

THE VASCULUM (SUBSTITUTE)

MARCH, 1950

Vol. XXXV. No. 1.

Price 2/6 per annum post free

Edited by

J. W. HESLOP-HARRISON, D.Sc., F.R.S.
KING'S COLLEGE, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE

BY THE WAY

Secretaries of our Societies and other contributors should send all material intended for publication in our June issue to the Editor before June 1st, 1950.

THOSE BOYS O'BONDGATE

We were delighted to receive recently a little book with the above title, containing many of the writings of our old and valued friend, Mr. C. P. Nicholson, who did so much in the past for the Northern Naturalists' Union, and for his own society, the Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club. To do full justice to its contents, we cannot do better than repeat the words of his son, Mr. J. B. Nicholson, M.A. (of 16 Welbeck Avenue, Haughton-le-Skerne, Darlington), from whom copies of the work may be procured.

The book opens with the coming to Darlington in 1820 of a new parson, Richard Atkinson, whose zeal led to a notable reawakening of the church-life of the town during his all-too-short ministry. There follows an account of the humble beginnings of public elementary education in the country as a whole, and in Darlington and Bishop Auckland in particular; in this too Parson Atkinson was a notable pioneer.

Following the opening of the Stockton and Darlington Railway, came the development of the north end of the town, formerly bounded by Bulmer's Stone. The story of the early days of the railway parish of St. Paul's leads up to a sympathetic picture in prose and verse, of its much-loved vicar, Edmund Hutchinson.

The book takes its title from a chapter descriptive of life in Darlington in the 1850's. The story is told from unusual angle its central theme the young rascals who then lived in Bondgate and its many yards. A lively tale it is, with its numerous revealing anecdotes of the boys and their cronies.

A volume by C.P.N. would not be complete without some account of the bye-ways and field paths of the surrounding countryside. The chapter on Ketton has particular significance in its illustration of the close links which exist between the footpaths of a district and its history.

Other chapters deal, each in original fashion, with old funeral customs in Swaledale, with scenes from the past of Gretaedale, and with 'the marshes in the field of Darlington.'

Finally, there is 'Teesdale: in Ballad and in Song,' a delightful introduction to the little-known wealth of Teesdale poetry. Noble verse and homely ballad are pleasantly linked in relation to their natural setting, the background of the dale and the lives of the dalesfolk.

Each of the ten chapters brings vividly back to life days long gone by. Each deals with a theme on which no other pen could have written so felicitously and with such authority. Wealth and precision of detail are combined with clarity and continuity of thought in so readable a style as to satisfy the serious student of local history and at the same time to fascinate the more casual reader who dips into its pages.

OUR LOCAL REPTILES AND AMPHIBIA

In our December issue, we gave an account of a long series of papers which had been published in the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* during the period January 3rd, 1880 to January 1st, 1881; these dealt with our local mammals. Recently, we have been agreeably surprised to discover that a further group of thirteen articles, supplementary to these, had commenced to appear in the same periodical on May 28th, 1881, and had continued for a further period of twelve weeks. These bore the general title "Notes on Local Reptiles"; this, however, is somewhat misleading, as the notes cover our amphibia also.

The whole of the articles are signed "J.A." and are therefore from the same pen as those described in our December number. We feel, however, that they scarcely level of accuracy reached by the former series.

The Sand Lizard is stated to occur on Beaully and Bewick Moors, as well as in Durham and Yorkshire. We have never met this lizard locally; nor have we learnt of its presence from any of our colleagues. Further, our author supplies many Northumberland and Durham stations for the Ringed Snake. It seems very unlikely that this reptile exists in all these habitats now. Nevertheless, we can assert, from personal knowledge, that it occurred in Urpeth Woods, Co. Durham, in our boyhood days, and that we saw a specimen taken at Birtley just after the first Great War.

Writing of the Edible Frog, he records it as naturalized in a pond near Newton Hall, Newton-by-the-Sea, Northumberland, in 1850. From thence, he states that it spread to other suitable habitats in the same area, where it persisted in goodly numbers until 1861. Would a careful search reveal that it is still there? We suggest that an attempt to rediscover it is well worth making.

Further, he records the Natterjack Toad from both of our counties, mentioning, in particular, that it "was fairly plentiful near Belford." Once again, we can only state that we have never encountered the animal, and think that investigations should be initiated to determine whether it exists at Beal, Belford, Adderstone, Haggerstone, Twizell, Newlands and Mousen, from all of which stations our author reports it.

Another curious record is that of the Hawk's-bill Turtle, taken in 1852, off the Coquet. As the specimen was examined by Mr. P. J. Selby, no doubt can exist about its authenticity. J. A. also includes the Coriaceous Turtle in his thirteenth article, but he gives no account of its capture north of the Humber. It is difficult to decide, therefore, why it is listed.

MR. J. J. MCKINNEY

News of the death of Mr. J. J. McKinney on February 17th, 1950, came as a shock to his many friends both in the N.N.U. and in the Consett Field Club. Of the latter body, Mr. McKinney had been an active member for upwards of 25 years, and his genial and happy personality had always been appreciated by its members.

Spending much of his time out of doors, he formed the habit of making notes of all he heard and saw in the world of nature, and it was in January this year that the Secretary, Mr. W. Ellerington received his list of observations for 1949.

It was greatly due to his initiative that the progressive Annfield Plain Field Club was formed.

Mr. McKinney was a great personality, and a true naturalist, who will be greatly missed by all his many friends in the district.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Council of the Northern Naturalists' Union has decided to publish a new part of its Transactions toward the end of the present year. The Editor, Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison, will be glad to receive suitable articles for publication. Intending contributors are requested to note that papers dealing with areas outside the British Isles cannot be accepted.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

By the kind invitation of the Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne, the Twenty-sixth Annual Meeting of the Union was held in the Hancock Museum on Saturday, March 4th 1950.

After the election of new members, the report of the Treasurer was read by Mr. J. E. Ruxton, and that of the Secretary by Dr. K. B. Blackburn. Both were regarded as proving the continued strength of the Union.

Following this, the election of new officers took place, when Dr. D. H. Valentine, of the University of Durham, was elected President; and Miss R. E. Dowling and Messrs. Dixon and J. J. Robson as Vice-Presidents in place of the gentlemen due to retire. No changes were made in the cases of other offices.

On the conclusion of the elections and reports, Mr. J. J. Robson, M.B.O.U. give an exceedingly interesting Presidential address, illustrated by a series of beautiful lantern slides of his own making, and entitled "Glimpses of Shetland." He commenced by showing us views of the journey via Orkney to Lerwick, of life at Kirkwall and of Fair Isle in the distance. His slides of Lerwick gave us very different ideas of this Venice of the north from what we held previously. He proceeded by putting on the screen photographs typical of Unst and life there, emphasizing at all stages the wealth of bird life always present. The Isle of Bressay, its grand cliffs, birds and bird habitats received special attention, and created a desire in the minds of many listeners to visit this wonderful island. Mr. Robson described graphically the difficulties of passing from island to island, and even of landing. These were easily recognized when he demonstrated the strength of tidal currents and the ground swell in, and around, Bressay.

A thoroughly well-deserved vote of thanks was given to Mr. Robson for a lecture which will form a landmark in the Union's history.

At five o'clock, a record number of members and friends sat down to tea, and to discuss events which had occurred since they met last.

Of the exhibits, the bulk were arranged in the lecture room, although Mr. R. B. Cooke's beautiful collections of living spring flowers were displayed near the entrance to the Museum. Other collections shown included the Marriner Coccinellidae, now the property of the Natural History Society. Miss Moss had on view an instructive series of specimens illustrating the development of the seaweed *Himantalia*. Amongst the flowering plants, Mrs. Gibby and Mr. J. K. Morton brought interesting specimens, many of the

latter being from the Hebridean Isle of Jura, whilst Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison produced a collection of Norwegian wild roses, and photographs of a haploid oxlip. *Primula elatior*. Mr. Morton also showed his fine series of Jura butterflies. Of the more unusual exhibits, Mr. T. Hutton was responsible for leaves of the tobacco plant grown by himself, and also for nicotine distilled from them. Dr. E. Elliott showed us a manuscript list of Alston mosses, drawn up by Mr. J. B. Duncan, with letters that had passed between him and the late Mr. George Bolam. Another important exhibit was Mr. D. Morgan's collections of West African Orthoptera.

DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

Our 26th Annual Fungus Foray was held at Dryderdale on September 17th. Owing to the prolonged drought, fungi were almost absent from the fields, and few even in the woods. In all, 58 species were collected including *Pleurotus corticatus*, *Nyctalis parasitica*, *Boletus flavidus* and *Rhizina inflata*.

On September 24th, a party of 85 walked from Grangetown along the south side of the Tees estuary to the South Gare, continuing along the sand dunes to Redcar. Many characteristic birds of the river mouth were seen, including Knot, Turnstone, Oystercatcher, Grey Plover and Curlew Sandpiper, while on the breakwater itself about 30 Goldcrests, a Great Spotted Woodpecker, two Redwings, a Siskin and other migratory species were reported. Among a long list of plants noted were Perfoliate Yellowwort (*Blackstonia perfoliata*) and Sea Wormwood (*Artemisia maritima* var. *gallica*), both still flowering freely. Wild Lettuce (*Lactuca virosa*). Fennel (*Foeniculum vulgare*), Sea Beet (*Beta maritima*), Purple Milk-vetch (*Astragalus danicus*) and Prickly Saltwort (*Salsola kali*)—three plants only of the last-named. Tomato plants on the dunes were flowering and some bearing well-grown green fruits. Silver Y moths were visiting Sea Rocket (*Cakile maritima*), both lilac and white-flowered forms.

The Excursion Programme concluded with a visit to York. The day was packed with historical interest, the morning being spent in the Minster, including the crypt and chapter house, the afternoon in the Castle Museum of "bygones," with a walk along the City Wall sandwiched in between.

ANNFIELD PLAIN AND STANLEY NATURALISTS' CLUB

The Seventh Annual Meeting of the club was held in the Public Library, Annfield Plain, on Wednesday, January 18th, 1950, with the President, Dr. W. M. Morison in the chair. There was an excellent attendance but, due to the regrettable absence of Mr. F. Wade through illness, his secretary's report had to be read for him. Once again, he recorded a most successful year. The Treasurer, Mr. J. Atkinson, also made his statement, which showed

that the club's finances were in an excellent condition, and that it possessed a membership of 112.

