. Some of the children came armed with nets – or borrowed ours – and gathered more specimens. We had fish, shrimp, a water boatman, a beetle and small signal crayfish as well as the usual mayfly larvae.

We had a few larger signal crayfish alive in a bucket and also some cooked ones. It is illegal to release or re-release signal crayfish into the wild but eating them is acceptable! Note, however, that the native white-clawed crayfish is a protected species and must not be disturbed. To tell the difference, please check:

[http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/Crayfish\\_Identify.pdf](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/static/documents/Leisure/Crayfish_Identify.pdf)

Peter Brunning



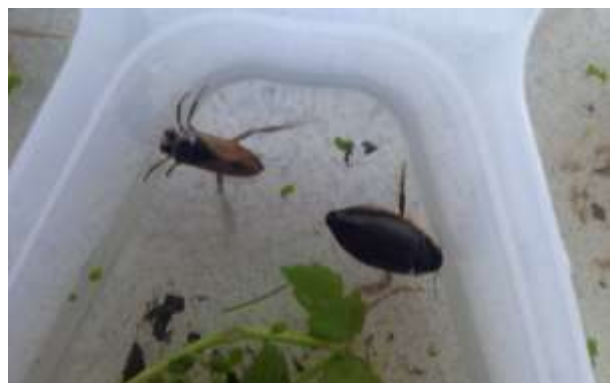
36: World Rivers Day – introduction to river life – 29 Sept. (PB)



37: Cooked Crayfish – 29 Sept. (PB)



38: River Samples – sorted – 29 Sept. (PB)



39: Water boatman, Water beetle – 29 Sept. (PB)





40: Lesser Redpoll – 12 January (CH)



41: Lesser Redpoll, Goldfinch - 5 January (AM)



42: Brambling - 5 January (AM)



43: Jay 13 February (PD)



44: Pheasant - 31 March (AM)



45: Siskins 20 March - (AM)



46: Tree Creeper – 24 March (AD-N)



47: Reed Buntings – 24 March (PD)

## 5. BIRDS

### *I. Members' Reports*

As ever, I am extremely grateful for all the reports I have received from many people during the year. Frequent or infrequent, detailed or simple, without them there would be no record. All reports are recorded in full; there follows a synopsis.

#### **i. January 2013**

The year began with a Treecreeper followed by further reports in the month in LA, a Cormorant fishing in the lake and then Bramblings and Lesser Redpolls being seen frequently in GA. Bullfinches were seen too on one occasion and 3 reports of Blackcaps. Fieldfares and Redwings appeared as did Sparrowhawks, both Green and Great Spotted Woodpeckers and there was one report of a Kingfisher. The RSPB Garden Birdwatch produced a list of 27 species from 13 recorders.

#### **ii. February 2013**

This was a good month for sightings of Siskins. There were numbers of reports of Greenfinches, Goldfinches and Reed Buntings. Sightings of Bramblings and Lesser Redpolls continued as well as a Yellowhammer. Buzzards, Sparrowhawks, Tawny Owls and Kestrels were recorded. A pair of Mallard spent time on a small garden pond.

#### **iii. March 2013**

During March both Siskins and Lesser Redpolls continued to be in evidence as did Reed Buntings and Bullfinches. A Stock Dove was seen and 2 Kingfishers. Great Crested Grebes were seen on the lake. Fieldfares and Redwings continued in some numbers.

#### **iv. April 2013**

Lesser Redpolls were seen throughout the month and Siskins and Fieldfares continued in evidence for the first week. Brambling were reported up to mid-month. Chiffchaffs were heard from 6th. A Barn Owl was seen on 5th and then a dead Barn Owl on 29th. There were several Buzzard sightings and two of Red Kites. A Kingfisher was spotted on 27th. The first Swallow reports came on 15th and House Martins on 24th. Several species of waterfowl seen on the lake. Blackcaps and Yellowhammers seen.

#### **v. May 2013**

A Lesser Whitethroat heard on 5<sup>th</sup>. First of many reports of Swifts on 6th. A pair of Tufted Duck were on the lake on 16th. Stock Doves seen and one report of a Kingfisher. Dramatic scene of 2 Hobbies attacking a Skylark; Corn Bunting and Wheatear reports.

Our local survey over the weekend of 25th, 26th and 27th produced a list of 48 species including Corn Bunting, Hobby, Jay, Turtle Dove, Wheatear and Whitethroat from 8 recorders.



48: Red Kite - 20 April (AM)

**vi. June 2013**

On 6th at least 5 young Blue Tits seen to leave nest in LA. In first week House Martins in the centre of the village around usual nesting sites, female Mallard and 6 ducklings near Millennium Bridge, 2 male Tufted Duck on the lake. On 10th a sighting of a Spotted Flycatcher in Granta Park. Mid-month: Corn Buntings heard south of LSA and 20+ Swifts high above village. Report of a male Brambling dead beneath window in GA and an Egyptian Goose on lake on 24th. Hobby seen over cricket field on 27th.

**vii. July 2013**

On 5th, 14 Swifts counted. On 11th Turtle Dove seen just downstream of road bridge and a Kingfisher near footbridge in Granta Park (and on 18th), also a Whitethroat. On 17th a Peregrine Falcon over South Grove Wood. Report that a tree surgeon found 2 Tawny Owl nests in trees in LA and so did not fell them. Turtle Dove in garden in South Road on 30th.

