

THE VASCULUM (SUBSTITUTE)

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BY THE WAY

Once again, we have to appeal to the Secretaries of our Societies to send us accounts of their doings as punctually as possible. Our printers can deal with matter immediately they receive it, and only one cause can produce delay in the appearance of the Vasculum; that is failure to receive the necessary material from the Societies when it is due.

Our supply of notes and records keeps more or less satisfactory, but we should like to emphasize, as before, the necessity for casting them in the proper format. Further, we wish to point out that it is very desirable that new contributors of such material should assist us.

BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR THE ADVANCEMENT OF SCIENCE

The British Association has done our district the honour of choosing Newcastle upon Tyne as the headquarters, of its 1949 meeting, and already the portents point to a very successful event. As a considerable amount of the Association's efforts is directed toward the furtherance of the Biological Sciences, may we urge our members to assist in this success by joining the Association for the year 1949, and by promoting its aims in any of the numerous ways open to local residents? The meeting begins on August 31st, 1949 and ends on September 7th, 1949.

MR. GEORGE NICHOLSON

Once again, we have to record the passing of one of our old stalwarts, Mr. George Nicholson, who died on February 10th, 1949. Mr. Nicholson was a most enthusiastic field worker in entomology, and a staunch supporter of the Entomological Section of the Natural History Society. Moreover, he was a foundation member of the Wallis Club, in whose activities he played a very prominent part, both by lecturing to it and by bringing interesting exhibits to its meetings

His chief interests lay with the Lepidoptera although other groups of animals, especially birds, attracted his attention from time to time. Working with the Rosies in his early days, he revealed the riches of Prestwick Carr, and, later, with J. R. Johnson, Harry Sticks and ourselves, he investigated the then almost virgin areas in those stretches of Northumberland lying south of the Tyne. In his explorations, he not only proved that many species, long considered rarities in our district, were actually locally plentiful, but also added new and important forms like *Odontostia carmelita* and *Hadena glauca* to our lists.

George was very far removed from being a "mere moth collector," as a glance at the contributions from his pen which appeared in our last issue will demonstrate. They were extracts from a lecture he had given to the Entomological Section of the Natural History Society on our "Pug-moths," and had sent to us quite recently for publication. In addition, he was a very keen breeder of the insects he loved, and this pursuit he carried on almost to the end. One of the last letters we had from him contained a request for eggs of *Nyssia zonaria*—an insect he had long desired to breed.

George Nicholson was a lovable character, and a very loyal friend whom many of us will miss very sorely indeed.

THE NEW NATURALIST SERIES

In the past, we have had occasion to draw attention to the New Naturalist series of books which has had a stimulating effect on British natural history in general, and on field work in particular. We therefore welcome an additional service the series is rendering to its public in the production of the first of its projected monographs. This deals with the Badger, and is written by Mr. Ernest Neal, an enthusiastic field naturalist. The work can only be described as excellent from every angle, and it is not proposed to lessen readers' enjoyment by discussing any of its details.

However, we do wish to draw attention to the unfortunate tendencies of remarks contained in a review of the work which appears in the Sunday Times for February 20th, and is from the pen of C. E. Raven. In the first place, we do not consider that the series has been "much-publicised" when one considers the sterling worth and real novelty of treatment of the various volumes. We, ourselves, have ventured to criticise them in some of their aspects in the past, but cannot truly state that we were "mildly disappointed." The advances they registered were too emphatic to allow of such a feeling.

Again, no one writing as a field naturalist in the true sense of the word would deprecate "moth-collecting and bird photography" as overworked subjects. Future field naturalists must begin their studies somewhere, and we are compelled to propound the question: with what better subjects could a keen juvenile worker begin than with those named? Many workers who have

made their influence felt in the scientific world have not been ashamed to admit that they began with those very activities. Did not Darwin and Wallace themselves begin with beetle-collecting?

Even the use of the word "overworked" is itself to be deplored in this connection. There is scarcely a British moth which, if subjected to the intensive study which marks Mr. Neal's labours with the badger, would fail to yield important results. Could such a study be initiated without a preliminary acquaintance with the science and art of moth-collecting?

THE FLORA OF BIRD CLIFFS

Quite recently we received a very important paper by Anne Margrethe Grönlie which dealt with the "Ornithocrophilous Vegetation of the Bird Cliffs of the Lofoten Islands, Northern Norway." It is written in English and appears on pages 117-243, Vol. 86, of the *Nytt Magasin for Naturvidenskapene*. We cannot resist introducing it to our readers because it offers two new lines of work to the more enterprising of our readers. The use of the word "ornithocrophilous" should not alarm anyone needlessly, for it simply asserts that the plants concerned favour areas charged with bird-droppings. Have we not such areas within our limits in the Fame Islands? The general vegetation of those islands is well known, but no ecological survey of the vegetation amongst the bird colonies has been made. Will someone tackle the research?

Again, whilst the Annual Meadow Grass (*Poa annua*) appears freely in the "Sociations" listed in Miss Grönlie's paper, the chief grass concerned seems to be the Red Fescue. In our field experience, gained amongst colonies of the Kittiwake, Black-backed Gull and Manx Shearwater, *P. annua* plays a much more important role. In fact, we have a photograph in colour of a Kittiwake colony in which the colour of the *P. annua* is so intense as to suggest a cascade of green flowing down the cliff slopes. Much the same abundance marks the colonies of the Black-backed Gull. The position of the Manx Shearwater was different. There the vegetation was sparse, the clumsiness of the birds leaving their burrows serving to inhibit the growth of plants. Nevertheless, the Meadow Grass was present. Again we have observed *P. annua* lining sheep and deer paths, putting a casual appearance in amongst horse droppings, growing in masses where cattle congregate on the edges of Newham Bog, along the bases of Newcastle town-wall, near stables and byres. In fact, *P. annua* betrays its propensities by bobbing up in endless stations which allow for its nitrophilous predilections. In view of the prevailing bareness of such situations, it is often washed by flood waters into other strange situations. Thus we have seen it growing amongst *Carex Goodenovii* tufts along a stream south of Alnwick, amongst *Carex bicolor* plants on Barkeval, Rhum, amongst *Lathyrus macrorrhizus* near Urpeth, and so on. Does not all this suggest that a special study of the ecology of *Poa annua* would be worth undertaking?

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Twenty-fifth Annual Meeting of the Union was held, by the kind invitation of the Natural History Society of Northumberland and Durham, in the rooms of the Hancock Museum on Saturday, March 5th, 1949. Despite the inclemency of the weather a very great number of our members and associates was present.

After the admission of new societies to the Union, and the election of new members, the usual Treasurer's and Secretary's reports were read by Dr. K. B. Blackburn. Once again, both demonstrated the soundness of the Union's position. After the usual thanks had been given to the officers concerned. Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison briefly described the state of the Union's publications and urged upon Secretaries that doings of their Societies should be sent in punctually.

The election of officers for the year 1949-1950 then took place, Mr. J. J. Robson, of the Consett and District Naturalists' Field Club, being elected as successor to Dr. W. M. Morison as President, and Mrs. Gibby, Drs. W. A. Dark, G. Heslop-Harrison, D. H. Valentine and Messrs. J. B. Nicholson and F. Wade as Vice Presidents. No changes were made in respect to other officers except that Miss E. Elliot was appointed Assistant Secretary.

After the preliminary business was finished. Dr. W. M. Morison gave a very interesting lecture with the title "Northumberland and Durham Place Names." Dr. Morison began by announcing that he intended to confine his remarks to a very few names, indeed, these being Durham, Brancepeth, Pity Me, Morpeth, Beamish, Amble, Cambo, Berwick, Tynemouth, Hexham, Lindisfame, Finchale, the Wannies and Waskerley. He indicated the vagueness of the generally accepted origin of some of these names and, in some cases, the absence of any explanation at all. Bringing to bear his knowledge of the various Celtic languages. Dr. Morison demonstrated that many of the supposed difficulties would vanish if it were remembered that our area had been inhabited formerly by tribes akin to the present inhabitants of Wales. On this basis, he produced derivations of the whole of the disputed, names, which he considered to be wholly Celtic except for certain elements. The lecture proved that our President had put a very great deal of time and work into preparing his talk for our instruction. The proceedings concluded with a very hearty vote of thanks to Dr. Morison.

We partook of tea at 5 o'clock which, following the precedent of last year, had been provided by a firm of caterers. It was considered very satisfactory.

On this occasion, our exhibits were scattered, the usual display of spring flowers by Mr. R. B. Cooke being set out in the main body of the Museum as was also Mr. J. K. Morton's collection of

local varieties of mints. Mr. Cooker's plants were even more beautiful than usual and comprised nearly a hundred species. The rest of the specimens were on show in the lecture room. Of these, we had a nice collection of flowers and shells by Derek Robertson, and also a series of species belonging to the Ranunculaceae by Mrs. Gibby. Dr. Burt, whom we welcome amongst us, brought a number of living locusts, whilst Mr. Wm. Carter had on view his unique series of varieties of the Brown Argus Butterfly, *Aricia medon*, as well as his explanatory chart showing the relations between the various forms. Prof. Heslop Harrison had set out local cocoons and specimens of the Five Spot Bumet, *Zygaena lonicerae*, paper from the nests of *Vespa vulgaris* and *V. germanica*, combs of the Carder Bee, *Bombus agrorum*, and galls of *Cynips insana* on the oak *Quercus aegilops*, of the fly *Lonchaea lasiophthalma* on *Cynodon Dactylon* and a species of Lipara on Papyrus.

ANNFIELD PLAIN AND STANLEY NATURALISTS' CLUB

The sixth Annual Meeting of the Club was held on January 5th, 1949, in the Public Library, Annfield Plain, with the President, Dr. W. M. Morison in the chair.