Dr. W. M. Morison was elected President for the eighth successive year, whilst Mr. F. Wade, Secretary, and Mr. J. Atkinson, Treasurer, and all the other officers were also re-elected.

In the course of the past season, twelve rambles were arranged, as well as twelve lectures. The attendance at the field meetings was again good, and the following places were visited: Urpeth Bottoms, Abbotsford and the Scott Country, the Tees Valley, Wynyard Park, Mickle Fell and Birkdale, The Sneap and Muggleswick, Staward Peel and Plankey Mill, Penshaw and Hylton, Rookhope Burn, Deerness Valley, Jarrow Monastery and Darlington.

The winter session lectures were likewise well attended, and in most cases provoked lively discussions. The following list supplies the titles of the various talks and the names of the lecturers: "The History of Newcastle," Mr. H. L. Honeyman; "The Road to the Isles," Mr. G. Boggon; "Highways and Byways in North Tynedale," Mr. F. Wade; "Thomas Bewick, Naturalist and Engraver," Mr. F. D. Oram; "Within Northumberland," Mr. V. Bell; "Fishes and their Environments," Mr. J. H. East; "A Holiday in Switzerland," Mr. W. B. Graves; "The Middle East," Mr. W. Williams; "The Romans in County Durham," Mr. J. P. Gillom; "The King's Highway," Mr. F. Hassall; "The Waters under the Earth," Prof. H. G. Hickling; "The Psychology of Swearing," Mr. D. Russell.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

At our meeting on December 6th we had an interesting talk by Mrs. H. H. Clark on "Local Singing Games" in which she discussed the games prevalent in the Team Valley at the end of the 19th century and at the beginning of the 20th. This was followed on December 15th by a lecture on "Hebridean Memories" by Mrs. C. W. Heslop Harrison; it was illustrated by lantern slides and enjoyed by all. On January 3rd, we held our Annual Dinner, when forty members sat down to a meal. Our guests were Dr. and Mrs. P. G. Fothergill, and Dr. Fothergill entertained us by some clever conjuring. Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison lectured on "Lewis and Harris" on January 10th. For our gathering on January 24th we had looked forward to a visit from Mr. F. Wade. On account of that gentleman's illness, his lecture was postponed, and his place as speaker taken by Prof. Heslop Harrison, who talked about "Our Local Insects." Mr. Alan Hutchinson lectured on "Climbing in the Lake District" on February 7th. He detailed methods of climbing and illustrated his remarks by slides depicting noted climbs in the area. A very important talk was given on February 21st by Mr. T. Tomlinson of King's College, who discoursed on the "History of a Piece of Coal." This proved very

instructive and provoked considerable discussion. On March 7th, Dr. G. Heslop Harrison gave an illustrated account of "Field and Garden Pests," in particular, concentrating on insects of economic importance in our two counties.

KING'S COLLEGE NATURALISTS' SOCIETY

The first Annual Conversazione of the above Society was held in the Hancock Museum on Saturday, February 11th, 1950. After the formal opening by Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison, visitors examined the many exhibits which included photographs of the Society's expeditions by Mr. F. N. Hepper; British Fungi, Mr. D. E. Caulton; specimens illustrating the ecology of Wester Ross, Miss D. Ballantine; Gold Coast Arts and Crafts, Essential Oils, Mr. D. Morgan; Seaweeds of economic importance. Dr. B. L. Moss; Butterflies, Mr. D. Robertson; Bird Paintings, Mr. A. J. Lacey; Gasteropods, B. Colville; a living example of *Metasequoia glyptostroboides*, *Potamogeton ephydrus* var. *Nuttallii*, a new British pondweed, and the results of an early experiment in selection by Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison.

In addition, a very instructive film of the Natural History of the Galapagos Islands, with Mr. V. Bell as commentator, was shown, and Mr. D. Morgan gave an interesting talk on "Coconuts." After tea had been served, a very successful meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

Bedeguar Galls on the Downy Rose, *Rosa mollis*.—The so-called Bedeguar galls, known locally as "Robins' Pin Cushions," are generally found in the Team Valley and surrounding districts on various varieties of the Dog Rose, *R. canina*. This season, galls occurred on the same food plant in some numbers, but, along the Vigo railway, the colonies of *R. mollis* were shown to produce an abundance of the galls.—J. Alan Richardson.

A New Hybrid Rose found near Birtley.—As I have distributed specimens of this novel hybrid, it seems best to describe it at once x *Rosa molletorum* *hybr.* nov. (= *R. mollis* x *R. dumetorum*). Ramis elongatis arcuatis, aculeis rectis, foliolis 5, magnis, copiose biserratis, utrinque pubescentibus, infra inconspicue glandulosis, pedunculis aciculatis, fructibus rotundatis, aciculatis, frequiter male formatis; sepalis patentoerectis, subpersistentibus.

A tall shrub showing great heterosis, with elongate arching stems, prickles stout, straight, leaflets large, glandular biserrate, pubescent on both sides, inconspicuously glandular below, peduncles generally single, hispid, fruit roundish to elongate hispid, often malformed and containing 0-5 achenes only; sepals spreading-erect, subpersistent. Habitat: Birtley; type specimen in the Herbarium, Kew.

Migration inquiry, 1950.—In the *Vasculum* XXXIV, p. 10, an appeal was made for records of the arrival of the Swallow in Northumberland and Durham.

Some eighty records were received, and, whilst they did not enable any definite conclusions to be drawn, they did suggest the probability of migration overland rather than by following the coast and moving

inland up the river valleys. A report on the records received is being published in the Naturalist.

It is hoped to continue the inquiry during the coming spring, and in addition to reports of the arrival of the Swallow, records are also desired in respect of the Willow Warbler and Swift. The information should be given under the following headings 1) Time, (2) Place, (3) Number seen (4) Observer.

Details of the direction of flight and of the wind in connection with birds actually seen on the move should be given, and information as to the subsequent increase in numbers of birds in the district would be helpful. Records should be sent not later than June 30th to Mr. C. J. Gent, 30, Berkeley Square, Broadway West, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, 3.

The Rose-Coloured Pastor near Durham.---On the afternoon of February 20th, 1949, a specimen of this interesting bird was seen feeding with a number of starlings on a few crumbs thrown out on the grass behind our house in Durham City. It seemed quite at home with the other birds, and eventually flew off towards the river. It was probably a female as no crest was noticeable on its head. It was in its autumn plumage, the breast being chestnut brown and the head, neck, wings and tail a glossy black.—A. N. Gibby.

RECORDS

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Vanessa atalanta L. Red Admiral.	66
V. cardui L. Painted Lady.	66
These two immigrant species were still on the wing in the Folly Plantation at Birtley on October 16th, 1949.—J.W.H.H.	
Thecia quercus L. Purple Hairstreak.	68
Seen in early July on Kyloe ridge.—Sir Walter Aitchison.	
Aphantopus hyperantus L. Ringlet.	68
Plentiful on the Kyloe ridge (Sir Walter Aitchison) and also at Budle Bay, July 12th (J. S. Ash)	
Erynnis tages L. Dingy Skipper.	66
This butterfly seems to continue to occupy new territory for I discovered, in May, that it was common enough at Blyth's brickyard Birtley Parish, and at Bewicke main, Lamesley Parish.	
Apatele leporina L. Miller Moth.	66
Whilst I was beating for larvae in a local birch wood two specimens of this interesting species fell into the tray. Unfortunately both had been stung and failed to pupate.—J. P. Robson	
Argynnis selene Schiff. Small Pearl Bordered.	66
On June 13th, I took a single male of this fine butterfly in a birch/alder wood not far from Chester-le-Street, At first I thought that this was but a stray migrant from elsewhere in the county. However I observed two more in the same area on June 22nd. These were playing together so they were probably male and female. I did not attempt to take them. It seems possible that this represent the founding of a new colony locally.—T. C. Dunn	
[This record falls in line with the recent spread of <i>Argynnis aglaia</i> in Northumberland and Durham, and is, therefore, extremely important. The last-local record of <i>A. selene</i> was from Pelton Fell in the 1850's—J.W.H.H.]	
Selenia lunaria, L. Lunar Thorn.	67
An example of this species was noted on a lamp at Riding Mill station on May 21st—C. T. Gent	

**THE VASCULUM
(SUBSTITUTE)**

JUNE, 1950

Vol. XXXV, No. 2.

Price 2/6 per annum; post free

Edited by

J. W. HESLOP HARRISON, D.Sc., F.R.S.
KING'S -COLLEGE, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.

BY THE WAY

Our next issue will be published in September, and Secretaries of Societies, and other contributors, should send all material intended for publication then to the Editor before September 15th, 1950.

CRUELTY AND VANDALISM

This season, the senseless spearing of frogs and toads by means of a specially sharpened steel instrument has become much more prevalent than before. In some cases, the police have interfered, and a certain amount of good has resulted. Nevertheless, it appears that they can take no action until a complaint has been made. Obviously, before that is possible, the culprits have, in many instances, made their escape. In addition to this horrible form of cruelty, in some areas, an even worse one, the inflating of the same animals; forms a favourite "amusement."

Under these circumstances, it seems that the most hopeful method of attacking the evils is to bring about a joint effort by the police, schools, and our Societies. To secure this unity in action our own organizations should take the lead.

Another disquieting feature which has become much more frequent recently is the deliberate firing of areas to which the public has a reasonable right of access. Such fires on Waldrige Fell have appreciably lessened the area occupied by the Green Hairstreak butterfly, and have practically wiped out the Juniper and the Drinker moth. At the Blackhall Rocks, the Marsh Helleborine Orchid and the Round-leaved Wintergreen have been destroyed in most of their stations by recent fires, whilst the Brown Argus butterfly has vanished from some of its already restricted habitats owing to the destruction of its foodplant, the Rockrose, by the same agency.

OVERCOLLECTING

Another disturbing fact to which our attention has been drawn recently is the disappearance locally of some of our most interesting species of plants and animals. This is not the outcome of the

activities of collectors as such, but results from the zeal of younger students of biology. Not so very long ago, the Butterwort was common, and well-distributed, on Waldridge Fell; now it would be difficult indeed to find a specimen. Again, the water beetle, *Dytiscus marginalis*, was once an inhabitant of nearly every pond; at present, if required, specimens have to be bought from dealers, by which means the depopulation operation is transferred to other counties. In these, and similar cases, the remedy needs no emphasis.