**viii. August 2013**

Kingfisher seen early morning at Millennium Bridge. Treecreeper seen in LA and a pair of Bullfinches in GA. By midmonth Swifts not seen for a week at least. Swallows and House Martins still present – on 22nd about 150 seen on electricity cables in GA. 18th:10 Barnacle Geese on lake. After note about Tawny Owls in July, young heard calling nearby. 28th Cormorant flying over lake. 31st House Martins in centre of village.

**ix. September 2013**

Herring Gull and Grey Wagtail at Granta Park on 2nd. Spotted Flycatcher in a garden in LA on 7th. Last Swallows reported on 21st. Young Tawny Owls heard calling at night in GA. On 25th: Buzzards soaring and mewing in Bourn Bridge Road area. A pair of Blackcaps in GA on 28th. Kingfisher seen from road bridge on 29th.

**x. October 2013**

On 1st a Kestrel in its regular place in a tree in LA. Two days later c120 Mallard around edge of lake, mostly in moult, and 12 Barnacle and 48 Canada Geese. Chiffchaff heard on 4th in LA. Meadow Pipit on Granta Park cricket ground. 2 Herons in Bourn Bridge Road fields. On 22nd a Kingfisher near sluice and a Redwing in Granta Park; on 26th a male Shoveler on lake.

**xi. November 2013**

Tawny Owl reported in GA on 4th. c30 Redwings seen in Lewis Crescent and c40 in Granta Park on 11th. On 12th a Kingfisher flying under Millennium Bridge and male Shoveler on lake, also 2 Blackheaded Gulls. 17th: Woodcock on ground in Sluice Wood, Granta Park. A Green Woodpecker on lawn in Cambridge Road for 30+ minutes. 5 Herring Gulls and a female Tufted on lake on 28th. On 30<sup>th</sup>, a Kingfisher seen from Millennium Bridge.

**xii. December 2013**

Granta Park: on 1st: Little Egret high in a tree near the sluice; a Treecreeper and 30 Blackheaded Gulls. On 2nd a Kingfisher flying upstream from sluice and 2 juvenile Common Gulls on cricket pitch. A little Egret downstream from Millennium Bridge and on 8th 50+ Fieldfares on Roman Road. Last Kingfisher report of the year on 9th near sluice. c50 Goldfinches in Lewis Crescent on 11th. There were c100 Fieldfares in fields behind Chalky Road on 26th and 6 Yellowhammers towards Hildersham Wood. Finally a female Sparrowhawk on 30th in Lewis Crescent.



## II. RSPB Big Garden Birdwatch 2013 - Abington records

Species in alphabetical order

<i>Species</i>	<i>No. of recorders</i>	<i>Total number seen</i>	<i>Top 12 by incidence</i>
Blackbird	11	44	3=
Blackcap	1	1	
Blue Tit	12	25	1=
Carrion Crow	5	9	
Chaffinch	11	37	3=
Coal Tit	7	8	10=
Collared Dove	8	31	7=
Dunnock	8	15	7=
Feral Pigeon	1	8	
Fieldfare	1	1	
Goldfinch	6	23	12
Great Tit	11	18	3=
Green Woodpecker	1	1	
Greenfinch	5	40	
House Sparrow	4	14	
Jackdaw	8	15	7=
Jay	4	5	
Kestrel	1	1	
Lesser Redpoll	1	1	
Longtailed Tit	7	31	10=
Magpie	4	5	
Pied Wagtail	1	1	
Robin	9	15	6
Rook	2	14	
Starling	5	29	
Woodpigeon	12	40	1=
Wren	3	4	

13 records received, 27 species noted.

## III. Abington Naturewatch Bird records: 25, 26 and 27 May 2013

Blackbird	House Martin
Blackcap	House Sparrow
Blue Tit	Jackdaw
Buzzard	Jay
Canada Goose	Kestrel
Carrion Crow	Longtailed Tit
Chaffinch	Magpie
Chiffchaff	Mallard
Coal Tit	Mistle Thrush
Collared Dove	Pheasant
Coot	Pied Wagtail
Corn Bunting	Robin
Dunnock	Rook
Feral Pigeon	Skylark
Garden Warbler	Song Thrush
Goldfinch	Starling
Great Crested Grebe	Swallow
Great Spotted Woodpecker	Swift
Great Tit	Turtle Dove
Greenfinch	Wheatear
Green Woodpecker	Woodpigeon
Greylag Goose	Wren
Hobby	Yellowhammer

8 reports received. 46 species recorded in all.

## IV. Outings

Please note that Reports of Outings can be found in Section 11.

Derek Turnidge 18.1.14



49: Great Spotted Woodpeckers: young/ red cap - 1 July (GS)



50: Egyptian Goose - 24 June (AM)



51: Egyptian Goose - 24 June (AM)



52: Shoveler Duck - 19 November (AM)



53: Chiffchaff - 13 October (AM)



## 6. REPTILES & AMPHIBIANS

Records were received over the amphibian/reptile season (March to October 2013) from 5 ponds and gardens in the Abingtons. Unlike last year, there were no reports of Common Lizards, but, as in previous years, there was steady reporting of Grass Snakes and Common Newts throughout the period. Frogs and frog spawn were reported in only one pond, while toads and toad spawn were reported from another. A goal for next year is to encourage more Abington pond-owners to send in their sightings, and to obtain records from Granta Park (just one received this year).