The Secretary, Mr. F. Wade, was able once more to report a highly successful year. He pointed out that, in spite of the disastrous season, without exception, the summer outings were carried out as planned. In his review of the general activities of the Club, he mentioned that the membership now stood at 119, an increase of 5 over last year's figures. In stating this, he indicated that they had lost two foundation members, Mr. A. Midwood and Mr J Spence, both sources of strength to local natural history in the district. Continuing, the Secretary emphasised that during the season there had been 15 lectures, three of which had been provided by the Club's own members, and twelve field meetings, including three arranged by the Northern Naturalists' Union. In carrying out the arrangements for field meetings visits were paid to the following places: High Cup Nick and Great Rundale Tarn; Barrasford Fish Hatchery and Gunnerton Crag; Weardale, Split Wood and Middlehope; Satley and Ragpathside; Ramshaw and Bott's Law; Prudhoe Castle and Ovingham Church; The Chesters; Newcastle Guild Hall and Blackgate Museum; Hancock Museum.

As for the lectures, we were honoured by a visit from the Northern Naturalists' Union when, with our President, Dr. W. M. Morison, taking the chair. Dr. S. T. Nadel gave an excellent lecture under the title "Races of Mankind." Of the lectures planned by the committee, the following is a list: "From Island to Island in the Hebrides," Dr. W. A. Clark; "The Age of the Earth," Prof. G. H. Hickling; "Durham Castle," Dr. G. W. Gibby; "The Science of Ecology," Mr. S. Armstrong; "Atomic Energy and its Peace Time Utilisation," Mr. F. Morgan; "Nature and the

Naturalist," Mr. A. E. Hart; " Food, the Primary Factor," Mr. V. Bell; "Mesopotamia," Mr. W. Williams; "Relict Woodland Floras in the Hebrides," Dr. W. A. Clark; "The Life Story of a River," Prof. G. H. Hickling; "Island Bird Haunts," Mr. J. J. Robson; "By-products of an Active Life," Dr. W. M. Morison; "The Purpose of Education," Mr. G. E. Geffen.

The Treasurer, Mr. J. Atkinson, reported a small debit balance on the year's working, but demonstrated that in the possession of a balance of £38 the Club was in a sound financial position.

In the ensuing elections, Dr. W. M. Morison was once again chosen as President, with the Secretary, Treasurer and other officers also remaining unchanged.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

For our meeting on December 14th we had a very interesting talk on our local "Fungi," by Mr. Thompson, one of our own members. The lecture was profusely illustrated by slides of the lecturer's own making and by suitable specimens. Following this, on December 28th, Dr. J. Heslop Harrison gave a lecture entitled "A Naturalist's Wanderings in the Hebrides." This dealt chiefly with the Isles of Rhum and Harris and was profusely supplied with numerous photographs in colour of the areas explored. For our meeting on January 11th, Mr. J. A. Richardson interested us with a much appreciated account of "How a Plant Lives," once again lantern slides assisting the discourse. On February 1st, Dr. G. Heslop Harrison lectured on his experiences as State Entomologist in Iraq, employing a large number of appropriate slides as he talked. Next we had a very fine account of "Medicinal Plants," given by Mr. H. Soulsby, who brought large numbers of specimens to illustrate his remarks. Mrs. Heslop Harrison lectured on "Life and Scenery in Canada" with lantern slide illustrations. This was greatly appreciated by an attentive audience.

On January 25th, our first annual dinner took place when 32 members sat down to an excellent meal. After the usual toasts, the proceeding closed with a Natural History Quiz.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

The Collywell Dyke.—The whin dyke, exposed in the cliff and on the foreshore in Collywell Bay, Hartley, has a local reputation because it comes definitely to a head in the cliff section. Last summer, I observed that it bears in places those ridgy structures which characterize the Whin Sill at the Harkus Rocks, Bamburgh, and which I described in the *Vasculum* many years ago (1930, Vol. XVI, No. 1, p. 19). These structures can be seen within an area about 6x6 feet, on the shore-outcrop, 40 yards from the cliff. There are five patches of rock in this area which show them clearly. The ridges are beautifully rounded, about half an inch apart, crescentic in shape and presenting convex curves towards points between south and west. There can be little doubt that they were formed by the excessively slow flow of viscous magma, and that they mark the last stages of igneous intrusion in an open fissure.—J. A. Smythe.

Two Egyptian Coins at Birtley.—On December 14th, 1948, I exhibited two very interesting coins at the meeting of the Birtley Natural History Society. These had been brought to me for inspection by a gentleman whose little son had dug them up in the Birtley district. On examination, they proved to be Egyptian and to represent a series issued by two of the Ptolemies, a dynasty that occupied the throne of Egypt from 323 B.C. to 30 B.C. Very naturally, I asked for further particulars concerning the site of the find, but none were forthcoming. It would be interesting, indeed, to learn under what circumstances these coins had been buried at Birtley.—A. Macnamara.

The Pale Brindled Beauty Moth (*Phigalia pendaria*) at Barnard Castle.—This species appeared in great force at Barnard Castle from January 26th to February 20th. I have never seen such numbers and such a range of variation before. The ground colours represented ranged from pale leaden grey, without any ochreous tinge, through various shades of ochre and greenish brown to true melanic forms without markings. The transverse lines also varied considerably. In some examples, they were only faintly discernible, especially in those approaching the melanic forms, whereas in others there were four distinct heavy lines.—J. P. Robson.

Woodpeckers and Marble Galls.—During the past winter, the oak marble galls produced by the gall-wasp *Cynips kollari* have been very plentiful in Lambton Park. These, however, have now been thinned out to a very remarkable extent by the attacks of woodpeckers. The birds peck a deep hole in one side of the gall, and through it extract the larva of the wasp. Galls so treated were strewn on the ground under the oaks in all directions.—J. Walton.

Notes on the Foxglove Pug (*Eupithecia pulchellata*) and the Valerian Pug (*Eupithecia valerianata*).—The larvae of the first of these dainty moths live in the flowers of the Common Foxglove which they enter by boring small round holes through the side; they close the mouth of the corolla by means of a few silken threads. Affected flowers, in general, have a withered appearance, and often hang limply on the stem. The larvae should be searched for by hand in July. However, apparently affected flowers often lack a tenant, and in such cases adjacent blossoms should be inspected.

The moth is somewhat local, but it is fairly common in the Tyne and Derwent Valleys at Hexham, Winlaton Mill, Gibside, etc., and throughout the Team Valley from Ravensworth to Beamish. Plants growing along wall sides and in open glades in our woods are most likely to harbour the insect in its early stages.

The caterpillars should be kept with an abundant supply of fresh flowers in glass jars with a layer of fine soil on the bottom, in which they spin small earthen cocoons. Many, however, will be found to be ichneumonid.

The Valerian Pug is much more restricted in its habitats with us, for Prestwick Carr is the only reliable station. In that locality, the larval food plant, valerian, grows in plenty along the runnels which drain the Carr. The larvae may be readily obtained towards the end of July by gathering a good bunch of flower heads indiscriminately. If searching is practised, results are unsatisfactory although the presence of larvae on affected plants may be detected occasionally by looking for petals suspended loosely from the flower heads by means of silken threads.

The larvae may be fed up quite openly on bunches of valerian placed in jars of water. As the larvae reach the stage of pupation, they may be shaken easily from their resting places on the plants, and transferred to jars containing fine soil for pupation.—George Nicholson.

RECORDS

FLOWERING PLANTS

- Mentha viridis** L (spicata Huds.) 65
By the Swale above Muker and below Gunnerside. No record for this vice-county appears in Druce's Comital Flora.
- M. viridis** var. **ciliata** Dr. 66
A form with very thickly ciliated calyx teeth occurs on the edge of a turnip field near Corbridge.
- M. piperita** L. 66
Brasside Ponds near Durham with a form at Urpeth Bottoms, near Birtley, tending towards var. *vulgaris* Sole in having the leaf bases rather rounded.
- M. aquatica** L. 66, 67
This name is used to cover the less hairy forms; very variable near the Blackhall Rocks and with forms at Boldon Flats approaching var. *denticulata* Braunand to var. *major* Sole; near the mouth of Whittle Dene; also a tall slender form in the old mill dam, in Castle Eden Dene just above the Stockton Road; Butterby Marsh; Urpeth Bottoms, alongside a form with included stamens resembling *M. citrata* but not that species. The variety *major* Sole grows by the Swale below Gunnerside, while forms between it and the type occur in Butterby Marsh. The var. *Lobeliana* Beck, a form with small elongated leaves and small flower heads, may be found in Sharpley Moss near Sunderland, Ryhope Dene and in Urpeth Bottoms.
- M. hirsuta** L. 66,68
This covers the very hairy forms of *M. aquatica* found in Urpeth Bottoms and by springs on the coast north of Craster.
- x M. verticillata** L. (**M. aquatica** x **M. arvensis**) 66, 67
On the south side of the Tyne at Corbridge in a form leading to var. *acutifolia* Fraser; also near Crag Lough. In Urpeth Bottoms, forms near to var. *acutifolia* are very plentiful. All have a rather shorter calyx tube than is normal for this plant.
- M. gentilis** L. 65,66,67
Banks of the Tyne above Wylam and near Corbridge as a very bushy form; around a pond near the road passing Finchale Abbey in a very tall form with thin flexuous stem; by the Swale below Gunnerside, fine and typical, with an unusually hairy form also present. Apparently new to v.-c. 66 and not in the Comital Flora for v.-c. 65.
- M. arvensis** L. 65,66
On cultivated ground and in a gravel pit at Ryhope Dene; Sherburn Hill in a cornfield and on the banks of the Swale below Gunnerside.
[The whole of these records of our local mints are due to the labours of J. K. Morton and are based upon the specimens collected by him during the past few years. They were examined for him by Mr. R. A. Graham of the Botanical Society of the British Isles who has checked and corrected original determinations when necessary.]
- Rosa corifolia** Fr. 67
This rose, which is of general distribution with us, occurs at Barras ford in the form of the var. *Bakeri* Désgél.
- R. Sherardi** Day. 65
The variety named *typica* by Wolley-Dod is not uncommon on the burn flowing past Swinburn Castle.
- R. obtusifolia** Desv. 66,67,68
Although this species is not listed from our area in the "Comital Flora" and recorded for Durham only by Wolley-Dod, it may be found in many areas chiefly lowland in Durham and Northumberland.