MOUNTAINS AND MOORLANDS

Under the above title, Professor W. H. Pearsall, F.R.S. has enriched the already popular "New Naturalist" series with a noteworthy contribution to botanical science. Like its companions, it is published by Collins at the price of 21/-, and no field naturalist can grudge paying that figure for such an addition to his library. As we have already indicated elsewhere, whilst the general level attained in the series is good, there is considerable variation in the actual levels of the individual works. In the present book, a new high level has been reached. Moreover, this level is maintained almost uniformly in every chapter. Since this is so, it is not proposed to lessen the readers' enjoyment by discussing "Mountains and Moorlands" in detail.

Naturally, the book is not without points deserving criticism, the most glaring of which is the coloured plate No. 29, which, whilst purporting to depict the larva of the Northern Eggar, in reality provides an excellent photograph of a Fox Moth caterpillar. In addition, the accompanying caption cannot be correct. Again, we do not consider some of the remarks concerning the case-bearing moth *Coleophora caespitiella* as in accord with fact. So, too, the remarks on page 250 giving the supposed distribution of sheep and deer on the Isle of Rhum need revision. There is also a number of mis-spelt Latin names, more especially those of insects. As these are consistent, they cannot be regarded as printer's errors; in any case, they should be corrected in the new edition which, we feel sure, will soon be necessary.

We have no hesitation in giving this work the strongest of recommendations to our readers.

TRANSACTIONS OF THE NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Editor, Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison, is still able to receive suitable articles for publication. They should be sent to his King's College address.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The sixty-fifth Field Meeting of the Union was held at Finchale Abbey and in Cocken Hall Grounds on Saturday, May 20th, 1950. As a result of the extremely bad weather, the attendance was one

the smallest we have had. Owing to the wet grass, serious work was impossible, and few observations were made. The usual spring flowers still persisted in the woods, but the searches planned to determine whether the rare plants formerly recorded from Cocken Wood still existed there could not be carried out.

DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

"Tea with A. R. Wallace" was the subject of a talk by Mr. G. F. Horsley on 4th April. Mr. Horsley, then about 18, walked most of the way from Canterbury to Poole to meet the author of "Travels on the Amazon," who was 74. Their conversation made a lasting impression on the younger man, whose recollections and impressions gave us a vivid picture of the veteran scientist.

At the Annual Meeting on 18th April, Mr. H. M. Collier was elected President for the ensuing year. Mr. A. Morton, who had resigned from the curatorship after 17 years in office, was made an Honorary Member. Miss K. F. Cox made the club the unexpected, but much appreciated, offer of an Aldis film-strip projector.

Ettersgill, near High Force, was visited by a party under Dr. F. H. Stewart and Mr. C. Walker on 22nd April. Of many features of geological interest, perhaps the most outstanding was the waterfall where the beck pours over the Cleveland Dyke as it protrudes through the Whin Sill.

The Juniors spent an enjoyable weekend, under Miss F. M. Spencer's leadership, with headquarters at the Saltburn hostel, 18th/14th May. They had to report finding large numbers of oiled sea-birds along the shore. Although many had previously been removed, they counted 61 Puffins, 39 Guillemots, 18 Razorbills and 2 Little Auks between Redcar and Teesmouth; and 51 Puffins, 39 Guillemots, 12 Razorbills, 2 Gannets and a Little Auk between Saltburn and Marske.

CONSETT AND DISTRICT NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

At the well-attended Fifty-first Annual General Meeting of the above club, Mr. Wm. Ellerington was elected President, Mr. T. Hutton, Organizing Secretary, and Mr. J. J. Robson, Treasurer. The remaining officers were re-elected.

The election of Mr. Ellerington as President was a spontaneous and unanimous choice as he has been a member of the Club since its inception, and a very successful secretary for upwards of 12 years. All members wished him a happy and successful Presidential year. The Treasurer was able to report that the club was in a very sound financial position whilst Mr. T. Hutton indicated that a series of interesting summer outings had been arranged. For the special convenience of the Junior Section two outings had been planned.

It was announced that the membership of the society included 70 ladies, 52 gentlemen and 20 juniors.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On March 21st, Mr. James Walton gave a very interesting lecture on the topic of "Kindness to Animals." He developed it by referring to his own experiences with animals ranging from jackdaws to his pet lioness, Sheila. The whole was illustrated by a series of fine lantern slides of the lecturer's own making. On April 4th, Mr. J. Alan Richardson, M.Sc., in a lecture entitled "Curious Plants," introduced our members to aspects of plant life which they had scarcely considered possible. This lecture was also well-illustrated.

Our Annual Meeting took place on April 18th. After the elections and reports, a group of coloured lantern slides of orchids was shown. Next followed a "quiz" in which many members took part. During the course of this event, tea was served. Afterwards, Mr. T. C. Dunn put on display, and discussed, a large number of spring flowers which he had just collected. Professor Heslop Harrison showed a living example of the famous "fossil" tree, *Metasequoia*, which had been reared from the first batch of seeds collected in the Chinese habitats of the plant.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

The Spotting of the Leaves of the Cuckoo Pint.—On May 25th, a colony of *Arum maculatum* was discovered near Quarrington Hill. As is usual in this county, the bulk of the plants bore unspotted leaves. One group, however, was composed of plants with the leaves very heavily marked with black spots. As the topic of the frequency of such spotted plants has been a subject of inquiry recently, the occurrence is now recorded.—J. Alan Richardson.

Flower Colour in the Blue Bell (*Scilla non-scripta*).—This season seems to have been characterized by the presence of numbers of plants of this species bearing flowers unusual in respect to colour. In the Square Wood at Lamesley Station, very many white-flowered plants were observed whilst one example displayed flowers of a dark hue approaching navy blue; this stood out remarkably against the sea of blue with which it was surrounded.—T. H. Ward.

[I have had brought to me for inspection white-flowered specimens from Otterburn, Brancepeth, Cambo and Ravensworth, pink-flowered plants from Ravensworth, Cambo and Morpeth and white ones with a picotee edging of pink from Penshaw and Cambo. I do not remember seeing such picotee-edged plants previously.—J.W.H.H.]

Further Durham Localities for the Five-spot Burnet.—It will be remembered that I recorded the capture of the Five-spot Burnet moth (*Zygaena lonicerae*) at Caseburn in the summer of 1947. I can now add an additional station in the county. On July 9th, 1949, four specimens of the moth were taken at Hamsteels Colliery near Quebec, Co. Durham. These were found amongst long grass and looked as though they had just emerged from the pupae.—Gerald White.

In July, 1949, I took a single example of the Five-spot Burnet moth at Brasside, Co. Durham.—G. Giles.

Unusual Plants of the Cowslip.—On May 15th, whilst I was working on Birtley Fell, I discovered two remarkable plants of *Primula veris*. One, although clearly free from any hybridity with the primrose, bore long, narrow leaves, with a length of 17.5cm. and a breadth of 3.5-3.7cm. The lamina passed gradually into the petiole just as in the primrose. The plant showed no other outstanding divergences from the ordinary form. The other plant noted was homostyled. Many other plants were examined but none revealed this peculiarity.—J.W.H.H.

A Hermaphrodite Campion.—I hesitate to write "red" campion because, although the species concerned was *Melandrium rubrum*, the plants itself bore pure white flowers. Whilst primarily a female, its stamens with anthers complete, were utterly unlike the rudiments usually observed in female campions. In an endeavour to procure pollen, I removed the ovaries and slit both calyx and corolla, but in all cases the anthers shrivelled up. Another peculiarity exhibited by the plant lay in the fact that the corolla was salver-shaped, a fact possibly correlated with the presence of the stamens: Other white-flowered plants, both male and female, produced flowers quite normal in shape and structure.—J.W.H.H.

The Holly Blue Butterfly in Co. Durham.—In the Vasculum for October, 1948, I was able to report the occurrence of a second brood example of the Holly Blue (*Lycanopsis argiolus*) at Birtley, Co. Durham. As I did not capture the insect, the record was made in a guarded manner. However, this season on June 1st, in a locality not two miles from the original station, I discovered a colony attached to some well grown hollies. These hollies were in full flower, and the female butterflies were busily engaged in ovipositing on the calyces. As I had no desire to weaken the colony, I made no attempt to capture specimens. This recurrence of the butterfly with us is very noteworthy, for it disappeared from the area in, or about, 1870, although Wailes had noted it in 1858 as "not uncommon in a few localities in Durham." Being fully aware of these old records, Mr. J. R. Johnson and I used to make periodic searches for the butterfly in all suitable stations, but without success, even in the old habitats mentioned by Wailes. The Holly Blue has never been captured in Northumberland but, in these days of its new colonization efforts, it seems certain that planned investigations would end in its detection in that county.—J.W.H.H.

The Dingy Skipper in Durham.—Here again we have an insect which, after a period of contraction in its range, is now rapidly occupying new territory. Last season, I recorded it for various stations in the Team Valley. To these others are now being added, for I encountered it further up the Valley than Bewicke Main on June 10th, and have even observed it behind the Churchyard in Birtley on June 3rd. Again, records for Northumberland are lacking, and attempts should be made to fill the blanks.—J.W.H.H.

RECORDS

50_2

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Alsophila aescularia Schf. March Moth. 66
On March 25th, I took a male specimen of the March Moth on a fence under some beeches in Birtley. This is the first time the insect has been seen in the Team Valley by any of us.—J.W.H.H.

Eupithecia vulgata L. Common Pug. 66
A melanochroic example of this species was taken on the same fence on June 1st. This fence has yielded a considerable number of melanic and melanochroic "pugs" belonging to several species.