Date	What	Where	Comments
8 March	Common newt	Cambridge Road, LA	First sighting this Spring
10 April	Common frog	Linton Road, GA	First appearance of frogs
11 April	Common newt	Cambridge Road, LA	
12 April	Frog spawn	Linton Road, GA	First frogspawn in pond
13 April	3 common newts	South Road, GA	
13 April	2 toads	South Road, GA	Piggy-backing in water at pond-edge, eyes just showing.
13 April	Frogs and frogspawn	Linton Road, GA)	Lots of spawn, been present for a week or so
15 April	2 grass snakes	Cambridge Road, LA	Both 1 metre long, slim. Enjoying sun and in pond
16 April	2 grass snakes	Cambridge Road, LA	2 Grass Snakes sunning themselves on top of a low conifer bush next to the pond
19 April	4 toads	South Road, GA	2 pairs both piggy-backing in amongst water weed. At least 4 newts seen regularly.
20, 21 April	Grass snake	High Street, GA	Swimming in pond, basking in sun on stone beside pond
25 April	Grass snake	South Road, GA	Sunning itself on water's edge
25 April	Common newts	South Road, GA	At least 6, some with pinkish underbellies, all very active
28 April	Toad spawn	South Road, GA	Well-developed spawn found among surface weed, with elongated, wriggling tadpoles ready to break free
28 April	7 adult newts	High Street, LA	Newts found and counted during pond maintenance
1 May	2 grass snakes in pond	High Street, GA	One very brown, the other much greener
3 May	Grass snake	South Road, GA	Grass snake sunning itself by greenhouse beside compost heaps
3 May	Toad tadpoles	South Road, GA	Tadpoles have eaten their way out of the strands of jelly and are now free-swimming, but very tiny.
5 May	4 smooth newts	Cambridge Road, LA	
6 May	At least 12 adult newts	South Road, GA	Lots of activity, males pursuing females
6 May	Young grass snake	South Road, GA	Young, slim grass snake in pond
18 May	Tadpoles	High Street, GA	Uncertain if frog or toad tadpoles as spawn not seen
1 June	Small grass snake	High Street, GA	
3 June	Newts and one grass snake in pond	Cambridge Road, LA	Newts always present but snake not seen for some while
20 June	1 very young grass	South Road, GA	Very young (thickness of a bootlace),



	snake		found dead near driveway
24 June	Grass Snakes	Granta Park, behind cricket pavilion	Unknown number, unnamed reporter
12 July	1 young grass snake	South Road, GA	Small and lean
13 July	Baby toads	South Road, GA	Small number, seen swimming round edge of pond, occasionally crossing the pond. Many probably predated by grass snakes
13 July	Frog	South Road, GA	1 young frog (see photo)
13 July	Adult toad	South Road, GA	Large yellowish toad, with dark spots seen swimming along bottom of pond to roots of lesser spearwort
13 July	Common newts	South Road, GA	17 counted in pond – very clear water, easy to see them on bottom, quite varied in colour (light/dark brown)
Mid-August	Large toad	South Road, GA	Digging itself deeply into soil of raised flowerbed. Completely covered itself (hibernation?).
24 Sept	2 grass snakes	Cambridge Road, LA	Both about 90 cm long.



54: Grass snakes on conifer – 19 April (DT)



55: Frogspawn – 13 April (CH)



56: Common Frog, garden pond - 13 July (AD-N)

## 7. MAMMALS

There have been 68 reports of mammals in 2013, which is a big increase on the previous year, giving a better indication of the species present in the area of Great and Little Abington including Granta Park. We hope members will continue reporting at this level and more, since with the inclusion of Granta Park reporting in 2014 we will have an even better picture of mammals in the village.

Foxes and grey squirrels have been regularly reported and are apparently thriving in the area, and there have been more sightings of hares and hedgehogs this year which is interesting because they are considered endangered species. However badgers do not appear to live nearby since the only report was of one dead by the roadside.

Muntjac deer have also been regularly reported, although these are an invasive species and maybe not so welcome.

There have been very few reports of bats generally, and it seems they may not have survived so well in the cold wet spring due to the absence of insects in that period.

One of the most exciting reports came from Granta Park in September, namely photographic evidence of otters captured by motion sensitive cameras, plus identifiable droppings (spraints).