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BY THE WAY

It will be noted that this, the second number of the current volume of the Vasculum, will appear in June instead of in July. This change has been made for two reasons. In the first place, it is hoped that, by publishing a number at the end of each quarter, we shall receive reports concerning our Societies' doings from the Secretaries much more regularly and punctually than in the past. It should be obvious that, if we do not receive material at the proper times, delays in publication are bound to occur. A second reason rendering the change desirable arises from the fact that it makes it much easier to send the Vasculum out with the notice of our July field meeting, thereby saving postage. May we, therefore, appeal once more to Secretaries to assist us in securing the regular appearance of our magazine by sending their material promptly?

THE NEWCASTLE MEETING OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION

As we have just received the preliminary programme of the above meeting, we feel it our duty once again to draw the attention of our readers to the importance of their doing all that lies in their power to make it a success.

The President on this occasion is Sir John Russell, O.B.E., F.R.S., and the various committees, which have been at work for a considerable time, have arranged a full programme of evening discourses etc. open to the general public. Details of these will be supplied in due course. In addition to these, the sectional committees responsible for carrying out the objects of the Association have announced interesting groups of discussions and papers covering a very wide range of topics of importance to the individual sections.

In order to give visiting members adequate opportunities for becoming acquainted with all the aspects of our district, there have been planned numbers of general tours and visits to works in various parts of the two counties. Further, diverse social

functions have been arranged, some intended for members in general, and others of sectional interest.

We trust that as many of our members as possible will join the Association before the meeting commences on August 31st. If they do so, it is certain that they will not regret their action.

THE VEGETATION OF PIT HEAPS

From time to time there have appeared in the *Vasculum* accounts of the interesting vegetation which has colonised pitheaps of varying types in the area. In many cases, with but little variation in the individual species concerned, this vegetation has been composed of a restricted range of herbaceous plants. These have manifested but few tendencies to become nuisances by spreading to stretches of ground on which their presence was not required. On other heaps, in addition to the layer of herbs, various trees and shrubs have crept in with the silver birch playing the part of a pioneer, and hawthorns, elders, with numerous species of wild roses and brambles, following closely behind. In this way, really pretty little woodlands have been built up in certain instances. Now all this is threatened with destruction, or ruin, on both kinds of heap.

Just after the 1914-1918 war, when extensive stretches of waste or bare land became available, intense colonisation of such places by the Rose Bay Willow Herb set in, with the result that its silky wind-driven seeds began to appear in localities in which they had never occurred previously. In consequence, many pitheaps received an undesirable alien intruder in the form of this pretty, but obnoxious, weed. Now, the infestation has become so appalling in some districts that, not only are the usual herbs on the heaps rapidly disappearing but, in addition, even such hard cases as the roses and brambles are being slowly stifled. Moreover, within the last three or four years, it has become quite impossible to force one's way through masses of this plant on affected heaps without becoming covered with a thick layer of downy seeds almost defying removal by brushing.

The evil is not restricted to pitheaps, for many ordinary woodlands, like those in Castle Eden Dene, have been invaded, and former delightful glades turned into unsightly tangles. In view of the fact that matters are rapidly becoming worse, it is suggested that some means must be devised to check the ravages of this pest, and that at a very early date.

A SWALLOW INQUIRY

In the years prior to the war, a detailed study of the movements of the swallow and other migratory birds was carried out in S.W. England by means of co-operative bird watching, and the results, published by Mr. E. W. Hendy in his book *Here and there with Birds*, and in an article in *Discovery* (March 1935), show that much useful information was obtained.

Little detailed work appears to have been done on the subject in our counties apart from two co-operative efforts carried out along the Tyne in 1938 by members of the Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne under the leadership of Mr. H. Tully; these achieved inconclusive results.

With a view toward determining what information can be gleaned regarding the spread of the Swallow through Durham and Northumberland, Mr. C. J. Gent has attempted to organize an investigation during the present spring. A circular letter has been sent to persons known to be interested in birds, and a letter has appeared in the local press. The response to the latter has exceeded expectations. It is realised, however, that there are many more observers who can supply records likely to be of assistance. The information desired is as follows: (1) Place, (2) Date of the first swallow seen in 1949, (3) Date when the bird was first observed in numbers, i.e., more than 6 in the district, (4) Observer's name and address. In addition, any details of actual movements observed would, of course, be of considerable assistance. Records are more especially desired from country and coastal districts, and should be sent directly to Mr. C. J. Gent, 30, Berkeley Square, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, 3.

BOOK REVIEW

THE CATERPILLARS OF BRITISH MOTHS, INCLUDING THE EGGS, CHRYSALIDS AND FOODPLANTS. By W. J. Stokoe and G. H. Stovin, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P., D.A.

For a long time, a really modern work on the caterpillars of the British Moths, selling at a reasonable price, has been a great desideratum amongst British lepidopterists, and to meet this demand Frederick Warne and Co., Ltd., have produced this addition to their Wayside and Woodland series. It has been produced in two volumes (costing 15/- each) with 1488 illustrations, of which just less than a third are reproductions in colour of water-colour drawings made by that famous artist and entomologist, the late J. C. Dolman, R.W.A. The bulk of the figures, therefore are in black and white.

Although the work will, undoubtedly, prove quite useful, and satisfy an entomologist's needs to a certain extent, it cannot be regarded as entirely successful. As far as the illustrations are concerned, those in black and white are very good indeed. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said of those in colour. Some of the latter are of the highest quality, but the remainder will form a very doubtful asset to the field worker. In some instances, if one is fully acquainted with the larvae beforehand, the figures are recognizable. Of the rest, the less written about them the better. Most of the failures are due to faulty registration of the colours during the process of printing leading to serious blurring effects.

Nowadays, a really earnest entomologist must be acquainted

with the authority responsible for the naming of the various species he studies. In these volumes such a worker would search in vain for a single name. As far as the general text goes, it gives a limited amount of what is, on the whole, accurate information. Nevertheless, the distributional ranges supplied for the species described are antiquated, and hence, in many cases, inaccurate and misleading. Moreover, disappointment will arise in connection with the lists of foodplants given, a feature to be regarded as one of the main reasons for the appearance of the book. Recently, we had to examine the information the work supplies in respect to the distribution and the foodplants of the Red-tipped Clearwing (*Aegeria formicaeformis* Esp.). In the matter of the former point, we find it stated that the moth "only appears to have been noted occasionally in a few counties as far north as York" whereas the correct position is that the insect is locally plentiful in Northumberland and Durham. As for its foodplants, we are modestly informed that the larva feeds upon *Salix viminalis* and *S. triandra*; with us its foodplants are the three species of the Capreae group, *Salix aurita*, *S. atrocinerea*, and *S. Caprea*, with *S. nigricans* and *S. viminalis*, the latter pair being chosen only on rare occasions.

As a kind of introduction to the first volume, certain details are provided concerning "Mendelism in Entomology." We see little reason for including these under such an imposing title, for they seem to have been forced in irrespective of the title of the book. As a matter of fact, they deal with inheritance in the lepidoptera alone, and even then are restricted to the imagines. Why this should be so passes comprehension when facts concerning the Mendelian behaviour of larval characteristics are available for reference, both in British and in foreign literature.

Again, spelling errors, especially in the case of the Latin names of foodplants, are far too plentiful. Of such "*Caluna vulgaris*", "*Viola oderata*," "*Suaeda fruticosa*" "*Asperula oderata*" and "*Atriplex lacincata*" form typical and consistent examples. All of these should be carefully corrected in the next edition and, further, simultaneously, care should be taken to employ some recognized up-to-date plant list as a guide to the selection of the current names.

In spite of the above remarks, the book can be recommended to the worker as forming a very helpful tool, if due cognizance is taken of the defects we have emphasized above.—J.W.H.H.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

An outdoor meeting of the Junior Section of the Union was held along the banks of the Tyne just east of Wylam on Saturday, April 30th, with Dr. K. B. Blackburn and Prof. J. W.

Heslop Harrison as leaders. The day was fine and warm, and work amongst the willow thickets was therefore much easier than usual.

The date, of course, was much too early for insects. We did, however, observe a considerable number of Oil Beetles (*Meloe violaceus*) mating on grasses in the sandy places providing burrows for the solitary bees of the genus *Andrena* on which the beetle is parasitic. Other insects noted were queen humblebees of various species at sallow blossoms, the two white butterflies, *Pieris napi* and *P. rapae*, larvae of the Common Winter Moth and of the Red-tipped Clearwing, burrows of the Hornet Clearwing in different *Salix* species and also those of the beetle *Cryptorrhynchus lapathi*.

Amongst the plants, we detected a novelty in the form of the Greater Knapweed (*Centaurea scabiosa*), a plant described by Baker and Tate as rare in Northumberland, but on record for Dilston and Corbridge. Interesting, too, was the Butterbur colony, which, unlike most of those with us, contains a large proportion of female plants. As on former occasions, we examined the Melancholy Thistles closely, as the station produces a variety with cut leaves in plenty.

Another noteworthy plant was a pink-flowered form of the Ground Ivy, of which a fair number of specimens was found. Again, recalling the fact that the banks of the Tyne at this point had once been heavily wooded. Garlic, Bluebells, Wood Anemones, Red Campions, Wood Forget-me-not and Wood Rushes abounded. Other interesting species collected included the Bitter Cress, Alpine Penny Cress, Alpine Scurvy Grass, Great Hedge Bedstraw, Northern Bedstraw, Wood Stitchwort, Vernal Starwort, Bladder Campion, Salad Burnet, Rest Harrow, Yellow Loosestrife, Guelder Rose, Thrift and various *Salices* belonging to the species *S. nigricans*, *S. phyllicifolia*, *S. purpurea*, *S. viminalis*, *S. caprea*, *S. fragilis* and *S. alba*. With them grew a very important series of hybrids which are now being submitted to careful study.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The lecture season which has just closed has been a very successful one for this young society, for at everyone of its meetings the lecture room has been crowded. On March 15th, Mr. F. Ridley gave a very interesting account of "Old Chester-le-Street," illustrated by series of lantern slides, many of which were unique. Next followed, on March 29th, a talk on "What Darwin said." This provoked a long and instructive discussion. A "quiz" was held on April 12th during which topics drawn from nearly every branch of science were dealt with. Mr. W. B. Graves showed us his very beautiful coloured film on Tuesday, April 26th. This was taken during his holiday in Switzerland and was rendered the more valuable by Mr. Graves' descriptive remarks. The last lecture of the season was given on May 10th by Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison. He took for his subject "Past and Present Woodlands in the Scottish Western Isles," and it was illustrated with lantern slides.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

Early Appearance of the Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*) at Barnard Castle.—On April 20th, I observed a good specimen of the Painted Lady butterfly near Barnard Castle. It was settled on the ground sunning itself. When it was disturbed, it fluttered away for a short distance and then returned to the same spot, where I left it. Although the species is a well known immigrant, this is a very early record for the district.—J. P. Robson.