- Argynnis selene** Schf. Small Pearl-Bordered. 66
A single specimen captured in Wynyard Park proves that the extension of range of this butterfly is not restricted to northern or western districts.—T. C. Dunn.
- Pieris napi** L. Green-veined White. 67
On June 4th, a female of this "white" was observed darting repeatedly at its own reflection in a shop window opposite St. Nicholas' Cathedral; truly a strange place for the species!—J.W.H.H.
- Eurnenis semele** L. Grayling 68
This local butterfly occurred plentifully at Budle Bay, Northumberland on July 12th, 1949.—J. S. Ash.
Thyatira batis L. Peach Blossom Moth. 67
The Peach Blossom occurs occasionally at Gosforth, but much more commonly at Plessey, Northumberland.—J. S. Ash.
- Eupithecia succenturiata** L. 67
The "pug," although not previously reported from this locality, was common at light at Gosforth during 1949.—J. S. Ash.
- Ourapteryx sambucaria** L. Swallow-Tail Moth. 66
Although this moth was recorded from the Team Valley many years ago I have never seen it locally. On July 11th, however, I found a single specimen alive entangled in a spider's web in the greenhouse. Subsequently, I discovered that it was abundant in the garden.—J.W.H.H.
- Abraxas sylvata** Scop. Clouded Magpie. 66
This is another insect which seems to be extending its range, for it was captured in Lumley Woods on July 23rd.—J.W.H.H.
- Aicis rhomboidaria** Schf. Willow Beauty. 66
Melanic forms in Castle Eden Dene, August 8th.—J.W.H.H.
- Agrochola lychnidis** Schf. Beaded Chestnut. 66
On September 24th, I noticed a moth feebly struggling in a spider's web on a fence near Barnard Castle. On inspection, I found it to be a specimen of the above species which I have never encountered before here.—J. P. Robson
- Chiasmia clathrata** L. Latticed Heath. 66
I was pleased to discover this little geometer on some rough ground near Barnard Castle this year.—J.P.R.
- Apatile leporina** L. The Miller. 66
Whilst beating for larvae I obtained two specimens of this species in a birch wood near Barnard Castle; both were "stung."—J.P.R.

MOLLUSCA

- Planorbis complanatus** Jeff. 66
This species had not made its appearance in Boldon Ponds up to the outbreak of war. In my first visit after the war, I found it to be well established, and it has since increased in numbers, for it is now the commonest mollusc in the ponds.—A. H. Lowe.
- Paludestrina jenkinsi** Smith. 67
Found in the Coquet at Rothbury on August 3rd.—A.H.L.

FLOWERING PLANTS

- Hypericum dubium** Leers. 66
Quite common in the Dene near Lumley Castle as well as in Castle Eden Dene.—J.W.H.H.
- Hypericum hirsutum** L. 66
Also in Castle Eden Dene.—J.W.H.H.
- Rosa obtusifolia** Desv. 66
The variety *tomentella* was found to be well distributed, but not common, in Castle Eden Dene.—J.W.H.H.

- Centaureum umbellatum** Gilib. Centaury. 66
This species, which had been extirpated by hand grenade practice in its only Birtley habitat, can now be recorded as plentiful in one of the clay pits.—J. Alan Richardson.
- Rhododendron ponticum** L. Rhododendron. 66
Healthy seedlings of this species may be found scattered along the west slopes of the clay pit near the station, Birtley. It is difficult to determine the origin of the seeds.—J. Alan Richardson.
- Arabidopsis thaliana** L. Thale Cress. 104, 110
Abundant not far from the Laig sand dunes. Isle of Eigg, as well as on an embankment enclosing a field near Ormaclett, Isle of South Uist. The species is new to Eigg.—J.W.H.H.
- Elymus arenarius** L. Lyme Grass. 110
A large colony exists on the Balevanish dunes on the Isle of Benbecula; this certifies its occurrence as a wild species in the Outer Hebrides as we have only known it previously as an introduced species on South Harris.—J.W.H.H.
- Anemone nemorosa** L. Wood Anemone. 104
Not previously recorded from the Isle of Rhum, but a large patch was discovered in the Kinloch Woods in June last season; the plant is not uncommon in the neighbouring Isle of Eigg.—J.W.H.H.
- Plantanthera chlorantha** (Cust.) Rchb. Small Butterfly Orchid. 119
Extremely common on the shores of the lochs just south of the Ormaclett—Loch Eynort road on the Isle of South Uist.—J.W.H.H.
- Orchis latifolia** L. Marsh Orchid. 110
Common in the form of var. *coccinea* Pugsley on damp ground near Balevanish Post Office, Isle of Benbecula.—J.W.H.H.
- Scirpus setaceus** L. 66
In the clay pits near Birtley Station in September.—J. Alan Richardson.
- Artemisia vulgaris** L. Mugwort. 67
The variety *coarctata* was not uncommon along the Tyne banks near Wylam in September.—J.W.H.H.
- Eleocharis uniglumis** (Link) Schult 67
On sandy ground on the Tyne east of Wylam. Only one patch was discovered, and the only previous record I can trace for the species in v.c. 67 is that due to Prof. Oliver, and given in Baker and Tate.—J.W.H.H.
- Picris hieracioides** L. 66
In various stations in Castle Eden Dene but never plentiful; collected on August 4th.—J.W.H.H.
- Phyllitis scolopendrium** L. Newm. Hart's Tongue Fern. 66
Well distributed along the stones containing the tunnel running parallel to the Vigo railway; evidently increasing in numbers.—J. Alan Richardson.
- Aphanes (Alchemilla) microcarpa** (Boiss. et Reuth) Rothm. 67
As this species has been recorded recently for the British Isles, search has been made for it locally. Durham plants examined last month all belonged to the more ordinary *A. arvensis* L. On the other hand, plants occurring in abundance on basaltic crags near Colwell, Northumberland, uniformly turned out to be *A. microcarpa*.—J.W.H.H.
- Cirsium heterophyllum** (L.) Hill. Melancholy Thistle. 66
Quite recently, I discovered a strong colony of this fine plant in Cassop Vale, Co. Durham. As the species seems normally to be western and upland, the occurrence seems worthy of record.—J. Alan Richardson.
- Viola hirta** L. Hairy Violet. 66
On April 17th, in working the Quarrington Hill area, I noted that the whole of one bankside was covered with strange-looking examples of this species, all of which were more or less irregularly blotched with white. One plant bore petals, each of which was adorned with a large circular white spot; this individual was removed to the garden for further observation and experiment. I suppose that all of the plants concerned should be assigned to the variety *variegata* Gregson.—J.W.H.H.
- Senecio vulgaris** L. Groundsel. 66
On April 17th, not far away from the plants just discussed, I observed at a distance a mass of yellow flowers which I could not assign to any species likely to be flowering at that time. I therefore went to them to examine them critically when I found, to my surprise, that they were representatives of the Radiate Groundsel, *lanuginosus* Trow. As I happened to have access to descendants of Trow's original stock, I made comparisons between the two plants when I discovered that they were easily separable, although the differences did not warrant the erection of a new, named variety.—J.W.H.H.
- Asplenium adiantum-nigrum** L. 66
A. ruta-muraria L. 66
Although Baker and Tate described these two spleenworts as frequent in our counties, their remarks no longer hold true, as the plants have vanished long ago from most of their former habitats. Their presence on a wall near Crawcrook, therefore, seems worthy of note.—J.W.H.H.
- Prunus insititia** L. Bullace. 66
Quite plentiful, with the Common Sloe, in a hedge between Birtley and Lamesley. On a nearby pitfall, the Common Plum has established itself as the result of tipping of household refuse.—T. H. Ward.
- Pyrus communis** L. Pear. 66
Amongst the masses of hawthorns, elders and the like which have colonised the claypit near Birtley Station one

well grown wild pear was noted.—J. Alan Richardson.

FUNGI

- Amanitopsis adnata** (W.G.Sm.) Sacc.
Newbiggin Hall woods, near Blanchland, October, 1949.
- Boletus flavidus** Fr. 66
Dryerdale, near Wolsingham, September, 1949.
- Puccinia expansa** Link 66
Teleutospores on Ragwort (*S. jacobea*) by the Wear
between Durham and Finchale, May, 1949.
- Galactinia adae** (Sadler) Bond 66
A whitish elf-cup growing in a plant-pot, apparently on bulb-fibre, Darlington, January, 1949.—J. B. Nicholson.
- Puccinia malvacearum** Mont. Hollyhock Rust. 66
The young leaves of several Mallow plants (*Malva sylvestris* L.) already badly "rusted," 18th March, an unusually early date, clearly indicating that the fungus had over-wintered in the rootstock.—Gainford.
- Sclerotinia tuberosa** (Hedw.) Fuckel. 66
A small brown elf-cup, parasitic on the rhizomes of the Wood Anemone, appearing thickly in patches near the riverside at Winston, 25th March —J. B. .Nicolson.
- Morchella esculenta** L. Morel. 66
Late in May, this strange looking fungus occurred in thousands along the edge of the old clay pit situated just to the south east of Birtlev. The only other fungus with it was *Coprinus comatus*.—J.W.H.H.
- Puccinia betonicae** DC. 66
Very plentiful on betony on cliff tops and in hollows at the Blackhall.

THE VASCULUM (SUBSTITUTE)

SEPTEMBER, 1950

Vol. XXXV, No. 3.

Price 2/6 per annum; post free

Edited by

PROFESSOR J. W. HESLOP HARRISON, D.Sc., F.R.S.
KING'S COLLEGE, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.

BY THE WAY

Secretaries of our Societies are reminded that, if they desire reports of their summer and autumn activities to appear in our December number, material should be in the Editor's hands not later than December 1st, 1950. Notes and records of general interest may be sent by contributors at any time.

HANCOCK PRIZE COMPETITION

The Natural History Society of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne, is anxious that all amateur naturalists should know about this competition. The prize, of the value of five pounds, is awarded for the best essay giving an account of personal observations in any branch of natural history, including geology. There is no restriction as to subject matter, but the essay must be of reasonable length. It may take any form the competitor chooses, and the following, amongst others are suggested: (1) a general natural history diary, (2) a study of the inhabitants of a special piece of ground, (3) a life history of some animal or plant, (4) an account of natural history observations made during a single day or other period.

It seems worthy of special mention that several minor prizes are awarded by the Society to competitors of school age.

COLLECTING AND OVER-COLLECTING

In our last issue, we drew attention to the evils of over-collecting. In doing so, we had no intention of discouraging the formation of collections when such are needed for adding to our knowledge of the flora and fauna of our counties, or for other scientific studies. Quite recently, we felt the full force of the lack of an adequate collection when we wished to elucidate the problem presented by the "Belle" moths. Instead of the one species of our earlier workers, no fewer than three species occur with us. Clearly, a collection in such cases affords the only satisfactory aid to solving the problem. Nevertheless, in forming one, moderation must be practised.

On the other hand, the wholesale collection and massacre of some species is greatly to be deplored. For many years, we have observed and objected to, the depredations made on local colonies of the Six-spot Bumet Moth. During the past season, this destruction has continued, and has, unfortunately, involved the "Fivespot" which is now colonizing our area. In one instance, no fewer than 50 cocoons were taken from a newly-established colony, and over 60% of these produced "Five-spots." How, under such circumstances, can we hope to have our fauna augmented permanently by this beautiful insect?