Species	Location	Date	Abundance	Comments
Fox	Millennium bridge	10/02/2013	1	
Stoat	High St, Abington	16/03/2013	1	
Muntjac deer	Top of South Road	18/03/2013	1	
Muntjac deer	4 Went ways roundabout	21/03/2013	2	
Hare	South Road	24/03/2013	4	AM
Fox	South Road	01/04/2013	1	
Fox	Hildersham Wood	02/04/2013	1	
Short-tailed vole	Garden, Cambridge Rd	03/04/2013	2	
Grey squirrel	Garden, Cambridge Rd	03/04/2013	2	Regular visitors
Mole	Garden, Cambridge Rd	03/04/2013	2	Mole activity only seen
Roe deer	Hildersham Wood	02/04/2013	2	
Fox	Little Abington Church	03/04/2013	1	
Grey squirrel	Garden	03/04/2013	3	
Badger	Side of old A11	06/04/2013	1	Dead at side of road
Fox	Sluice wood	06/04/2013	1	
Hare	Granta Park	07/04/2013	1	
Fox	Side of old A11	11/04/2013	1	Dead in ditch by side of road
Hare	Corner of North/South Road	16/04/2013	1	Dead by side of road
Fallow deer	Field in front of Hildersham Wood	17/04/2013	10	8 lying down 2 on watch
Fox	South Grove woods	25/04/2013	1	Seen in evening
Bat	Garden BBR	29/04/2013	1	Seen in evening
Muntjac deer	North Road	01/05/2013	1	Living in copse
Muntjac deer	Old Carriage Track, Bourn Bridge Road	30/04/2013	1	AM
Hedgehog	High St, Abington	01/05/2013	1	Evening
Bat	Garden, Cambridge Rd	01/05/2013	1	Possible pipistrelle
Common shrew	Garden, Cambridge Rd	02/05/2013	2	Dead-brought in by cat

Pygmy shrew	Garden, Cambridge Rd	02/05/2013	1	Dead-brought in by cat
Fox & Cubs	Edge Granta Park	15/05/2013	4	Afternoon
Large bat	Garden, Cambridge Rd	22/05/2013	1	Evening
Brown hare	Granta Park	26/05/2013	1	Evening
Muntjac deer	Temple, BB Road	27/05/2013	1	Morning
Muntjac deer	Grange Farm	27/5 to 05/06	1	Hearsay
Roe deer	Grange Farm		1	Hearsay
Stoat	Grange Farm		1	Hearsay
Hares	Granta Park	03/06/2013	2	Field behind cafe.
Hedgehog	Garden, Cambridge Rd	06/06/2013	1	
Red fox	Chalky Road	11/06/2013	1	
Muntjac deer	Outside Abington Hall	11/06/2013	1	
Bat	Abington	13/06/2013	2	Garden
Hedgehog	Abington	17/06/2013	1	Frequent garden visitor
Hares	Abington Park Farm	19/06/2013	2	Evening
Muntjac deer	Church Lane	20/06/2013	1	Garden
Red fox	Granta Park	27/06/2013	1	Afternoon
Hedgehog	Garden, Cambridge Rd	08/07/2013	1	Signs in garden
Fox	Garden, Cambridge Rd	09/07/2013	1	Passed by end of garden
Common vole	Garden, Cambridge Rd	10/07/2013	1	Dead
Hare	Cricket pitch, Granta Park	10/07/2013	1	
Wood mouse	Garden, High Street	11/07/2013	1	(see photo)
Fox	BBR	21/08/2013	1	Ran across back lawn
Grey squirrels	Garden, Cambridge Rd	31/08/2013	< 2	
Shorttailed vole	Garden, Cambridge Rd	31/08/2013	1	
Hedgehog	Garden, Cambridge Rd	31/08/2013	< 1	
Bats	Garden, Cambridge Rd	31/08/2013	< 3	
Noctule bat	Garden, Cambridge Rd	31/08/2013	1	Used bat detector
Hare	Cricket pitch, Granta Park	01/09/2013	1	
Hares	Cricket pitch, Granta Park	02/09/2013	3	
Hedgehog	Church Lane/Westfield	05/09/2013	1	Crossing road to garden
Otters	Granta Park	24/09/2013	?	Photos of otters + droppings
Fox	Cutting Rd/Old RW line	08/10/2013	1	
Hedgehogs	Garden 51 High St.	Over summer	3	
Hedgehogs	Church Close	Over summer	2	
Hedgehog	Church Lane	29/09/2013	1	
Hedgehog	Meadow Walk	07/11/2013	1	Under nourished - taken to Hedgehog hospital
Fox	Fields near South Grove	17/11/2013	1	Well-nourished specimen
Muntjac deer	Old Railway line	17/11/2013	<1	Evidence of use as resting place
Fox	TWI/Snowdrop Wood	09/10/2013	1	In long grass
Fox	TWI/Snowdrop Wood	04/11/2013	1	Resting in long grass
Fox	TWI/Snowdrop Wood	13/11/2013	1	
Hedgehog	Garden, Cambridge Rd	11/12/2013	1	6am in garden
Hedgehogs	Church Close	Thru Nov	<1	

Gill Smith





57: Wood mouse - 11 July (JH)



58: Wood mouse - 11 July (JH)



59: Hare - 1 September (GW)



60: Hedgehog - 29 September (PB)



61: Squirrel - 22 January 2007 (PB)





62: Early Bumblebee - 29 April (JH)



63: Bumblebees on knapweed - 10 August (JH)



64: Large Red Damselflies mating - 6 June (JH)



65: Common Darter - August (LM)



66: Burnet Moth - 18 July (JH)



67: Burnet Moth - 27 July (JH)



68: Mullein Moth caterpillar - 10 July (JH)



69: Pine hawk-moth caterpillar – 29 September (AD-N)

## 8. INSECTS

This report covers butterflies, moths, bees, dragonflies and damselflies, ladybirds. These are the groups that members recognize and can usually identify. Other invertebrates, which are hardly ever reported or identified, are also mentioned at the end.