On April 22nd, as I was walking through Urpeth Woods with Mr. T. H. Ward, a butterfly which settled on a nearby bare patch, rose from some young spruces. I attempted to get a near view, but the insect vanished amongst the oaks. Although, I cannot be absolutely certain of its identity, I am almost sure that it was a Red Admiral (*V. atalanta*) in which case the occurrence would supply an interesting complement to Mr. Robson's record of the allied species.—J. W. H. H.

The Muslin Moth near Lamesley in the Team Valley.—On April 27th, as we were exploring the wood near Lamesley, we pushed through some rough herbage from which rose a female specimen of the Muslin Moth (*Cynia mendica*). The insect has since laid two batches of eggs. In addition to the fact that the exceptionally early date seems noteworthy, I understand that, although the insect has occurred at Dunston, this is the first time that it has been noted in the Team Valley.—T. H. Ward.

The Nesting Operations of a Pair of Song Thrushes.—During the first week in April, a pair of thrushes, which have haunted our garden for several years, built a nest in a site they have occupied for at least two previous seasons. In fact, the new nest was placed on top of that made last year. The site is in a tangle of a climbing Polygonum which festoons a Lombardy Poplar. Unfortunately for the birds, the climber has weakened the poplar to such an extent that with the slightest breeze it sways violently in the wind. As a result, during the gales of Easter week, the eggs were thrown out, and the nest deserted. Almost immediately the pair commenced to build a new one on a narrow ledge, barely three inches wide, inside a derelict Nissen hut. Naturally, owing to unsuitable nature of the position, the nest fell. Quite undaunted, the birds proceeded to build another nest in precisely the same place, and this suffered the same fate. During the process of building these nests almost a bushel of material was wasted by falling to the floor. In fact, the labour involved must have been colossal. Finally, a nest was constructed in a Weigelia bush near the door in the garden. At the present moment, the hen bird is safely sitting on a clutch of five eggs.—J. W. H. H.

On the Occurrence of Abnormalities in Sycamore Seedlings.—Last October, at the Annfield Plain meeting of the Northern Naturalists' Union, I exhibited a series of sycamore fruits in which the seeds were arranged in sets of three instead of the normal two. Some of these seeds were planted, and have now germinated, with the curious result that most of the seedlings possess three cotyledons or seed leaves. A few show further abnormalities in displaying fused, or partially fused cotyledons.—R. Harris.

The Aleyrodid, *Tetralicia ericae* Heslop Harrison, still on Waldrige Fell.—In 1915, an extremely interesting species of the Aleyrodidae (Hemiptera) was discovered on Waldrige Fell attached to colonies of the Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica Tetralix*). This insect was described as a new species belonging to a new genus in Vol. III. Pt. 2, of the *Vasculum* (1916). Recently, a similar white fly has turned up on the same food plant in Sweden. However, it has been deemed possible that the Swedish insect is specifically distinct from ours, and it became desirable that the two should be compared in every possible stage. To secure British material, a visit

was made to Waldrige on April 19th. After a lapse of 34 years, larvae of the insect were obtained from the identical patch of the foodplant that had provided the type specimens. Not only was this so, but, in addition, the species was found to be distributed widely over the moorland wherever the preferred heath grew. Since its original discovery, *Tetralicia ericae* has only turned up in two additional stations, Blanchland, Northumberland, to R. S. Bagnall, and at Scarborough, Yorks., to G. B. Walsh.—G.H.H.

Notes on Local Willows, with a Record of a Hybrid New to the District.—This season I have devoted a considerable amount of time to the study of the *Salices* growing in the Wear and Tyne Valleys. In particular, enormous numbers of examples of *Salix nigricans* and *S. phylicifolia* have been examined. The former species was encountered throughout the Tyne area and, in a very striking round-leaved guise, on Waldrige Fell, in every case in mixed colonies with other species. On the other hand, *S. phylicifolia* grew in almost pure stands near Eastgate in Weardale, although it flourished with *S. nigricans* and other willows at Ovingham and Wylam. Naturally, a sharp watch was kept for hybrids, and several were detected, in certain cases in plenty. For instance, *S. rubra* (= *S. viminalis* x *purpurea*) abounded in the Tyne Valley, in the Team Valley and along the Wear at Chester-le-Street. At Wylam, in addition to *S. rubra*, the hybrids coming under observation included plants of varying degrees of complexity, originating in crosses between *S. nigricans* and *S. phylicifolia*, in addition to such forms as *S. viminalis* x *S. caprea*, *S. phylicifolia* x *S. purpurea*. Moreover, a single well grown plant at parentage *S. nigricans* x *S. purpurea* was collected on the Tyne banks to the east of Wylam. As far as I can ascertain, this hybrid has not been reported previously from the British Isles.—J.W.H.H.

The Decadence of the Common Juniper on Waldrige Fell.—Forty years ago, as I have been told, the juniper was quite common in the alder carr which fringes the stream on the eastern edge of Waldrige Fell. In addition, a separate colony flourished on a drier zone of the open moorland to the west of this. Gradually, the plants began to die until this season only one poor specimen, in a moribund condition, remains. This was noted today (May 7th) growing amongst *Scirpus sylvatica* in the alder wood.—G.H.H.

Birds and Galls of *Cynips Kollari*.—In the last number of this magazine, reference was made to the attacks of woodpeckers on the Oak Marble Gall. On April 2nd, whilst several of us were exploring Lumley Wood, we again observed galls of this species destroyed for the sake of the larvae within. What interested us most, however, was the method by means of which the gall was cracked, and the larva extracted. In many cases, the gall had been carried from the oak tree and wedged in narrow cracks in elm bark. After being fixed in this manner, it had been broken by the birds' beaks and the grub secured.—J. Alan Richardson.

RECORDS

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Hipparchus papilionaria L. Large Emerald.	66
Captured near Hamsterley.	
Ourapteryx sambucaria L. Swallow-tailed Moth.	66
Also noted near Hamsterley.	
Colostygia olivata Hb. Beech-green Carpet.	66
Stated by Robson to be fairly common and well distributed in both counties, but not met with by most collectors.	
Obtained at Hamsterley.	
Thyatira batis L. Peach Blossom.	66
Another insect taken but rarely recently; captured at Hamsterley at sugar on June 19th.	

Xylena exsoleta L. Sword Grass.	66
Bred from larvae collected at Hamsterley, on October 28th.—C. Longstaffe.	
Bombyx rubi L. Fox Moth.	66
On March 25th, I observed a larva of the Fox Moth wandering across the path on the moorlands near Moorcock Inn, Waskerley. This was placed in a small tin box with hawthorn, but it spun up without feeding on April 1st. The moth, a rather small but well marked female, emerged on April 24th.--G.H.H	
Aegeria formicaeformis Esp. Red-tipped Clearwing.	66, 67
This rather rare "clearwing" was observed on <i>Salix rubra</i> , <i>S. viminalis</i> and <i>S. purpurea</i> along the Wear at Chesterle-Street, and full grown. larvae were obtained from <i>S. aurita</i> in another station in the same area on April 19th.	
Along the Tyne the insect was observed on <i>S. nigricans</i> and other willows on April 1st.—J.W.H.H.	
Lygris testata L. The Chevron.	66
This common moorland species used to be plentiful on Birtley Fell. Gradually the Fell has been ploughed up so that now very little of it remains, I was therefore very glad when I took a larva of this moth on May 7th feeding upon a male catkin of the Creeping Willow, <i>Salix repens</i> .— J.W.H.H.	
Amathes triangulum Tr. Double Square-spot.	66
Concerning this species, Robson remarks, "Not by any means a common species in either county." In spite of this, J. R. Johnson and myself used to obtain larvae freely in the Derwent Valley whilst I collected them commonly from Rumex near Beamish and Lamesley. However, for many years I have failed to find the insect in any stage until the last week in April this year, when I found a single larva, high up a Lombardy Poplar, in a thrush's nest built this season.—J.W.H.H.	

FLOWERING PLANTS

Hesperis matronalis L. Dame's Violet.	67
In the willow thickets just above Wylam.	
Viola lepida Jord. Pansy.	66, 67
Along the river side at Eastgate in Weardale; also in a reclaimed part of the Carr at Prestwick.	
Cotoneaster Simonsii Baker. Cotoneaster.	66
Found amongst the scrub hawthorns, etc., on the Wear at Eastgate.	
Lonicera periclymenum L. Honeysuckle.	66
On April 22nd, I discovered a huge tangle of honeysuckle in the birch wood on the west side of Urpeth Bottoms which proved to be composed of the best examples of the Oak-leaved Honeysuckle, var. <i>quercifolia</i> Ait., I have ever seen.	
Polemonium caeruleum L. Jacob's Ladder.	66
Thoroughly at home, and in quantity, along the river on both sides of the bridge over the Wear at Eastgate.	
Centaurea scabiosa L. Great Knapweed.	67
A few plants at Wylam.--J.W.H.H.	
Helleborus viridis L. Green Hellebore.	66
A few plants in a wood near Shotton Hall.	
Adoxa moschatellina L. Moschatel	66
In great quantity on the edge of the wood near Urpeth Mill.	
Corydalis claviculata T. Climbing Fumitory	66
Very abundant in the birch wood near the Riding Farm, Urpeth, on April 22nd, when it was in full flower.	

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BY THE WAY

Secretaries of our Societies are informed that if they wish accounts of their summer and autumn activities to appear in our December issue, material should be in the Editor's hands not later than November 30th, 1949. Notes and records of general interest may be sent by members, associates and others at any time.