BILLINGHAM BOTTOMS

On excursions made in former seasons, members and associates of the Union have had the pleasure of investigating the natural history treasures of this unique piece of fen-land where species and communities not known elsewhere in the North could be seen at their best. We have the melancholy duty of informing our readers that it will soon be gone for ever, as it is now being used as a dump for town refuse. When we visited it in June to study the variation of *Dactylorhiza praetermissa* we discovered, to our horror, that the plant, with many another rarity, was buried under several feet of ashes. Beginning at the Norton end, the tipping had extended to the middle of the swamp. The magnificent masses of Globeflowers and *Thalictrum flavum* were not then affected but, at the present rate, they cannot last more than two seasons—and nothing can be done to save them!

BRITISH TRUST FOR ORNITHOLOGY

We have received two very interesting publications from the British Trust for Ornithology, with the request that we should introduce them to our readers. One, bearing the title "Birdwatching" is the fifteenth annual report of the Trust, and gives interesting details of that body's activities during the year 1950. The other, "Trapping Methods for Bird Ringers," forms Field Guide Number One of the organization. This is published at the price of 2/6 and describes the trapping and ringing of birds for scientific observation purposes. It is well illustrated by excellent sketches of the traps employed. The Secretary of the Trust expresses the hope that some of our members will assist in the work of trapping and ringing.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The sixty-sixth Field Meeting took place on June 24th. The bulk of the party assembled at Durham and proceeded to Sherburn where they met the Darlington contingent. The route followed was by the limestone quarries at Sherburn, then along the stream to Shadforth, and back to the main road at Sherburn Hill.

Many of the characteristic limestone plants were seen amongst which were the Frog Orchid, the Salad Burnet, the Rock Rose, the Blue Grass (*Sesleria caerulea*), the Quaking Grass and others. Additional plants of interest noted during the first part of the walk were the Hemlock, Hoary Plantain, and the Adder's Tongue fern. As the party approached Shadforth a number of marsh plants was seen, including the Spotted Orchid (*Orchis fuchsii*) whilst the nearby cornfields produced a series of interesting weeds like the Shepherd's Needle and the Poppy *Papaver argemone*.

One very important insect was captured by Mr. T. C. Dunn; this was the Forester (*Ino geryon*) a moth now reported for the first time from an inland station in the county. After a picnic tea at Shadforth, the party made its way homeward, observing on the journey a fine series of variants of the Bladder Campion; these were collected and discussed.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

Observations on Durham Orchids, with Accounts of a New Subspecies and a New Hybrid,—

The investigations carried out last year in connection with the Durham colonies of *Dactylorchis traunsteinerioides* were so successful that they were continued this season to determine to what extent the species formed hybrid swarms with the Spotted Orchid, *D. fuchsii*. During the progress of this work, in addition to the desired hybrids, three more colonies of *D. traunsteinerioides* were detected south of Deneholm. More important still, it was discovered that the form of *D. fuchsii* represented in, or near, these colonies was racially separable from plants growing in Billingham Bottoms, in the Team Valley and elsewhere in Durham. As a matter of fact, in some respects, but not in others, they recalled the Hebridean race.

Many of the colonies have been studied statistically by Dr. J. Heslop Harrison, and will be discussed by him from the biometric angle in a forthcoming paper. As a name for the new subspecies will be needed then, the want is supplied now:

Dactylorchis fuchsii subsp. *dunelmensis* ssp. nov. Planta 10-16 cm. alta super tuber, foliis 3-7. Spica, fere ut in *D. ericetorum*. Flores minores pallidioresque quam in typo, labello trilobo, lobis lateralibus rotundatis, lobo medio saepe minore.

The plant is much smaller than ordinary *D. fuchsii*. Its leaves vary in number from 3-7, and are less heavily spotted; in fact some are markingless. The inflorescence, in outline, approaches that of *D. ericetorum*, and is thus very unlike the conical spike of Billingham plants. The individual flowers are shorter, the lip broader proportionately, and the outer margins of the lateral lobes rounder than in the type. Further, the middle lobe is generally smaller than the outer lobes, and in some cases recalls the condition in *D. ericetorum*.

In general, the plants in the hybrid swarms consisted of first generation hybrids, but other generations were represented. As no hybrid between *D. traunsteinerioides* Pugsley and any form of *D. fuchsii*, has been described previously, the omission is rectified here:

$\times D. gracilis$ n. hybr. = *D. fuchsii* ssp. *dunelmensis* \times *traunsteinerioides*; Plantae inter parentes eisque fere intermediae, 12-16 cm. altae. Spica laxa et pauciflora, foliis eis *D. traunsteinerioides* similibus, aut maculatis aut immaculatis.

This beautiful hybrid is very like that between *D. purpurella* and *D. fuchsii* on a small scale, for it rarely reaches a height of 16 cm. In general appearance and structure, it is more or less intermediate to the parents. Its inflorescence consists of a few flowers which are almost identical in colour with those of the *D. purpurella x fuchsii* hybrid. The leaves may be blotched or unblotched. When they do bear blotches, the markings may assume the form of small black rings. Otherwise, they tend to resemble the leaves of *D. traunsteinerioides*.—J.W.H.H.

An Abnormal Cross-leaved Heath.—Dr. A. Todd of Thornley has collected a branch from a most interesting plant of the Cross-leaved Heath (*Erica tetralix*). Normally, in this species the corolla is bell-shaped, owing to the fusion of its petals, but here they are separate and strap-shaped. The flowers, although pink, suggest in form those of the Witch Hazel which also has its parts in fours, and possesses free petals. One genus of the Ericaceae, *Ledum*, differs from the normal for the family; hence the appearance of the character in an *Erica* as an abnormality seems worthy of special emphasis.—K.B.B.

The Establishment of New Colonies of Burnet Moths.—A new colony of Six-spot Burnets (*Zygaena filipendulae*) now appears to be established definitely on the river banks at Chester-le-Street. I noted only odd specimens last year, but this season the insect is quite abundant in one stretch of 100 yards where the Blue Vetch (*Vicia cracca*) is particularly abundant. On July 26th, I took a party of students to Brasside. There I confirmed my former observations that both the Burnet colonies on the east and west side of the large pond are mixed ones containing both "Fivespots" (*Z. lonicerae*) and "Six-spots". With the help of my pupils, we made a rough count of the two species and we estimated that about 20 per cent. were *Z. lonicerae*. The two forms seem to mix freely, and many pairs were seen, but always matings were between pairs of the same species. T. C. Dunn.

More Colonies of the Five-spot Burnet.—This year I have kept the original Birtley colony of *Z. lonicerae* under observation, and noted that it was extending rapidly. Without much trouble, I counted 54 cocoons and two larvae at the tips of the broom shoots, some over four feet from the ground. Later, in August, I observed a second, but weak colony, about a mile away. Another very strong colony turned up on the slag tips at Norton in late June, whilst Mr. W. Campion, during the same period, obtained numerous examples of the species in the Derwent Valley. J.W.H.H.

More about the Five-spot Burnet.—On July 8th, 1948, I picked up two Burnet cocoons at the Blackhall Rocks. One yielded a "Five-spot" on July 19th and the other a "Six-spot" on July 26th. At the same place, on July 9th, 1949, I found another cocoon which produced *Zygaena lonicerae* on July 13th. At Sherburn Hill, on July 10th, 1949, I captured four additional specimens of the same species.—J. P. Robson.

The Holly Blue Butterfly.—I am glad to be able to add to Professor Heslop Harrison's Birtley records of this interesting butterfly. On the second Saturday of April 1948, I saw a specimen sitting on privet in a garden at the bottom of Roker Park Road, Sunderland. The insect, a female, was rather torpid and I was able to tilt the twig on which it rested to look at its silvery underside. There are some large hollies in the south-west corner of Roker Park close to where I saw it. Since then, I have seen what I thought was another specimen in my own garden about 100 yards from where I saw the first example, but it was on the wing and very active. I am quite certain of the facts about the insect seen in 1948. For one thing, it was too early in the year for any other blue butterfly on the north-east coast. I realized it was rare, as Ford's book gives

Carlisle as its northern limit, and I therefore went for my camera to take a photograph, but the insect had vanished.—M. E. Richardson.

(I have received a report of the appearance of the Holly Blue at Gosforth from other sources, but the account was too vague to be of real value. J.W.H.H.)

The Flowering Plants of St. Mary's Island.—St. Mary's Island is a small rocky island just large enough to hold the lighthouse and two houses perched on top of the rocks. It is surprising, therefore, that as many as thirty-two plant species flourish there. Two small patches of grassland exist, and round them, and near the houses, are to be found ordinary weeds of cultivation. The grassland is largely composed of Rye Grass (*Lolium perenne*) and Sheep's Fescue (*Festuca ovina*) with Daisy, Dandelion and White Clover.

Round the edges of the grass, and near the house walls, were found: Orache (*Atriplex patula*), Curled Dock (*Rumex crispus*), Chickweed (*Stellaria media*), Mouse-eared Chickweeds (*Cerastium vulgatum et C. tetrandrum*), Plantain (*Plantago lanceolata*), Knotgrass (*Polygonum aviculare*), Cat's Ear (*Leontodon officinalis*), Rest Harrow (*Ononis repens*), Bird's. Foot Trefoil (*Lotus corniculatus*), Cinquefoil (*Potentilla reptans*), Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*), Sowthistle (*Sonchus oleraceus*), Thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Yarrow (*Achillea millefolium*), Annual Grass (*Poa annua*), Cock's Foot Grass (*Dactylis glomerata*), Couch Grass (*Agropyron repens*), Jointed Couch Grass (*A. junceum*), and last, but not least, a cross between the last two species.

Two banks border the grassland, and a third lies below the houses. The last is largely covered by the Tea Tree (*Lycium chinense*) which forms a large hedge, and sprawls down the slope. This seems to be a strange habitat for the plant. Near it exists very large plants of *Rumex crispus* var. *trigranulatus*.

Genuine sea plants occupy the paths and rocks. The Sea Meadow Grass (*Puccinellia maritima*) prefers damp rocks, with the cracks lined by the Sea Milkwort (*Glaux maritima*). Also favouring the rocks, are all four species of plantain, Greater Plantain (*Plantago major*), Ribwort (*P. lanceolata*), Sea Plantain (*P. maritima*) and the Buck'shorn Plantain (*P. coronopus*). The last two grow in every possible form producing the tiniest of rosettes and the largest of plants, with huge fleshy leaves. Thrift (*Armeria vulgaris*) tends to follow the sandy edging of the rocks. D. Blackburn.