### I. Weather

The weather is the most important factor that affects changes in our insect populations and observations from one year to the next.

2013 was less extreme than 2012 which was the wettest year since records began (as recorded by the Cambridge University Botanic Garden).

<i>Year start</i>	<i>Mild</i>
January	Wintery spell mid-month and a significant snowfall and many frosts
February	Dry with little rain or snow but cool days
March	Coldest since 1962, most of precipitation was snow
April	Cooler than normal, drier than average month
May	Spring arrived at last but ground frosts at start of month
June	Dry warm month, 12 day drought at start, but summer started
July	Summer weather continued, consistently hot, long drought, average temp. 25.6deg C
August	Also a hot month but 13 days of rain, a hot and damp month
September	Dry month with average temperatures, most rainfall on one night
October	Started mild and dry, then turned wet and windy, first ground frost at end of month
November	Rainfall average but colder northerly winds
December	Many days of rain interspersed with some sunshine, later serious gales
<i>Year end</i>	<i>Very wet and windy weather</i>

### II. Butterflies

Table showing those butterflies seen in Abington in 2013 by month (21 species)

Butterfly name	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sept	Oct	Notes from <i>Butterflies of Cambridgeshire</i>
<b>Reported in Abington 2013</b>									
<b>21 species to end October 2013</b>									
Small skipper					✓✓	✓✓			Widespread & common
Clouded yellow						✓✓	✓		Regular migrant
Large white			✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓		Widespread & common
Small white			✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓		Widespread & common
Green veined white			✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓			Widespread & common
Brimstone	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	Widespread & common
Orange tip		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓					Widespread & common
Small copper				✓	✓✓	✓			Widely distributed – but not abundant
Common blue				✓	✓	✓✓	✓		Widespread & fairly common
Holly blue		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓			Widespread & common
Small blue					✓				Extremely scarce
Red Admiral		✓✓			✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	Widespread & common
Painted lady				✓	✓	✓✓	✓	✓	Common migrant
Small tortoiseshell		✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓		Widespread & common
Peacock		✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	✓	Widespread & common
Comma		✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	Widespread & common
Speckled wood					✓✓	✓✓	✓✓	✓	Widespread & fairly common
Gatekeeper					✓✓	✓✓			Widespread & common
Meadow brown				✓✓	✓✓	✓✓			Widespread & common
Ringlet					✓✓	✓✓			Widespread & common
Small heath				✓✓	✓	✓✓			Widespread but localised
<b>Not seen in Abington 2013</b>									
Essex skipper									Widespread & common
Large skipper									Widespread & common
Dingy skipper									Localised and rare
Grizzled skipper									Localised and scarce
Green hairstreak									Uncommon
White-letter hairstreak									Widely distributed – rarely seen
Purple hairstreak									Widespread & common – rarely seen
Black hairstreak									Vulnerable
Brown argus									Widespread but local
Chalkhill blue									Rare
White admiral									Rare
Wall									Previously common, now rarely seen
Marbled white									Uncommon



The records of butterflies observed are given in the table. This year there were reports of only 21 of the 34 species resident in the county.

The reports started very slowly due to the late cold spring with only 2 Brimstones (normally the first to be seen) reported in March and Orange tips not reported until the end of April. The Whites appeared in May and thereafter had a very good summer especially later. From June to August most of the butterflies appeared in good numbers. The Whites continued through September with Brimstones still being seen and Red Admirals. And in October the Red Admirals were still around but not many others.

The last butterfly I saw was, rather poignantly, inside Little Abington Church on 15 November at Pat Daunt's funeral. In brilliant sunshine, it flew up to and landed on the Millennium stained glass window, one of Pat's most important and well-loved projects.

#### Highlights of the butterflies

Undoubtedly the highlight was the spotting of two Clouded Yellows on the Roman Road in Abington this year, seen after the initial sighting in August by several other members both that day and in the following four weeks. We do not have any records of this butterfly being seen in Abington before.

*The Clouded Yellow is a migratory European butterfly in the same family as the Whites. The caterpillar food plants are leguminous plants such as wild and cultivated clovers and lucerne. As lucerne is still a commonly cultivated crop, it has no difficulty finding a breeding habitat in farmland.*

Small tortoiseshells and Red Admirals had a good year.

Both the Small Heath and the Small Copper were reported but these are now rarer species and so need careful identification.

On the downside there were no reports of Hairstreaks. The White Letter Hairstreak, reported and photographed last year, is now a red list species.

See reports elsewhere on outings outside the village where we had some excellent sightings of Chalkhill Blues and Marbled Whites.

### **III. Moths**

We did not hold any moth evenings during the summer mainly due to the poor weather and also due to the lack of a moth expert in the village. There were a few reports of day flying moths during the year.

Spindle moth caterpillars seen again in May on Euonymus; also Mullein moth caterpillars in June. Cinnebar moth caterpillars seen on ragwort.

Hummingbird hawkmoths seen by several members in June.