THE NEWCASTLE MEETING OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION.

The 111th annual meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, held at Newcastle upon Tyne during the period August 31st, 1949 to September 7th, 1949, excelled all expectations. Not only did the attendance (3340) surpass noteworthy records set up for previous Newcastle meetings but, in addition, it was the highest of any of the post-war gatherings. Moreover, the quality of the papers reached a remarkably high level, whilst the social functions, both sectional and general, were regarded by all as amongst the most successful and interesting they had attended. Of those of importance to us as naturalists, we must single out for special mention the *Conversazione* arranged at the Hancock Museum by the Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle. Originally it was intended to limit the invitations to 300, but it seems certain that nearly double that number of Members attended, and we know that many more were disappointed by their failure to obtain tickets. Such a function is intended to bring together in an informal way workers with common interests, and to allow younger workers to come into contact with well known figures in the scientific world. We feel certain that in these aims, and in all other respects, the Hancock Museum gathering proved a complete success.

Amongst the local members we were very pleased to see many who are familiar figures at N.N.U. meetings. Some of these had played active parts in the preparation of the scientific survey ; and of the programmes of the sections, as well as in the organization of the various field excursions arranged for the natural history sections

IDENTIFICATION OF SPECIMENS

During recent years, owing to limitations of space, lists of referees who are prepared to name specimens, for our members have not been published in the *Vasculum*. We should like to point out that such services are still available. If the specimens in question are sent to the Editor, accompanied by stamps for their return or a reply he will see that they reach a suitable referee.

This matter is the more urgent as there have been influxes of strange insects into our area during recent years, and we have received important records which must be verified by an expert before they can be published. Further, many such species, especially those of a more critical nature, cannot be named from the textbooks usually available.

MR. J. E. NOWERS.

In our number for December, 1947, in announcing the death of our old friend Mr. J. E. Nowers, we stated that an obituary notice would appear in the succeeding issue of this magazine. Unfortunately, this notice was lost in the post, and Mr. J. B. Nicholson, M.A. has therefore sent us a second copy. In view of the great esteem in which Mr. Nowers was held, we have no hesitation, even at this late date, of publishing this record of our valued member's work.

OBITUARY NOTICE

JOHN EDMUND NOWERS (1864-1947)

When John E. Nowers came to Darlington from Burton-on-Trent in 1914, it was only natural that he should at once join the local Naturalists' Field Club as he had played an active part in the Burton-on-Trent Natural History and Archaeological Society ever since he had joined it as a junior member on its formation in 1876. During his Burton days, he had gained a very wide experience, learning much from close association with the many keen veterans of the Burton society and visiting Scotland, Wales, Ireland and many parts of England in pursuit of his botanical and entomological interests.

It is not surprising that so experienced a naturalist should have been warmly welcomed in his new Club, and that some essential work should quickly have been found for him. He was soon elected Hon. Secretary and continued in this office until 1930, when pressure of business duties compelled him to resign. Later, on his retirement, he again took up the reins from 1935 to 1942, thus serving the Club as secretary for 22 years in all.

As one of the founders of the N.N.U., and a consistent supporter of both it and the Yorkshire Union, he was widely known to, and esteemed by, north country naturalists. He was an Honorary Member of both the Burton and Darlington Clubs, the Northern Naturalists' Union and the Wallis Club.

On the botanical side he specialised in Flowering Plants, Mosses and Charophyta; on the entomological side, in Lepidoptera and Coleoptera; and he had considerable knowledge of freshwater life, including the microscopic forms. In addition to these subjects, the range of his interests was a very wide one and he could be relied upon for a helpful contribution to a discussion on any aspect of Natural History. His lifelong enthusiasm was in no way abated during his 83rd summer, as may be instanced by some interesting observations he then made on two species of digger wasps, which he found carrying paralysed flies to provision their tunnels in an old tree-stump. This latter incident is characteristic of his intense devotion to practical field-work and observation.

The influence of so enthusiastic a naturalist, occupying the position of secretary for so long a period, and discharging his duties with unremitting zeal, has indubitably been a most valuable asset to the Darlington club.

While we shall miss the valuable counsel by which we have profited for so long, his example will not soon be forgotten by his fellow members. J.B.N.

THE SOCIETIES.

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The first field meeting for 1949 was held in Urpeth Bottoms on May 28th. A goodly company met at Birtley station in fine weather, and under the leadership of Professor Heslop Harrison took the Urpeth road westward, leaving it to enter the Bottoms near the abandoned oil mill where, in days long past, linseed oil was made from locally grown flax. Many of the interesting plants recorded for the area by the botanists of a century ago were discovered still persisting in their old habitats. These, with others, are included amongst the following:- Ivy-leaved Buttercup, Wood Stitchwort, Sand Spurrey, Rosa Mollis, Procumbent Tormentil, Stork's-bill, Wood Geranium, Peppermint, Gipsywort, Field Lady's Mantle, Brooklime, Germander Speedwell, Mountain Speedwell, Ivy-leaved Speedwell, Foxglove, Sweet Cicely, Guelder Rose, Great Pendulous Sedge, Bay-leaved Willow (and its hybrid with the Crack Willow), the Field Pansy, the Red and Bladder Campions, the Giant Horsetail and *Claytonia sibirica*. The latter plant is noteworthy as it appeared first in this district fifty years ago, and has maintained its hold since. Of the butterflies and moths, only the Small Copper and Green-veined White were observed amongst the former whilst the moths included shoals of the commoner carpets like the Garden and the Silver Ground Carpet. Larvae were abundant, especially those of the various winter moths. Noteworthy of that group were totally black larvae of the Mottled Umber.

The sixty-third meeting took place at Wynyard Park on 18th June, when over a hundred members, including the President,

Mr J J Robson, assembled in Wynyard Park. Of these some spent the afternoon by the lakeside, but the bulk made their way past the Hall, up the Brierley Beck and into the woodlands. Whilst the wild flowers encountered presented no great varieties, several interesting species were observed, chief of which were *Nymphaea alba*, *N. lutea*, *Euonymus europaea*, *Potentilla procumbens*, *Geranium dissectum*, *Hypericum tetrapterum*, *H. hirsutum*, *Lysimachia nummularia*, *Listera ovata*, *Orchis fuchsii*, *Carex otrubae* and *Poa aquatica*. For the first time for some years, the mollusca were worked, Mr. Lowe recording *Bythinia tentaculata*, *Limnaea palustris*, *L. peregra*, *L. auricularia*, *Ancylus lacustris*, *Planorbis albus*, *P. fontanus*, *Sphaerium corneum*, *S. lacustre*, *Pisidium milium*, *P. nitidum*, *P. obtusale*, and *Anodonta cygnea*.

Mr. Gent, who paid special attention to the birds, listed the Rook, Jackdaw, Chaffinch, Pied Wagtail, Blue Tit, Marsh Tit, Spotted Flycatcher, Willow Warbler, Blackcap, Whitethroat, Mistle Thrush, Song Thrush, Blackbird, Redstart, Redbreast, Wren, Swallow, Sand Martin, Cuckoo, Mute Swan and Moorhen.

Amongst the insects there were captured two dragonflies *Pyrrhosoma nymphula* and *Enallagma cyathigerum*, with a number of Lepidoptera, most interesting of which were the Large Skipper butterfly, the Orange Tip and the Painted Lady, with the moth, the Beautiful Carpet.

The excursion concluded with an inspection of the Hall, where we were privileged to visit the private chapel.

The last outing of the season took place at the Sneap on July 16th under very dismal conditions, marked by the smallness of the attendance. As a result of the presence of sheep in the woodlands, but few of the usual interesting plants were observed although we did find Cow-wheat, Musk Mallow, the Heath Orchid, the Beautiful St. John's Wort, with its ally *Hypericum dubium*, a remarkable foxglove with short, broad leaves and corolla half the usual length, *Rosa mollis*, *R. glauca*, *R. obtusifolia*, with many *R. canina* forms, *Equisetum sylvaticum* and *E. palustre*. Of the birds, the presence of the Tree Sparrow seems worthy of note as does the capture of the plant bug *Tropicoris rufipes*, a relic of our once strong Pentatomid fauna.

DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

At the Annual Conversazione Dr. C. W. Gibby gave a masterly address on "The Fortified City of Durham." The exhibits included a display of specimens from the Club's collections designed to compare families of animals and plants known in the fossil state with related present-day species. The winter lectures covered a wide range of topics, as will be gleaned from some of the titles: "Naturalist in Lapland" (Mr. R. Chislett), "Durham Cathedral" (The President, Mr. G. H. Burden), "Cycling in Norway" (Mr. F. W. Cooke). "The

Miracle of Plant Life" (Mr. L. Buss), "The Measurement of Geological Time" (Mr. R. S. Thompson), "Weather Whys" (Mr. D. Hill), "Colour Photography" (Dr. O. H. Wichstead), "Italian Holiday" (Mr. G. F. Horsley), "A Course at a Field Study Centre" (Mr. J. P. Utley), "Growth Substances in Plants" (Mr. J. Lovell), "Experiences in Canada" (Mr. F. L. Cook), "The Economic Geology of Cleveland" (Miss M. S. Carmichael), "Luminosity in Animals and Plants" (Mr. W. W. Allen), "Problems of Bird Migration" (Mr. M. H. Rowntree), "The Wild Flower Garden of Upper Teesdale" (Mr. J. B. Nicholson) and "Expedition to Iceland" (Mr. R. A. Jarvis). In all, 26 addresses were given, 19 of them by our own members.