A Stray Plant of the Marsh Helleborine (*Epipactis palustris*).—This plant grows on marshy land near a burn not far from Morpeth, and has been under observation for the past ten years. Until 1947, the plant usually threw up one flowery spike, but in that year two appeared. These, however, rarely reach maturity as they are eaten off by slugs. The foliage is very pale, but the flowering stalk is somewhat tinged with purple. The strange, frilled flowers appear in July when they are allowed to do so!—W. J. Dixon.

An Unusual Visitor.—At Riding Mill, on June 11th, 1950, in the late afternoon, when "Whites" were flying freely, my attention was drawn to a yellow butterfly amongst them. It proved to be a male Brimstone butterfly (*Gonepteryx rhamni*). Its wings were rather worn and faded, as is frequently the case with hibernated specimens, but the insect was flying strongly across the garden.—F. W. Gardner.

Migrant Butterflies in 1950.—The Red Admiral was seen on June 5th and 7th at North Sunderland, followed by a third specimen on the 16th of July at Felling, Co. Durham and a fourth at Gosforth on August 26th. The Painted Lady was observed at North Sunderland on June 9th and June 10th.—C. V. Gent.

Immigrant Deaths head Hawkmoth and Red Admiral.—Two specimens of the latter insect were noted on lilac on June 11th at Chester-le-Street. Of the Death's head Moth (*Acherontia atropos*) a single female example was found on a lamp post at New Lambton on 12th June by one of my pupils, and brought to me on the morning of 13th June. It was still alive in spite of its sojourn overnight in a cardboard "Flit" box.—T. C. Dunn.

The Carline Thistle (*Carlina vulgaris*) still spreading.—This season my examination of local claypits has proceeded steadily, and one of the first results was the detection of the Carline Thistle in the claypit east of the main road.—J. Alan Richardson.

RECORDS

FLOWERING PLANTS

- Ophrys apifera** Huds. Bee Orchid. 66
On July 11th, 1950, whilst I was botanising in the Birtley area, I discovered a small colony of the Bee Orchid growing within a mile of Birtley Parish Church. This is an addition to the list of orchids which have appeared near Birtley recently.—J. Thompson.
- Euphorbia esula** L. Leafy Spurge. 66
A thriving colony of this plant was recently discovered growing at Lintzford in company with two other alien plants, the pink Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera* Rom), and the Monkey Musk (*Mimulus guttatus* D.C.).—E. C. Ellwood.
- Spergularia rubra** L. Sand Spurrey. 110
This plant, new to the Outer Hebrides, was detected on July 30th, 1950, growing on gravely ground near Stornoway, Isle of Lewis.—J. W. H. H.
- Arenaria leptoclados** (Rchb.) Guss. 67
Found near Colwell in great quantity.—J.W.H.H. and J.H.H.
- Rosa obtusifolia** Desv. Dog Rose. 66
This wild rose occurred in a hedge near Frosterley on September 14th in the form of var. *Borreri*. Whilst the plant could not be assigned to any other variety, it was much less hairy on the lower side of the leaves than is the case in Durham representatives of that variety.—J.W.H.H.
- Senecio squalidus** L. 66
This plant is now widespread in Durham from South Shields to the Tees in the east. It has, however, only appeared in the Birtley district this season.—J.W.H.H.
- S. squalidus x S. vulgaris** 66
A single example of this hybrid turned up on the roadside near Port Clarence.—J.W.H.H.
- Delphinium gayanum** Wilm. Larkspur. 66
This casual, not recorded for our counties for many years, was collected in Billingham Bottoms on June 17th.—J.W.H.H.
- Matricaria chamomilla** L. Chamomile. 66
Growing alongside the preceding, and making enormous bushes.—J.W.H.H.
- Coriandrum sativum** L. Coriander. 66
Another alien plant not seen in Durham for many years, but also found near the two preceding.—J.W.H.H.
- Centaurea cyanus** L. Cornflower. 66
A cornfield weed decreasing with us but noted near Norton.—J.W.H.H.
- Ranunculus lingua** L. Spearwort. 68
Found in a pool near Embleton.

Galium debile Desv. Bedstraw.	67
On June 25th, I went to Seaton Sluice to study the dune orchids, and during the course of my investigations, I perceived a clump of plants which appeared to be decked with masses of pink flowers. In reality, these proved to be white, heavily flushed with pink. The plants turned out to belong to the above species, and to be new to the county.—J.W.H.H.	
Dactylorchis latifolia L. see Pugsf.	66
Very fine examples of the var. <i>coccinea</i> Pugsley of this species were common enough on July 3rd in one of the larger dunes lying to the north of the Blackhall Rocks.—J.W.H.H.	
Dactylorchis purpurella Sph. Stephenson's Marsh Orchid.	66
This fine orchid, as well as its hybrid with <i>O. fuchsii</i> , is not uncommon in a clay pit near Washington.—J. Alan Richardson.	
Gymnadenia conopsea x D. purpurella	66
Discovered, growing with the parents, near Cotherstone.	
D. latifolia x D. fuchsii ssp. dunelmensis	66
Another hybrid, new to our area, noted at the Blackhall Rocks in the first large dene to the north.—J.W.H.H.	
Trientalis europaea L. Chickweed Wintergreen.	68
On Titlington Pike, near Glanton, in some numbers.	
Convallaria majalis L. Lily of the Valley.	68
In dense woods in the Hedgeley area; bracketed in the Comital Flora, but obviously the original record must be regarded as reliable.—J.W.H.H.	
Chenopodium rubrum L.	66
In plenty on the ground upon which bombed bags of washing soda had been placed during the war.—J. Alan Richardson.	
Epilobium hirsutum x E. montanum	66
In a pitfall near Lamesley.	
Salix phylicifolia L. x S. atrocinerea Brot.	66
Several plants of this hybrid, growing with their parents, were examined on the Wear at Eastgate on September 9th.	
Malva moschata L. Muskmallow.	66, 68
Along the Wear near Frosterley and in Denwick Quarry.	
Hieracium aurantiacum L. Orange Hawkweed.	66
Two separate patches in the old pitfall near Lamesley.	
Viola lutea L. Pansy.	66
The var. <i>amoena</i> of this pansy occurred in a very magnificent form near Frosterley.	
Thelypteris phegopteris L. Beech Fern.	67
This fern was noted growing in small quantity on the crags at Colwell.—J.W.H.H.	
Cryptogramma crispa L. Parsley Fern.	67
Collected on the debris lying to the north of the Colwell crags.—J. K. Morton.	
Ranunculus sceleratus L. Celery-leaved Crowfoot.	66
Along the burn at Birtley into which there is an escape of sewage, enormous quantities of this plant, with individual plants over a metre high and broad, grow luxuriantly.—J. Alan Richardson.	

BIRDS

Corvus cornix L. Hooded Crow.	68
An odd bird was observed in a mixed flock of rooks and other birds feeding on decaying seaweed on the beach at Seahouses on June 3rd.	
Larus leucopterus . Iceland Gull.	66
A gull, minus black tips to its wings, was seen feeding on a dead Black-headed Gull at South Shields on January 5th; its small size, and dainty appearance, suggested this species rather than the Glaucous Gull.	

Mectrophenax nivalis L. Snow Bunting.	66
A party of fifteen was seen on December 28th on the shore at South Shields, and at the same place on January 5th.	
Calidris maritima Briin. Purple Sandpiper.	66
Three examples of this species alighted on the breakwater at South Shields on January 5th.—C. J. Gent.	

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Biston strataria L. Oak Beauty.	67
Taken at light, Riding Mill, in 1948 and 1949.—F.W.G.	
Asthena albulata Hufn.	67
Found in a young plantation at Riding Mill.—F.W.G.	
Eupithecia tantillaria Bdv.	67
This supposedly southern insect is abundant in some spruce plantations in the Tyne Valley.—F. W. Gardner.	
E. indigata Hb. Ochreous Pug.	66
For the first time I found a larva of this species on Scots Pine on September 17th, 1949, near Barnard Castle. The moth emerged on May 26th, 1950.	
Selenia lunaria Schiff. Lunar Thorn.	66
A couple of larvae beaten from birch near Barnard Castle in 1949, produced this species early in June 1950.	
Tethea duplaris L. Lesser Satin Moth.	66
A pair of this species was taken in a birch wood at Barnard Castle on June 8th, 1950; this is a new record for the south-west of Durham.—J. P. Robson.	
Ino geryon L. The Forester.	66
This fine insect was captured in a meadow at Sherburn Hill during the N.N.U. excursion on June 24th, 1950.—T. C. Dunn.	
Notodonta ziczac L. Pebbled Prominent.	68
On <i>Salix repens</i> on Ross Links, a very unusual foodplant and habitat.	
Hadena trifolii Hufn.	66
A single example of this moth, so rarely reported from our counties, turned up in our own garden at Birtley on August 31st.	
Nymphalis io L. Peacock.	66
On September 9th, two specimens were seen at hawkweed flowers, one at Lamesley and the other at Birtley. A third example turned up at stock flowers on September 10th, also at Birtley.	
Notarcha ruralis Scop.	66
Another moth, very rarely seen in Northumberland and Durham,—taken in the house at Birtley.—J.W.H.H.	
Deilephila elpenor L. Elephant Hawk.	66
In a clay pit in late May at Birtley.—W. Adams.	
D. porcellus L. Small Elephant Hawk.	68
A single example of this rather rare moth was taken at Falloden.	
Colotois pennaria L. Feathered Thorn.	68
Taken at light at Embleton.	
Hepialus lupulinus L. Swift Moth.	67
This moth occurred in Highbridge, Newcastle upon Tyne, on June 13th; it would be interesting to know how the insect got there.—J.W.H.H.	
Philudoria potatoria L. Drinker Moth.	68
The larvae of this insect were fairly plentiful in the Seahouses-Bamburgh area in June.—C. J. Gent.	
Ortholitha scotica Cockayne. Scottish Belle.	67
This insect, formerly included under the Lead Belle, is now regarded as a distinct species. It occurs, attached to whin, on the dunes at Seaton Sluice. Two other species, <i>O. mucronata</i> Scop. and <i>O. umbrifera</i> Prout are included in my local material, but help from other workers is needed to determine the exact ranges of the three species in the north.—J.W.H.H.	

THE VASCULUM (SUBSTITUTE)

DECEMBER, 1950

Vol. XXXV No 4

Price 2/6 per annum; post free.