Pine hawkmoth caterpillar, rather dramatic, found dead in pond (under pine tree).

November moth spotted in October!

### **IV. Bees**

2013 was a poor year for bees, probably due to the late spring and the lack of food plants.

There were reports of bumblebees: buff tailed, white tailed, red tailed, tree, early, garden.

Common carder bees

Field Cuckoo Bee, Vestal Cuckoo Bee

Bumblebees are not too difficult to recognise when you look closely and if you have a good chart – there are not many different species. Look on lavender and rosemary plants especially.

Several reports of honey bees though not as many as we would hope to see in a normal summer.

### **V. Dragonflies and Damselflies**

A disappointing year.

Fewer Damselflies than usually reported, notably the Banded demoiselles, most reports in July and August and predominantly small red and large red Damselflies.

Dragon flies reported from June onwards included:

Broad bodied chaser (June & July)  
 Black tailed skimmer (July)  
 Emperor dragonfly (July, August, September)  
 Southern hawker (July, August, September, October)  
 Common darter (July, August, September, October)  
 Ruddy darter (August)

## **VI. Ladybirds**

Ladybirds were very few this year. This is reported in the National press as being due to the lack of greenfly for them to feed on.

The small number of reports that were submitted were mainly of harlequin ladybirds, mostly from late August through to October.

## **VII. Other insects**

A few reports of Bee flies in late April and May

## **VIII. Reporters**

I would welcome more reporters on insects, particularly butterflies, bees, dragonflies and damselflies and ladybirds. These are generally the easiest to identify. I can help with identification charts if necessary. I would particularly like reports from different parts of the village and different habitats. Altogether I received almost 1000 reports, up on the previous year. This shows what a lot of interest there is in our insect life especially butterflies.

## **IX. Outings**

We had three outings primarily to see butterflies: Paxton Pits and Fleam Dyke in July, Roman Road in August. Please see section 11 *Visits in and out of the Abingtons*.



70: Small Tortoiseshell - 11 August (JH)



71: Shield bug - 24 August (PB)



72: Harlequin ladybirds - 18 October (PB)







73: Chalkhill Blue - 27 July (JH)



74: Chalkhill Blues - 27 July (JH)



75: Common Blue - 7 August (JH)



76: Common Blue - 7 August (JH)



77: Painted Lady - 10 August (JH)



78: Peacock - 14 August (JH)



79: Brimstone - August (LM)



80: Ringlet – 27 July (PB)



## 9. FLORA

Flora records are recorded in the outings to Hildersham Woods and Meadow, Granta Park and Fleam Dyke – please see section 11.

Due to Pat Daunt's illness, we do not have a more detailed record this year.



81: Fleam Dyke Walk - 27 July (PB)

## 10. WORKING WITH CPERC

We continue to contribute our records of sightings in Abington to CPERC (Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Environmental Records Centre). We reported these sightings in 2013 (number of sightings in brackets):

### *I. Native (declining) species*

<b>Mammals</b>	Brown hares (6), bats (2), otter (1)
<b>Amphibians</b>	Grass snake (11), common toad (6), common frog (3)
<b>Birds</b>	Kingfisher (9), barn owl (3)
<b>Invertebrates</b>	-

### *II. Non-native invasive species*

<b>Plants</b>	-
<b>Mammals</b>	Muntjac deer (9)

Reports to CPERC need the species name, date and place (6 digit grid reference). For more information, please refer to the CPERC website [www.cperc.org.uk](http://www.cperc.org.uk); you may also submit records online on the website.

Jennifer Hirsh





82: Daffodils at Granta Park - 15 April (GW)



83: Cowslips at Granta Park - 15 April (GW)



84: Cowslips at Granta Park - 8 May (GW)



85: Marsh Marigolds at Granta Park - 8 May (GW)



86: Dwarf thistle - 27 July (JH)



87: Vetch - 18 July (JH)



88: Common Spotted Orchid - 5 June (JH)



89: Violets in Cooke's Meadow (JH)

## 11. VISITS IN AND OUT OF THE ABINGTONS

### ***I. Fen Drayton Lakes – Saturday 2nd March 2013 morning***

Five people went by guided bus to Fen Drayton Lakes on a cool but dry 2<sup>nd</sup> March. 26 species were seen during the morning including Goldeneye, Little Egret, Little and Great Crested Grebe, Teal, Tufted Duck and Wigeon.

### ***II. Lakenheath Fen – Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2013 morning***

Seven visited Lakenheath on 1<sup>st</sup> June and saw or heard a total of 38 bird species including Hobby, Marsh Harrier, Reed Bunting and Reed Warbler all seen, and Common Crane, Cuckoo, Grasshopper and Sedge Warblers and ?Golden Oriole heard.

### ***III. Hildersham Wood and Meadow – Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> June evening***

This flora walk to the meadow next to Hildersham Wood was to see the orchids and other interesting plants. Jennifer Hirsh led the walk as Pat Daunt was not able to be there. Ten members participated.

The flowers we saw were Common spotted orchid, Common twayblade, Marsh thistle, Birds foot trefoil, Smooth tare and Cowslip seed heads showing that there had been many.

We found that many of the Twayblades had been eaten, probably by deer, as Sally and I had seen large numbers a few days before.