At the Annual Meeting, Mr. G. F. Horsley was elected President for the ensuing year. The Council's Report described a very active year: 48 indoor meetings with an average attendance of 57, 52 excursions and rambles, and 20 Junior Section outings and meetings. Local rambles had taken place each Saturday afternoon throughout the winter except for the Christmas break, thanks to the initiative of the Excursion Secretary, Mr. T. N. Scaling.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

We held our first outdoor meeting in Lambton Park on May 21st, when a good company took advantage of the fine day to inspect the woods and grounds. Many plants, including fine varieties of the Red Campion, the Mountain, Common and Germander Speedwells, Soapwort, Wood Forget me not, Yellow Pimpernel, Dogwood, Alpine Currant, Giant Bellflower, Field Mouse-eared Chickweed, were collected. Insects were far from plentiful but of the butterflies we captured the Small Copper, the Red Admiral, and the Green-veined White, the latter sucking nectar from the yellow Azaleas which filled the air with their powerful scent. Amongst the moths our chief "takes" included the Garden Carpet, the Silver Ground Carpet, the Sandy Carpet and the Brown Silver Line. The usual queen bumble bees boomed their way from flower to flower, and we noted that the Wood Forget me not had a strange visitor in the form of the common hive bee.

On July 23rd we went to the grounds surrounding Lumley Castle and were once again favoured with fine weather.

The plants observed were much the same as those seen when we visited Lambton Park, with the addition of the Enchanter's Nightshade, *Hypericum dubium*, Meadow Crane's-bill, Herb Robert, Balsam, Wood Sanicle, Cuckoo Pint, Lime, Three-nerved Sandwort and Melick Grass. Just out of flower was the Yellow Deadnettle, here in its only station in our two counties. The Clouded Magpie amongst the moths was the only Lepidopteran new to our local list. We also discovered a hanging nest of the wasp, *Vespa sylvestris*, a great rarity with us, and never before observed by any

of us in the Team Valley and adjoining districts. It proved to be inhabited by a very vicious set of tenants for, without provocation, all the members of our party were attacked and stung. Perhaps we should add, for the benefit of any naturalists visiting the woods in future, that a route should be planned beforehand, as the paths at the eastern end are blocked by a combination of fallen trees and dense undergrowth.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES.

The Cowberry (*Vaccinium vitis-idaea*) and the Chickweed Wintergreen, *Trientalis europaea* still in Alnwick Park.—It is interesting to record that these two montane species, both recorded by Baker and Tate as "descending to 150 yards in Alnwick Park," still hold their stations there on the upper slopes of Brizlee Hill. The latter is fairly widespread as a component of the ground flora of the open birch, wood, whilst two small patches of the former were found with *Vaccinium myrtillus* in full flower on September 10th.—Yolande Massey.

The Crabapple in Flower a Second Time in September.—Although I have seen wild roses flowering twice in a season, until September 17th, I have never seen the Crabapple doing so. However, on the date named, I observed a tree on Chowdene Bank, Low Fell, full of blossom. More remarkable still, the eggs of its proper Psyllid, *Psylla mali*, had also hatched precociously.—G.H.H.

Butterflies in the Wooller District in July 1949.—Most of the butterflies seen belonged to common species like the Small Heath, Common Blue and Meadow Brown. Nevertheless, one of my observations seems distinctly important. On July 3rd, several fritillaries were noted in rapid flight on the moors between Wooller and Cheviot. These were presumably Dark Green Fritillaries (*Argynnis aglata*), not recorded until recently for North Northumberland.—C. J. Gent.

A New Orchid Hybrid.—This interesting plant I am describing here, as it is quite likely that it occurs in our counties. *Orchis purpurella* Steph. x *Coeloglossum viride* (L.) Hart. = x *O vindella* hyb. nov.

Planta 11 cm. alta super tuber; foliis angustis, erectis; floribus atropurpureis vel viridipurpureis; labello triangulare, medio lobulo parvo triangulato, affixo basi horizontali vel leviter concavo.

Habitat of type, now in my possession. Isle of Eigg (v.-c. 104).

Examples of this interesting new intergeneric cross were discovered this summer at Laig Bay, Isle of Eigg (104) and at Borve, Harris (110). The parentage is clearly revealed by the form of the labellum, which is wedge-shaped, intermediate between the rhomboidal lip of *Orchis purpurella* and the strap-shaped lip of *Coeloglossum viride*. The medium lobe of the labellum is considerably shorter than the two laterals. The perianth segments have all the rich purple colour of *purpurella*, tinged with green toward the flower centre. The lip pattern is also reminiscent of that species, consisting of random dots and bars of dark purple dispersed round the spur mouth. The plants are dwarf in stature (stem length measured from the tuber top averaging 11 cm.) with four erect, narrow unspotted leaves. It should be noted that I have two other orchid hybrids, *Platanthera bifolia* x *Coeloglossum viride* and *Orchis majalis* x *Coeloglossum viride*, to describe. The former was collected on South. Uist (110) and the latter on South Harris (110).—John Heslop Harrison.

Orchis majalis var traunsteinerioides Pugsley in Northumberland and Durham.—In the July number of the *Vasculum* for 1948, I pointed out that the orchid known as *Orchis majalis* occurred at the Blackhall Rocks in Durham, and at Seaton Sluice in Northumberland. At the same time, I indicated that our form was very close to Pugsley's *traunsteinerioides*, described from Wicklow in Eire. In fact, in my opinion, the differences between that form and ours are so slight, that I have no hesitation in labelling our plant *Orchis majalis* var. *traunsteinerioides*.

Last year, members of the British Ecological Society, during the course of their Newcastle meeting, explored the dunes at Seaton Sluice and collected the same orchid. This was subsequently, and quite erroneously, recorded in the *Journal of Ecology* as *Orchis praetermissa* Druce, and its presence so far North commented on as being noteworthy. It cannot be too strongly emphasised that the only known station in our counties for *O. praetermissa* is that discovered long ago in Billingham Bottoms, County Durham. All other reputed occurrences are due to misidentification of *O. purpurella* forms or, as in this case, of *O. majalis* var. *traunsteinerioides*.

Here, once again, it seems necessary to protest against the unnecessary multiplication, of so-called *Orchis* species. In the "Check-list of British Vascular Plants," no fewer than six forms are accorded specific rank which are either members of hybrid swarms, or forms of other recognised species. That provides the reason for my recording our coast orchid as *Orchis majalis* var. *traunsteinerioides*, and not as *Orchis traunsteinerioides* (Pugsley) Pugsley, as it appears in the "Check-list."—J.W.H.H.

Immigrant Lepidoptera in Northumberland and Durham.—I was on the Fame Islands on June 9th, and noted a number of Painted Ladies flying over Thrift and Sea-campion. Two days later I visited the Kyleo ridge and saw several more of the same species. The next day they were in gardens at Warkworth.—G. W. Temperley.

On June 19th, a specimen of the Hummingbird Hawk spent about ten minutes in my garden at Sunderland feeding at the flowers of Sweet Rocket. A group of five friends crowded around to watch the sight and failed to disturb the insect.—T. W. Jefferson.

A specimen of the Painted Lady was observed at Seahouses, Northumberland on July 12th, and two of the Red Admiral at Budle Bay on the same date.—J. S. Ash

The first Red Admiral, after that already recorded, in our June issue, was seen in the Birtley area on May 13th and the second at Lambton on May 21st. Since then it has been seen regularly until September 21st.—J.W.H.H.

During August and September, several examples of the Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*) have been seen in the Barnard Castle district.—J. P. Robson.

Hybrid Rushes at Birtley.—On page 29 of our December issue for 1946, Dr. D. H. Valentine reported the occurrence of x *Juncus diffusus* Hoppe (= *J. effusus* x *J. inflexus*) in Butterby Marshes. The same hybrid can now be recorded as growing in some numbers on marshy ground to the west of Birtley. Although the fertility of the seeds produced by the hybrid plants has not been tested by germination experiments, the presence of the larvae of the case-bearing moth *Coleophora caespitiella* on the seeds affords some evidence concerning the matter.

In the same station, a second *Juncus* hybrid was also encountered in the form of the cross between *Juncus acutiflorus* and *J. articulatus*. In this case likewise a fair number of hybrid plants was detected. As far as I could determine, this hybrid increases solely by vegetative means, but, in view of the great variability of all the plants coming under observation, further investigations seem necessary.

It appears worthy of mention that, in this locality, two forms of *Juncus acutiflorus* exist, one possessing very heavy inflorescences.—J.W.H.H.

Peloric Plants of the Toadflax (*Linaria vulgaris* in the Team Valley.—During the progress of some research work in which I am engaged I collected peloric examples of the Toadflax along the Bewicke Main railway. J. Alan Richardson.

The Establishment of Further New Colonies of the Bulrush (*Typha latifolia*) in the Team Valley.—During recent years, the colonization of all suitable habitats by the Bulrush has proceeded apace in this area. Now it must be admitted that, in its earliest colonies it has established itself quite firmly. Recently the claypit near Birtley station has been invaded, with the result that a small number of fruiting plants exists in the south east angle whilst in the west, fairly high up the slopes, three seedlings were noted on September 16th. It seems certain that the latter will develop into a strong colony in the near future. The former plants have been damaged seriously by the drought.—J. Alan Richardson.

The Destruction of Well-known Habitats of some of our Rarer Plants.—On August 4th, on our return from a visit to Castle Eden Dene, we passed the two ponds at Finchale and Cocken, well known for the flora they used to support. I was grieved to discover that both had been drained. The Finchale pond had not been filled in, and its bed was covered with rhizomes of the Yellow Water Lily (*Nuphar lutea*) as thick as one's arm. They were making pitiful attempts to push forth their leaves under very unsuitable conditions. The Cocken pond, once the home of the Water Violet (*Hottonia palustris*) and *Oenanthe aquatica* (= *O. Phellandrium*) was completely filled up and levelled, no traces of the plants remaining.—J.W.H.H.

The Scale insect, *Eriococcus devoniensis* Greene, at Ross Links.— This interesting insect, in spite of its name, is well distributed throughout the British Isles, and may be found upon all of our moorlands wherever the host plant *Erica tetralix*, flourishes. In general, it is not gregarious, and may easily be detected by the peculiar gall it produces on the heath. This takes the form of a spiral twist of the stem in which the insect dwells. On Ross Links, the insect occurred sparsely for the most part, but in one station, of some extent, thousands were present. In fact, the whole patch of plants seemed blighted and stunted as the result of the enormous numbers of *Eriococcus devoniensis* attacking them.—J.W.H.H.

RECORDS

FLOWERING PLANTS

Veronica filiformis Sm. 67

This plant a native of the Near East, has been reported in recent years from many stations in Great Britain. It can now be recorded from the banks of the Pent near Ponteland.