Edited by

PROFESSOR J. W. HESLOP HARRISON, D.Sc., F.R.S.
KING'S COLLEGE, NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE.

BY THE WAY

Once again it is necessary to point out that all material for publication, and exchanges, should be sent to the Editor at the above address. Secretaries of our Societies and other contributors are requested to send reports, notes and records intended for publication in our March issue before March 1st, 1951.

CASTLE EDEN DENE

Local naturalists will learn with satisfaction that the report we prepared for the Peterlee Development Corporation on the rehabilitation and conservation of Castle Eden Dene has been received and approved by that body. One of our recommendations was that a Castle Eden Dene Amenities Committee should be set up to include, in addition to local representation, competent naturalists selected from all parts of the two counties. Further, a full-time officer is to be appointed to whom will be assigned the duties of looking after welfare of the Dene in all its various aspects.

We discovered during our intensive surveys that, thanks to the care exercised by the Burdon family, much of the Dene remained in an almost primitive condition. There is thus every likelihood that a project long cherished by field naturalists will be successfully carried out, and the area, with its natural history wealth, preserved for the enjoyment of future generations.

LABELLING SPECIMENS

In our last two issues, we have dwelt upon the evils resulting from indiscriminate overcollecting, and have also urged that, for the proper understanding of a flora and fauna, some collecting is necessary. However, we were reminded when we inspected the exhibits at the last indoor meeting of the Northern Naturalists' Union that another evil exists; the amassing of collections inadequately labelled. It must be perfectly obvious that, for scientific investigations, each specimen must be fully documented. Every specimen without a label represents unnecessary slaughter in the case of animals, and needless uprooting in the case of plants. In making

this statement, we must render it perfectly clear that we realise that, in all almost all instances, the botanists do provide their material with full data. It is to a minority of the collectors on the entomological side that we direct our remarks, and we know that the practice of making unlabelled collections extends far beyond the area covered by the N.N.U.

WILD FLOWERS OF CHALK AND LIMESTONE

Once again the "New Naturalist" series has done botanical science good service in publishing the above-named book by Mr. J. E. Lousley. The price is 21/- and the publishers Collins. As was to be expected from one of the recognised standing of the author, the book, as a whole, can only be described as excellent, both in respect to accuracy and the presentation of its contents. In fact, had it dealt only with England as far north as Yorkshire, it would have merited nothing but praise. Very different, indeed, is the position in respect to Northumberland and Durham. It is true that Upper Teesdale receives some, but in our opinion, inadequate treatment. However, that meted out to our Magnesian Limestone areas, in spite of their floristic importance, amounts to a portion of one paragraph! This seems strange in view of the fact that, in all probability, no part of Durham has received more sustained attention from local botanists, both past and present. Nor is it correct to state, as Mr. Lousley does, that the only recent papers dealing with the area are a few short notes in the *Vasculum*. Our author ventures to express the opinion that the Durham Permian would still yield interesting plants if it received the attention he imagines it lacks. Perhaps the basis for this view is to be sought in his remark that it (the Magnesian Limestone) is not a district which appeals to botanists on holiday! We can assure him that, not only are our local botanists quite competent, but also that they have scoured the Magnesian Limestone again and again, and have only confirmed the prevalent opinion that our predecessors had indeed done their work well. It can be asserted, with safety, that very little in the way of novelties can be expected to turn up in such a well-worked area as the Durham Magnesian Limestone.

In spite of the genuine excellence of the work, a few features deserve criticism. For instance, in the legend to Plate 41, the Latin name for the Dark-flowered Helleborine appears as *Epipactis atrorubens*, instead of *E. atropurpurea*. Further, the map on page 169, purporting to display the Magnesian Limestone, is quite inaccurate as far as Durham is concerned. Nor does the statement on page xiii that the boundaries on the maps are only approximate afford an excuse for the fact that the whole of the classical botanical areas of the Durham Permian, Castle Eden Dene, etc., are completely ignored. Again, in the Bibliography, the citation for Baker and Tale's "New Flora of Northumberland and Durham" is incorrect. It did not appear as Volume II of the Tyneside Naturalists' Field Club—whatever that ambiguous phrase may mean. It was published as Vol. II of the Natural History Transactions

of Northumberland and Durham in 1868. Vol. II of the Transactions of the Tyneside Naturalists' Field Club appeared in 1853, and did not deal with our flora. Perhaps, too, the statement on page 199 asserting the uniformity of the flower colour in British *Gentiana verna* needs modifications. We have seen pure white specimens, and others covering a range of slatey-blue, in Durham. Moreover, Mr. Lousley has evidently failed to recognise that our *Gentiana verna* is dimorphic in respect to flower shape, a stellate form occurring in addition to the type.

Other points needing attention are the use of the archaic *Cecidomyia taxi* for the modern *Taxomyia taxi*, the implication that the gall-mite *Eriophyes geranii* is restricted to one Derbyshire dale whereas it occurs on *Geranium sanguineum* throughout its Northumberland and Durham range, and the inversion of our old friend Miller Christy's name on pages 99 and 247. Of actual misprints, there are very few. *Sesleria coemlea* in place of the *S. caerulea* of Clapham's compilation seems to be the only one.

The book constitutes a decided acquisition to the libraries of all field botanists, professional or amateur, and we cordially recommend it to our readers despite its comparative lack of local interest.

CHOICE AND USE OF FIELD GLASSES

We have received a pamphlet (price 9d.), which appears as "Field Guide Number Two" of the British Trust for Ornithology, with the request that we should introduce it to our readers. It bears the title "How to choose and use field-glasses," and it is written by Mr. E. M. Nicholson. The little publication seems to fulfil its purpose admirably, and should be very helpful to anyone not fully acquainted with the qualities necessary in good field glasses or with the methods of obtaining the best results from them.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Sixty-seventh Field Meeting was held in Gibside Park on Saturday, September 23rd, 1950. Contrary to our usual experience this year, the weather was reasonably good. As a result, although the excursion was planned primarily as a Fungus Foray, we were able, to explore the area, and to assess the effects of the enormous amount of tree-felling that took place during and after the war. It was quite a relief to find that a considerable amount of the vegetation had survived and, presumably, much of the insect wealth for which Gibside was famous in the past.

By the kind invitation of Professor D. H. Valentine, the Autumn Meeting of the Union was held in the University Science Laboratories, Durham, on Saturday, October 21st, 1950 with the President in the chair. The day was fine, and, in consequence, the attendance large.

On this occasion. Dr. E. T. Burt, Reader in Entomology at King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne, was the lecturer, and he

took for his subject, "Insect Societies." Dr. Burt commenced by dealing with the phenomena exhibited by the colonies of solitary bees and other hymenoptera found nesting on bank sides, in bramble stems, etc. In particular, he paid attention to Rose-leaf Cutter bees of the genus *Megachile*. From these he proceeded to more advanced types of social life as exemplified by termites and hymenopterous insects like ants, bees and wasps, emphasising the various castes and division of labour in these groups. The lecture, illustrated by lantern slides, was excellent. It ended with a series of questions put by members of the audience. After the usual vote of thanks had been given, we proceeded to take tea and to examine the various exhibits.

The President brought for examination Prof. E. Hulten's important book illustrating the distribution of the Swedish Flora, whilst other exhibits included interesting series of Lapland plants shown by Mrs. A. N. Gibby, of Swedish Subalpine specimens by Dr. J. L. Crosby, of bomb-crater vegetation by Mr. J. K. Morton. Amongst Mr Morton's plants may be singled out for special mention the new hybrid groundsel x*Senecio londinensis*. Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison brought a number of orchid species and hybrids including several new to the British list like *Orchis cruenta*, *O. traunsteinerioides*, *O. traunsteinerioides* x *O. fuchsii* ssp. *dunelmensis*, etc., also Potamogeton species and hybrids amongst which were *P. epihydrus*, x*P. cognatus*, x*P. billupsii*, x*P. prussicus*, x*P. sparganifolius* and the new rose hybrid x*Rosa molletorum*. Dr. Burt had on view ants and solitary bees illustrating his lecture, whilst Mrs. Vincent broke new ground by bringing living slugs typical of our local fauna. Mr. Murphy demonstrated the Berlese Funnel and other collecting apparatus for dealing with more difficult species. Mr. Gerald White displayed a number of local lepidoptera, most interesting of which were forms like *Zygaena lonicerae*, demonstrating the recent increases in range of these species in Durham.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

Our winter session began on September 26th, when Mr. F. Hill gave an interesting talk on "Local Historical Records," in which he dealt mainly with Washington, its connection with the Washington family and its links with other areas. On October 10th, Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison gave an illustrated lecture entitled: "Along the Pyrenees." This was mostly concerned with the scenery and natural history of the border zones of France and Spain lying along the southern slopes of the mountain range. Mr. Dennis Morgan, B.Sc., followed next on October 24th with an extremely interesting and important lecture on his "Experiences in West Africa." He held his audience enthralled with his account of the country, its people and natural products. Next, on November 7th, we were delighted with a lecture by Mr. J. Thompson, M.P.S., A.R.P.S., under the title "Plants, their Habits and Uses." It was illustrated by a series of lantern slides in colour of local plants

and their habitats, made by Mr. Thompson himself. On November 21st we had a splendid lecture on the "Abbeys of the North Country," delivered by Dr. G. H. Christie; it also was illustrated by the lecturer's own slides.

CONSETT AND DISTRICT NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

On November 22nd, 1950, our Annual Dinner and Conversazione was held in Hanson's Cafe, Middle Street, Consett, when Professor and Mrs. J. W. Heslop Harrison were again our invited guests.

Mr. W. Ellerington was in the chair, and after an excellent meal he proposed the health of the King. Next, Mr. Ashworth gave the toast of the Club and Mr. Hart that of the guests. Professor Heslop Harrison, in replying, congratulated the President on his dual posts of President and Secretary, and recalled that he and Mr. Ellerington were two of the few survivors of the founders of the Northern Naturalists' Union. He also showed how great was the part played by the Club in the progress of the Union. Next, in a happy speech, Mrs. Dixon presented an album to Mr. Ellerington in recognition of his long services. The President made a suitable reply.