It was noted that this walk would have been better in the daytime as the light was limited especially when we walked back to the farmyard.

*Thanks to Sally Turnidge and Lois Bull for helping to identify the flowering plants.*

### ***IV. Paxton Pits – Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> July morning***

#### ***i. Insects***

Twelve of us spent a most enjoyable and informative morning with our usual guide Stuart Elsom at Paxton Pits near St Neots in glorious sunny weather. This weather brought out the damselflies and dragonflies that we had gone to see. Stuart was able to identify some that we would not have known and point out distinguishing features to look out for (if they stay still for long enough!). There were quite a lot of butterflies in the meadows but not many different species.

This is a list of what we saw:

Damselflies – blue tailed, azure, common and banded demoiselle

Dragonflies – Emperor, Brown hawk, Norfolk hawk (these are very rare and have only recently been found at Paxton), Black tailed skimmer

Butterflies – Meadow brown, Ringlet, Large skipper

Moths – Burnet moth, Cinnebar moth, caterpillars of mullein moth

The highlight was the Norfolk hawk which we would not have seen without Stuart's expert help.

#### ***ii. Birds***

We also saw or heard a total of 23 bird species.

### ***V. Granta Park Meadow – Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> July evening***

Eleven members enjoyed a very pleasant evening at the end of another hot day. It was noted that the wildflower meadows were past their best and many plants had already gone to seed,



probably due to the hot dry weather. Jennifer Hirsh led the walk as Pat Daunt was not able to be there.

**i. Flora list (not exhaustive) round the lake and the wildflower meadows:**

Vervain	Ox eye daisy	Betony
Common centuary	Lesser knapweed	Ragwort
Figwort	Greater knapweed	Lucerne
Rosebay willowherb	White clover	
Perforate St John's Wort	Red clover	
Yarrow	Hedge bedstraw	
Birds foot trefoil	Lady's bedstraw	
Scarlet pimpernel	Mallow	
Pyramidal orchid	Field scabious	
Bee orchid	Wild carrot	
Kidney vetch	White campion	

*Thanks to Sally Turnidge, Lois Bull and others for helping to identify the flowering plants.*

**ii. Insects:**

Common blue damselfly  
Meadow brown butterfly

**VI. Fleam Dyke – Saturday 27<sup>th</sup> July morning**

This was a combined flora and butterfly outing. Ten members spent a very special morning on the section of Fleam Dyke to the east of the A11 road. We saw a spectacular number of butterflies and flowers on a glorious morning, including maybe 200 or more Chalkhill blues. The flowering plants were also very prolific, colourful and gorgeous. The two Marbled whites were also seen by most present but sadly we did not see the Dark green fritillaries that Roger Lemon, who does the regular transects on this section, had seen the week before.

The improvement of this site is likely to be due to 20 years of work by Sharon Hearle, Iain Webb and the Mid-week Volunteers, with help from the Cambridge Conservation Volunteers, The Friends of the Roman Road and Fleam Dyke, of course, and others.

Butterflies	Moths
Brimstone	5 spot Burnet moth
Large white	
Small white	
Small tortoiseshell	
Small skipper	
Small heath	
Meadow brown	
Ringlet	
Peacock	
Gatekeeper	
Marbled white	
Chalkhill blue	

Flora		
Rockrose	Quaking grass	Goatsbeard
Horseshoe vetch (seed pods)	Common milkwort	(Jack go to bed at noon)
Squinancywort	Ragwort	Oxeye daisy
Dropwort (gone to seed)	Teasel	Salad burnet
Lady's bedstraw	Small scabious	
Hedge bedstraw	Filed scabious	Juniper
Greater knapweed	Yarrow	Sweet briar

Black Knapweed Dwarf thistle ('Picnic' thistle) Tuberous thistle Carline thistle Harebell Kidney vetch	Wild parsnip Pignut Bryony Agrimony Wild mignonette Dark mullein	Privet Elder
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## ***VII. Roman Road east of the A11 from Worsted Lodge – Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> August morning***

This outing was intended to be for parents and children to introduce them to some of the flora and butterflies to be seen on this section of the Roman Road. Sadly no parents and children came but there were four members and we enjoyed a pleasant hour or so and saw some good butterflies in spite of the overcast weather.

Most special were two Clouded yellows that we followed for some time and photographed – these are still quite uncommon; also a Painted lady that my granddaughter Calista and I had seen a couple of days before; there were lots of Common blues too. Several other of the more common butterflies were around but it was good to see some of the less common ones.



90: Clouded Yellow - 10 Aug. (JH)

This is a list of the flowers that I had prepared for this outing on a visit to the Roman Road a few days before.