X Veronica Godroni Rouy. 66

On May 21st, when the Birtley Natural History Society visited Lambton Park, we observed many colonies of the Mountain Speedwell (*V. montana*) and of the Germander Speedwell (*V. chamaedrys*). Near the Castle, where the two species met, a strange speedwell was encountered which when closely examined seemed to combine the characters of the two species named. It formed a large patch and was nearest a colony of the Germander Speedwell. After careful examination, it was determined as a hybrid between the two species named, and not on record previously for the British Isles. When it has been studied more closely, it will be fully discussed elsewhere.—J.W.H.H.

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BY THE WAY

It is important that correspondents should send all communications containing material for publication, and concerning exchanges, to the Editor at the above address. Recently, owing to failures to recognise this simple requirement, considerable trouble and delay have been caused, and it is desired to avoid such happenings in the future. Secretaries of our Societies and contributors are requested to send all material intended for publication in our March issue before March 1st, 1950.

NOTES ON LOCAL MAMMALS

A few weeks ago, in looking over an old scrap book which had fallen into our hands, we encountered an intensely interesting series of papers dealing with the mammalia of our counties. These articles, forty four in number, bear the general title given above and have been extracted from the Newcastle Weekly Chronicle during the period January 3rd, 1880, and January 1st, 1881. Indicative of the authorship are appended to each the initials "J. A." Other cuttings in the book make it clear that J. A. lived at Belford, Northumberland.

The animals are discussed one by one, the first article giving information about the common bat, and the last about the "common stag" and the fallow deer. Throughout the series, as far as we can judge, the treatment of the individual species is exhaustive, and maintains a consistently high degree of accuracy. As a source of first hand knowledge about the status of our local mammals at the commencement of the last twenty five years of the nineteenth century, the papers seem unique and should be read by all interested in the subject. In studying them, one curious omission will be discovered; they make no references to the badger. In a later note, dated in pencil "N.W.C., 20/8/81," and appearing after the series had been concluded, J. A. explains that he

had imagined that the last local specimen of the animal had been killed on North Hazelrigg Moor in the spring of 1852. He supplies facts concerning a colony of badgers which had been detected in Detchant Wood, near Belford.

From various notes in the *Vasculum*, readers will be aware of the fact that, at the present time the badger has a much wider range in Northumberland and Durham than J. A. imagined.

KING'S COLLEGE NATURALISTS' CONVERSAZIONE.

Normally, the meetings which are held by this Society are not open to non-members. However, it is hoped to hold a *Conversazione*, probably on the first or second Saturday of February to which members of the N.N.U. are invited. The meeting, by kind permission of the authorities, will be held in the Hancock Museum, and those intending to come are requested to bring suitable exhibits. It should be noted that this is an advance notice, and that further communications to the affiliated societies of the N.N.U will be sent in January, after which time details of the various exhibits will be required.

LARVAL FOODPLANTS.

In our number for June this year, we drew attention to a book by Stokoe and Stovin entitled "*The Caterpillars of British Moths, including the Eggs, Chrysalids and Foodplants.*" Quite recently, this work has been followed by a second from the pen of that well known field lepidopterist, Mr. P. B. M. Allan, M.A., F.R.E.S., the publishers being Messrs. Watkins and Doncaster. Although the book bears the title, "*Larval Foodplants,*" it is much more than a mere list of known foodplants, for, whenever possible, it supplies concise little notes directing readers to substitute foodplants, to accounts of methods of rearing difficult species and to other matters. Further, it indicates the authority responsible for the names of the whole of the species discussed, an important feature neglected entirely by the writers of the first named publication. As was to be expected from a worker of the calibre of Mr. Allan, the book is characterised by its completeness, its extreme accuracy and ease of reference; without hesitation it may be commended to all who feel the need of such a book.

B.B.C. BIOLOGY.

A few weeks ago, in a broadcast of "Country Questions," a listener asked a very simple question: "Do caterpillars have sex?" To this the astounding answer was given that a caterpillar, being nothing but an embryo, could not possibly be endowed with sex. Moreover, this erroneous reply was complicated by the addition of irrelevant remarks of the skin and squash order. The answer should have been that, most emphatically, caterpillars do possess sex. The truth of this statement may be demonstrated

quite easily by collecting a few caterpillars of the Small White butterfly from cabbages, and examining the upper side of the last abdominal segments. In the male, the gonads are readily perceived through the skin as two whitish oval masses. These, very often, even at this early stage, contain mature spermatozoa. The sex in chrysalids may be determined with equal ease by an examination of the genital scars.

Again, in a recent "quiz," a schoolgirl was so unfortunate as to state that "cochineal" was vegetable. This was, no doubt, wrong, but later, in correcting it, a B.B.C. official said that "cochineal" was a beetle! We have heard of insects of diverse affinities classified by laymen as beetles, but to learn that a scale insect like the cochineal insect was a beetle seems somewhat staggering. Perhaps, however, the speaker was confusing the word "cochineal" with "Coccinella," the generic name of some of the lady bird beetles.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The usual Autumn Meeting of the Union was held on October 15th, by the invitation of the Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club, at their rooms in Darlington, with the President, Mr. J. J. Robson, M.B.O.U., in the chair.

In view of the recent British Association Meeting at Newcastle, instead of the usual lecture, we listened to interesting accounts of various items on the programme of value to us as naturalists. Dr. D. H. Valentine discussed the history of important Upper Teesdale plants whilst Dr. J. L. Crosby gave an account of discourses concerning birds. Mr. J. Alan Richardson summarised for us the various papers of physiological importance, and Dr. K. B. Blackburn passed under review the talks dealing with pollen analysis.

After tea we adjourned to examine the exhibits brought by various members for our inspection.

DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

On our visit to Finchale Priory on May 7th, Mr. H. Sowerby led a walking party by the pleasant riverside path from Durham. Among the plants noted were Wood Stitchwort (*Stellaria nemorum*), Field Mouse-ear Chickweed (*Cerastium arvense*), Sweet Woodruff (*Asperula odorata*) and a woodland form of the Field Rose (*R. arvensis*). After tea, Mr. G. H. Burdon described the history of the priory in relation to the remains now left.

A motor tour up Swaledale and down Wensleydale on May 14th enabled a party of 62 to visit several lovely waterfalls. At Aysgarth Force the botanists were pleased to find that several plants recorded from here many years ago still occur.

Visiting Upper Teesdale on May 21st, the party clambered up Fairy Dell and then across the moors behind Holwick Scars and past juniper-clad hillsides to cross the Tees below High Force. Under Mr. Walker's guidance, attention was chiefly devoted to noting evidence of glacial action. Nests of Curlew and Dipper were found, together with Marsh Violet (*Viola palustris*), Oak Fern (*Thelypteris palustris*), Beech Fern (*T. phegopteris*), Borrer's Male Fern (*Dryopteris Borreri*) and a pinnatifid-leaved form of the Melancholy Thistle (*Cirsium heterophyllum*).

The All-Night Ramble on May 28/29th, under Mr. Stainthorpe, was from Barnard Castle, via Barningham, to Brignall Mill, returning down Brignall Banks, now rather rough going owing to falls from the cliff-face. Bird song was somewhat restrained by a cold wind, but 27 species were timed. Redstarts, Pied Flycatchers and Wood Wrens were seen and heard in pleasing numbers.

A long day's excursion to the Farne Islands was undertaken on June 11th, Mr. Stainthorpe again our leader. The nesting sea-birds were watched at close range under ideal conditions and many interesting observations made, such as an Eider Duck driven off her nest by Arctic Terns, Puffins carrying beaks full of whiting for their young, and Eider ducklings just hatched.

Bedburn and "The Grove" were visited under Mr. A. Ball's guidance on June 25th. The botanists reported huge tussocks formed by the sedge *Carex paniculata*, Mountain Currant (*Ribes alpinum*) in a hedge and two forms of Cow-wheat (*Melampyrum pratense*) with pale and bright-yellow flowers respectively. Their most unexpected "find," however, was a seedling tree of the Dawn Redwood (*Metasequoia*), needless to say planted. This is a "living fossil," only known from fossil material until growing trees were discovered in the remote interior of China in 1945.

On the Roman Wall excursion on July 2nd, the party were particularly impressed with the excavations and excellent museum at Corstopitum. The following week, the Lartington ponds were visited; on July 16th, the Marske Beck valley almost up to Helwith; and on the 30th, the Bishop's Park at Auckland, some opencast coal workings near-by and Mr. Ball's garden, where a great deal of interest was found, including repeated attempts of wasps to enter a bee-hive.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The winter session of the Birtley Natural History Society commenced with a lecture by Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison who talked about "Sidelights on Evolution." He described various experiments he had carried out, choosing more especially those depending upon field observations in the Team Valley. The lecture was illustrated

by lantern slides of Urpeth Woods and adjoining habitats. On October 11th. Dr. P. G. Fothergill interested us with a careful account of the "Fungal Diseases of Plants," in which many fungoid pests of trees and crop plants were described. His talk was accompanied by a display of lantern slides and appropriate specimens. Dr. C. W. Gibby visited us on October 25th, and delivered a very important lecture on "Durham Cathedral." He approached the subject chiefly from the standpoint, of monastic life in the Middle Ages, and also gave special attention to the connection of St. Cuthbert with the Cathedral. His slides depicting the coffin and relics of the Saint were especially appreciated. On November 8th, the President of the Union, Mr. J. J. Robson, M.B.O.U., gave us a splendid account of his various visits to the Bass Rock and to the May Isle to study the bird life on those sanctuaries. His lantern slides and magnificent photographs were greatly admired. One of our own members, Mr. Thompson, lectured on November 22nd, choosing as his topic, "Local Plants." The very entertaining lecture was illustrated by a long series of photographs in colour taken by Mr. Thompson in the north-eastern area.

CONSETT AND DISTRICT NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

The Annual Dinner and Conversazione took place in Hanson's Cafe, Middle Street, Consett, on November 30th, 1949, when no fewer than sixty members sat down to dinner. Professor and Mrs. J. W. Heslop Harrison were again our invited guests as well as our own member, Mr. Ellerington.