Common knapweed Greater knapweed Field scabious Agrimony Yarrow St John's wort Lady's bedstraw Hedge bedstraw Field bindweed Mayweed Ragwort Rest harrow Wild parsnip Wild carrot Creeping thistle	White clover Bladder campion White campion Common toadflax Common mallow Dove's foot crane's bill Mugwort Stinging nettle Burdock Great mullein Dark mullein Wild mignonette Broad leaved dock Red Bartsia
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Derek Turnidge, Jennifer Hirsh



91: Harebells, Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



92: Skipper, Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



93: Mignonette, Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



94: Small White, Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



95: Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



96: Skipper, Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



97: White-tailed Bumble Bee, Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



98: Cinnabar Moth caterpillar, Fleam Dyke - 27 July (PB)



## 12.CONTACT INFORMATION

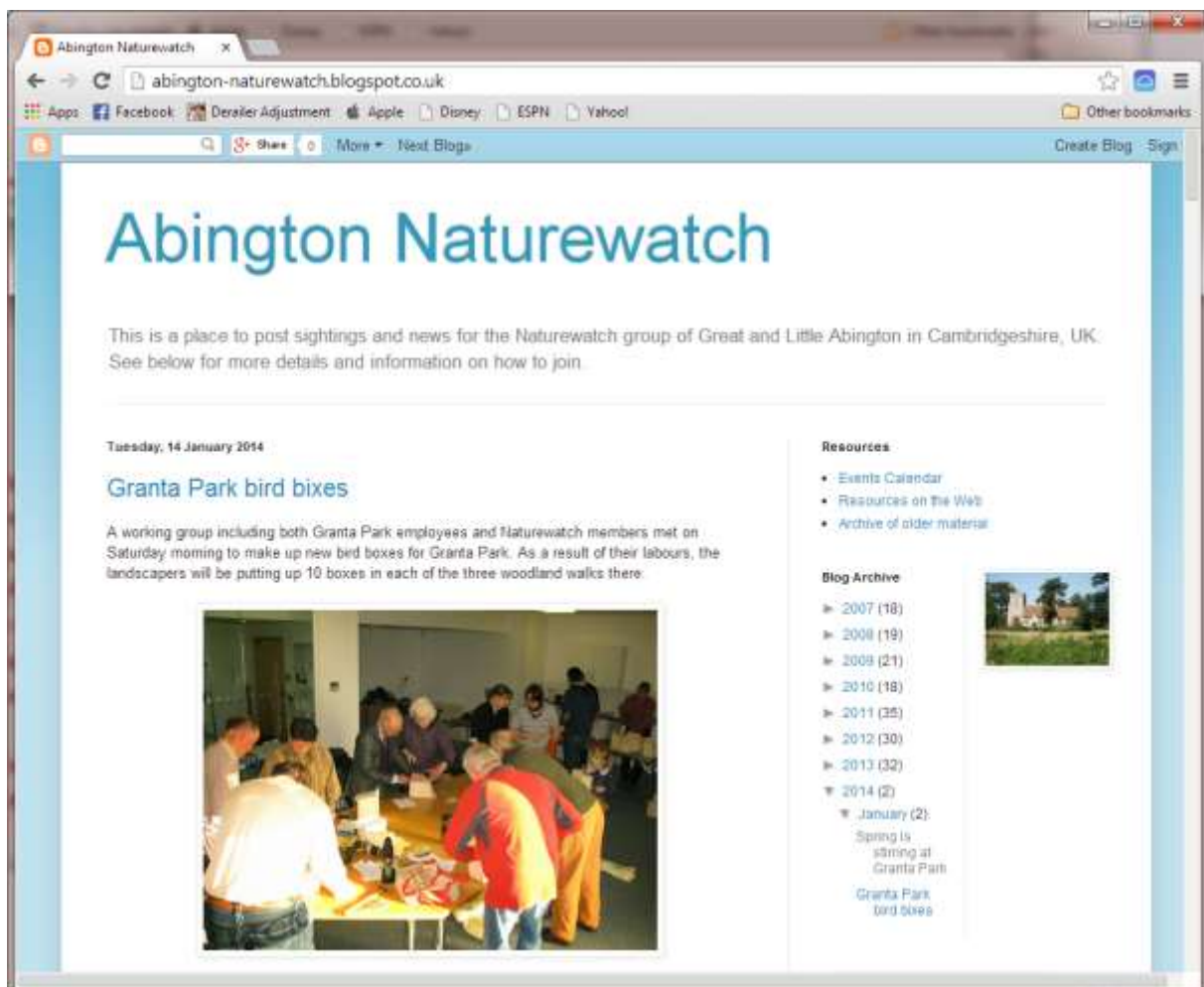
### I. *The Abington Naturewatch Website*

The Abington Naturewatch Website is maintained as a *blog* (i.e. web log) at <http://abington-naturewatch.blogspot.com/>. It is also easily reached from the village web-site: <http://www.theabingtons.org.uk/>. Using a blog means that it is simpler to publish material in diary form.

The site lists the aims of the group and has details of members' meetings. Those interested are encouraged to join – there is no membership fee! Members receive personal invitations to meetings, by email if available.

There is a link to a simple Google map of the area, with the names we use to refer to some parts of the area covered. There are also reports and photographs submitted by members and some useful links to other sources of information.

### Naturewatch Home Page:



## ***II. The Abington Naturewatch Project Team and Sectors***

### **i. Programme Coordinator (and Membership Secretary)**

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### **ii. Rivercare**

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### **iii. Birdwatch**

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### **iv. Amphibians & Reptiles**

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### **v. Insects**

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### **vi. Mammals**

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### **vii. Plantwatch**

*Vacancy*

Email:

### **viii. Rivercare**

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### **ix. Website & Record**

Website: <http://abington-naturewatch.blogspot.com/>

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