This year, Mrs. Dixon, the President, was in the chair. After we had partaken of an excellent dinner, she proposed the toast to the King. Following this, Mr. G. Teesdale, in a pleasing speech, gave the toast of the guests. Professor Heslop Harrison replied for Mrs. Harrison and himself. In doing so, he recounted the history of the Club and maintained how, at various times, it had formed one of the mainstays of the N.N.U. Incidentally, he drew attention to the great good-will toward each other existing amongst the Club's members, and thanked them for the kindness they had always displayed to Mrs. Harrison and himself. As, on this occasion, Mr. W. Ellerington, to allow the Club to show its appreciation of the work he had done on its behalf, appeared as an invited guest, he also replied to the toast of the visitors, and utilised the opportunity to describe the steady and persistent growth of the Club in stature and importance. To Mr. Surtees-Armstrong was entrusted the toast of the Club which was given in a witty speech to which Mrs. Dixon responded suitably. In her remarks, she pointed out the various ways in which individual members had been of service. Mr. J. J. Robson also said a few interesting words on the Avocet which he had sketched for the menu card.

The exhibits were next examined. Mr. Robson, as usual, had on view a fine series of his photographs of Shetland bird life, whilst Mr. A. E. Hart produced a number of exhibits illustrating the bark and foliage of our trees. Mr. Chas. Allison brought for inspection his magnificent prize Silver Brown and Silver Black rabbits, and Miss H. M. Durham exhibited a wild dog rose found in flower on October 16th.

The evening closed when Mr Horn showed a series of slides depicting various outings held in the past by the Club and the Union, and also a number of film strips illustrating various types of habitats, insects, birds, flowers and fruits. Again, we had spent one of those pleasant evenings which are never forgotten.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

Late Flowering of Plants.—In addition to the Durham record of the crab apple flowering a second time, I can report a similar occurrence from Longhorsley where, in a nearby lane, a crab apple tree was seen in full bloom on September 17th.—C. E. Mallen.

A laburnum was in flower in a Jesmond garden on October 10th.—K.B.B.

On October 16th, 1949, at Consett, a bush of the Downy Rose of the white flowered type was carrying a second crop of flowers.—H. M. Durham.

Immigrant and Other Butterflies and Moths in the Derwent Valley.—The Red Admiral began to appear in our garden at Rowlands Gill on July 30th, when a single specimen was seen. They were observed regularly until September 22nd, when nine visited one clump of flowers. Since that date, they have continued in similar numbers until the middle of October. The Painted Lady has also been present, but in small quantity, only single specimens being present on September 23rd, 24th, and October 10th. Of other Vanessids I saw one Peacock butterfly at Edmondbyers on August 4th. The Silver Y moth was noted in the garden on various dates between September 28th and October 10th.—C. Hutchinson.

The Fate of a Brood of Buff-Tips.—On July 19th, I found over one hundred eggs of the Buff Tip (*Phalera bucephala*) laid in small batches on a fence post close to one of the Barnard Castle woods. I carefully collected them and kept them in a chip box until they hatched on July 31st. Not wishing to keep them, I placed the young larvae on an isolated sallow in the wood, but on looking for them a month later, there was no trace of them. Possibly they had fallen victims to the plague of wasps we have had this summer.—J. P. Robson.

Larva-beating at Barnard Castle.—This season, in one of our woods, I had the pleasure of beating over a dozen larvae of the Pebble Hook-tip (*Drepana falcataria*) from birch. With them I also obtained three specimens of the Lesser Swallow Prominent (*Pheosia gnoma*), a dozen Coxcomb Prominents (*Lophopteryx capucina*) and a considerable number of the Iron Prominent (*Notodonta dromedarius*), the latter differed much in size.—J. P. Robson.

Early Appearances of Local Butterflies.—The following records show how the hot spring and early summer have advanced the dates of flight of our local butterflies. In the coastal districts the Common Blue (*Polyommatus icarus*) was flying in both sexes on June 14th, although the males

were seen on June 5th. The Brown Argus (*Aricia agestis*) was seen first on June 17th and the season over near Sherburn by July 10th. The coastal colonies were fully out on July 25th. Of other butterflies, the Small Heath began to emerge on June 7th, and the Meadow Brown on June 21st, whilst the Green Hair Streak was flying in numbers on May 20th.—T. W. Jefferson.

The Weardale and District Naturalists' Field Club.—At its last Annual General Meeting, it was decided to disband the above Club. The Minutes Book, Cash Book and Cash Balance have been deposited at Bowes Museum where the books may be inspected by anyone interested in them. The filed records of plants found in the Weardale District have been deposited at Wolsingham Grammar School where, it is hoped, they will be kept up-to-date by pupils of the school.—Doris E. Milbum.

Rosa mollis Colonies near Birtley, Co. Durham.—Recently, in order to carry out some research work I have undertaken on our local wild roses I visited some of the pit heaps in the district. On almost all of these wherever they have been occupied by shrubs, the Downy Rose (*R. mollis*) was present, sometimes even to the exclusion of other species.—J. Alan Richardson.

RECORDS

FLOWERING PLANTS

- Antennaria dioica** L. Mountain Everlasting. 68
On September 24th, 1949, I detected two plants of this species in the Henhole, Cheviot, at an elevation of 2,050 feet.
- Cornus suecica** L. Dwarf Cornel. 68
At 1,850 feet in the same area, I observed a colony of this plant about 2 yards across. No plant was fruiting. So far as I know the species has not been previously recorded from this side of Cheviot.—G. A. Swan.
- Ranunculus lingua** L. Great Spearwort. 67
A single plant was noted in flower in Gosforth Park.—J. S. Ash.
- Carex disticha** Huds. 110
During the first week in July, when I was working the dune flats near Barvas, Isle of Lewis, I discovered an enormous mixed colony of *Carex maritima* and *C. arenaria*. As some of the latter seemed to differ from the type form in structure and habit, I submitted them to Mr. E. Nelves for his opinion; he determined the plants as *C. disticha*, a species new to the Outer Hebrides.—J.W.H.H.
- Polygonum mite** Schrank 66
This species, new to the Northumberland and Durham list, was discovered on marshy ground west of Birtley.—J.W.H.H.
- Cirsium acaulon** (L.) Scop. Stemless Thistle. 70
In working the Cumberland wild roses, I discovered a colony of seven or eight examples of this species growing on a grassy patch on the west side of the Newlands road leading from Keswick to Buttermere. *C. acaulon* was once recorded in error from Ennerdale, but the plants concerned were *Carlina vulgaris*.
- Zannichellia gibberosa** Rchb. 66
Dense masses of this plant, now recorded for the first time from Durham, were found in pools in a clay pit near Birtley on September 30th.—J.W.H.H.
- Allium scorodoprasum** L. Sand Garlic. 66
By the Teesside near Aislaby; collected by Miss H. Worthington.—J.B.N.
- Maianthemum bifolium** Sch. May Lily. 66
Still in its old station at Blanchland in 1949.—A.N.G.

- Adoxa moschatellina** L. Moschatel 66
 In late Spring, 1948, a plant was seen in Blaid's Wood, Durham, bearing a well-formed fruiting head.—A.N.G.
- Sisymbrium altissimum** L. 66
 In both of the clay pits near the railway station Birtlev—J.W.H.H.
- Hypericum humifusum** L. Trailing St. Johns Wort. 66
 Fifty years ago, a strong colony of this plant was discovered near Birtley by the late Mr. Charles Robson, but this was destroyed by building operations. On September 15th 1949 a further colony was detected to the west of Birtley, a mile from the original station.—J.W.H.H.
- Salix cinerea** L. Gray Sallow. 66
 Found in several of the coast Denes like Castle Eden and Easington Denes. It should be made clear that the true *S. cinerea* L. is recorded here and not the prevalent *S. atrocinerea*—J.W.H.H.
- Salix nigricans** Sm. Dusky Sallow. 66
 As I have often stated, this plant grows in dense masses as a procumbent form on the sea banks along the Durham coast. This season I collected the plant as well grown shrubs in both Castle Eden and Easington Denes.—J.W.H.H.
- S. caprea x S. nigricans** 66
 In Easington Dene, Co. Durham—J.W.H.H.
- Carlina vulgaris** L. Carline Thistle. 66
 Another Birtley locality is Blythe's Clay pit near the station.—J. Alan Richardson.
- Calystegia sylvestris** Roem and Schult. 66, 67 and 110
 This is another alien plant which has established itself in our counties. My attention was drawn to it in July when I was collecting material for a School Certificate examination. A considerable amount was brought home and when I examined it. I felt certain that the plant was not the *Convolvulus* I had been accustomed to see in my younger days. Next I recalled that the Scandinavian plants belonging to the same genus had been revised recently in *Botaniska Notiser*, and that those from many habitats had proved to belong to the species *C. sylvestris* and not to *C. sepium*. To the former species I was compelled to assign my material. Subsequently other collections were studied. Those from Birtley, Bewicke Main, South Shields, Tynemouth and Wylam turned out to be *C. sylvestris* whilst those from Hart, Hesleden, Sherburn, Pittington, Castle Eden, with some Birtley material could only be assigned to *C. sepium*. Perhaps it is well to say here that I saw *C. sylvestris* at Leverburgh, Isle of Harris (110) and *C. sepium* at Callanish, Isle of Lewis (110).—J.W.H.H.
- Scirpus maritimus** L. Sea Club Rush. 66
 It seems well to report that, as a result of the changed conditions at the Black Hall Rocks, the Sea Club Rush is well established there.—J.W.H.H.

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

- Argynnis aglaia** L. Dark Green Fritillary. 66
 More than seventy years ago, Robson pointed out that this butterfly, once common at the Black Hall Rocks, had vanished completely from its old habitats. Since then, in spite of the fact that many generations of entomologists have worked the area, no one has seen the species there until I captured a fine female to the north of the rocks on August 4th—G.H.H.
 Later, I saw a male a couple of hundreds yards down the coast.—J.W.H.H.
 Worn males and freshly emerged females of *Argynnis aglaia* were flying at Sherburn Hill on July 10th—T. W. Jefferson