After that we adjourned to inspect the exhibits. These included a lovely group of pressed plants brought by Mr. A. E. Haft, and preserved by a process of his own development. Mr. W. J. Dixon had on view photographs illustrating the Club's outings, as well as floral pictures. Roy Jones showed many objects of interest from the Barbados, whilst Mr. Pirt displayed a wide range of plants from North Africa, as well as fossils and minerals from the Suez Canal Zone. Other exhibits were locusts and bats by Mr. Bell, a stuffed Kingfisher, Red-backed Shrike and Weasel by Mr. Hird, and Teasel and Bulrush by Mrs. Dyer. The whole ended with a cinema and lantern display in which Mr. J. J. Robson exhibited two films of the life of the Tawny Owl and Green Plover, whilst Mr. Evans showed a fine lot of photographs in colour depicting local views and the changing of the Guard in London. As usual, Mr. Horn manipulated the lantern.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

The Status of the Green Woodpecker in Northumberland—The Green Woodpecker has been reported as extending its range in Lancashire, and it seems that a similar change is also occurring in its status in Northumberland. It is well known as a breeding species in the Riding Mill area (v.-c. 67), and it now appears to be colonising Cheviotland (v.-c. 68), as on April 9th last year I both heard and saw the bird in a valley leading up to the Cheviots and also heard it a mile lower down. Subsequently, the late F. Baxter informed me that it had bred for the previous three years at a point in the Wooler district.—C. J. Gent.

An Abnormal Scarlet Pimpernel.—On September 3rd, 1950, an example of this plant was found on the western side of the new Marsden housing estate, South Shields, which was much stouter in all its parts than: the normal plant. Moreover, its leaves were in whorls of three and four. It seems very probable that the plant originated in a tricotyledonous seedling.—R. Boyce.

The two Largest British Moths.—The Death's Head Moth and the Convolvulus Hawkmoth are the two largest moths found in the British Isles. As they are migrants, they turn up at intervals in many districts. I have already reported the first named from New Lambton in June and can now record the second as found at rest on the grass verge of the Chester-le-Street By-pass.—T. C. Dunn.

Two Composites with Pale Cream Flowers.—On August 25th, whilst investigating the flora of one of the Birtley claypits, I discovered a plant of *Crepis capillaris* with cream-coloured flowers. A day or two later, a plant of the Hoary Ragwort, *Senecio erucifolius*, bearing flowers of the same colour, turned up at Vigo just south-east of Birtley.—J. A. Richardson.

Stray Notes on Northern Plants.—In August I discovered the Scentless Agrimony, *Agrimonia eupatoria*, growing along the roadside near South Hazlerigg between Chatton and Wooler, Northumberland; this seems worthy of note in view of the present enquiry into the local distribution of two forms. Of considerable interest to me also was the detection in small quantity of the Viper's Bugloss, *Echium vulgare*, at Hartburn near Morpeth, and profusely in the approach to Bamburgh Castle. I should also like to record, too, that the Common Laburnum was flowering in Eslington Terrace, Newcastle upon Tyne, in December 1949 whilst, as a contrast, the Common Daisy was in flower, with a hard frost on the ground, at Bewcastle, Cumberland, on March 21st, 1950.—J. H. J. Clay.

Chrysalids of the Bulrush Moth (*Nonagria typhae*) at Butterby.—My interest in this moth was aroused by the discovery of several empty pupa cases in last year's stems of the Bulrush. With a view of extending my knowledge of the life history of the moth, on a subsequent occasion I examined other stems, when I obtained nine living pupae, which have since emerged, and an additional ten empty pupa cases.—Gerald White.

The Large Skipper (*Argiades sylvanus*) in Durham.—The discovery of the Large Skipper at Blackhall in 1946 (*Vasc.* XXXI no. 3) was the first record of this insect, from our area, for a considerable period, save for an odd specimen from the Darlington area. In 1949, on the occasion of the N.N.U. meeting at Wynyard Park, the Large Skipper was noted in some quantity. A few days later I revisited the area and found the insect to be widespread and locally common in the triangle Wolviston-Brierley Cottages-Thorpe Thewles. Shortly afterwards, at Sherburn Hill, I was surprised to see four Large Skippers, and this year (1950) it has been more numerous. As both Blackhall and Sherburn have for years been much frequented by collectors, and as this insect has not previously been recorded from these areas, it is reasonable to assume that it has only just colonized them. The Wynyard Park area, on the other hand, has been but little worked and this, together with the large and extensive nature of the colony, suggests that this insect has probably been undetected here for many years, and that changing conditions have allowed it to spread thence to other localities. I have examined series of this insect from various parts of the country, and find that males from our area are identical with males from the south, and distinct from those collected in the N.W. of England. In particular, in those from the south and from Durham, the light spots in the margin of the forewing upper side, are larger and the margins themselves narrower, than in males from the north west. There are no apparent differences in the females.—J. K. Morton.

Some Fungi from Cocken Woods.—The wet weather at the end of May favoured the mycologist, and the visit to Cocken Woods on May 20th yielded a fair number of species. Of the larger fungi we note *Pholiota mutabilis*, *Pleurotus ostreatus*, *Coprinus micaceus*, *Morchella esculenta*, and *Stereum rugosum*. The leaf fungi found were *Uromyces ficariae* and *Puccinia aegopodii*. Two species of Mycetozoa were seen: *Lycogala epidendrum* and *Reticularia lycoperdon*. Making their home in the spore mass of *Reticularia* on a rotten trunk were three specimens of the beetle *Tritoma bipustulata*.—J. B. Nicholson.

A Few Wild Roses noted in Cassop Vale.—On November 1st I visited Cassop Vale, and amongst other things, collected wild roses. One of these which specially attracted my notice, both from its abundance and strange appearance, proved to be a form of *Rosa subcanina* Christ. Quite unknown to me, and probably new to the British list. Other interesting species were *R. mollis*, *R. obtusifolia* var. *sclerophylla* and *R. coriifolia*.—J.W.H.H.

X *Spartina Townsendii* (Groves) on the Northumberland Coast.—In 1948 I was surprised to find this grass colonising the muddy inlet on the north side of the Coquet below Warkworth. Since then I have seen it in great quantity in the salt marsh at the south side of Alnmouth and in the mud at Budle Bay and Fenham Flats. I believe that some time ago it was planted in Budle Bay in attempts to reclaim the mud flats. The other colonies are doubtless the result of the grass spreading from Budle Bay. It seems quite at home, especially at Alnmouth and Warkworth. From the small size of the latter colony, it would appear to be a recent arrival and to be spreading rapidly.—J. K. Morton.

Local Occurrences of the Peacock Butterfly in 1950.—I can extend Professor Heslop Harrison's notes of this species in recording that a single *Nymphalis io* spent the week September 4th to 10th in my front garden at Barnard Castle with several Red Admirals and Small Tortoise-Shells. No Painted Ladies have been observed this season in this district.—J. P. Robson.

The Red Admiral in Newcastle upon Tyne.—On September 1st, a pair of Red Admirals, in excellent condition, spent the afternoon on Buddleia bushes in a Jesmond garden. Later, on September 9th, a specimen was found dead on a pavement in Clayton Road which looked, from its torn appearance, as if a cat might have done the damage.—J. H. J. Clay.

RECORDS

FLOWERING PLANTS

Orchis morio L. Green Winged Meadow Orchid.	66
This fine orchid occurred in a field near Mainsforth.—R. E. N. Cafe. [It was quite common at the Blackhall Rocks early in June this year, growing in company with <i>O. mascula</i> . In spite of this, it must be considered a decreasing species with us as it has vanished from many of its old habitats.—J.W.H.H.]	
Viola odorata L. Scented Violet.	68
Found at Embleton but very probably an escape.	
V. canina L. Dog Violet.	68
Also at Embleton in its true form.	
Dactylorhiza purpurella Sth. Marsh Orchid.	67, 68
Not uncommon in a dwarf form at Howick, Shilbottle, Alwick and Seaton Sluice.	
D. ericetorum E. F. Linton Spotted Orchid.	68
Far from rare on Titlington Pike and at Glanton.	
Scirpus sylvaticus L.	68
Collected near Shipley.	
Astragalus danicus Retz. Purple Milk-Vetch.	66
Although common enough in some stations on the Northumberland coast, this vetch is rare enough in Durham. It can still, however, be recorded from Crimdon Cut and Whitburn.	
Calystegia sylvestris Roem and Schult.	66
In small quantity near Darlington.	
Sedum anglicum L. English Stonecrop.	68
On rocks at Longhoughton; this appears to be a furthest south station for this Atlantic species in the two counties.—J.W.H.H.	
Convallaria majalis L. Lily of the Valley.	66
Detected in a wood at Peshaw—a possible native station when one recalls its presence in Hawthorn and Castle Eden Dens.	
Senecio erucifolius L. Hoary Ragwort.	66
Not at all rare in Cassop Vale, and near Fatfield.—J. A. Richardson	

Agrimonia odorata Mill. Agrimony.	66
One or two patches of this plant were noted in Cassop Vale.—J.A.R.	
Gentiana amarella L. Gentian.	66
At several points, often on bank sides, in Cassop Vale.—J.A.R.	
Salix atrocinerea Brot. x S. caprea L.	66
One or two well grown bushes were examined on the old pit heap, Cassop Colliery.—J.W.H.H.	
Equisetum sylvaticum L. Wood Horsetail.	66, 68
The slender form var. <i>capillare</i> of this species is not uncommon in Urpeth Woods and also occurs at Cambo.—J.W.H.H. and A. E. Hart.	
Phyllitis scolopendrium (L.) Newm. Hart's Tongue Fern.	66
With the common male fern on an old limestone wall at Westoe, South Shields.—J.W.H.H.	
Lycopus europaeus L. Gipsywort.	66
In the middle of that section of Urpeth Woods nearest the keeper's house, growing with <i>Scutellaria galericulata</i> and <i>Oenanthe crocata</i> .	
Solidago canadensis L. Canadian Golden Rod.	66
Several large patches, which are clearly spreading, flourish on the pitfall just south of the Kibblesworth railway, Team Valley.	
Rosa mollis x R. pimpinellifolia	66
This hybrid, which occurs at several points in our counties, forms, as a result of heterosis, a long straggling patch between Bowbum and Quarrington Hill. At this station it seems necessary to note that the plant is white-flowered and that its parentage is <i>Rosa mollis</i> var. <i>fallax</i> x <i>R. pimpinellifolia</i> —J.W.H.H.	
Senecio squalidus L.	66
Quite recently I recorded this alien from Birtley. Lately, I have noted it spreading westward up the Team Valley at Urpeth.—J.W.H.H.	

INSECTS—NEUROPTERA

Drepanopteryx phalaenoides L.	66,67
This very strange neuropteran, taken at Riding Mill turned up again this year (1950).—F. W. Gardiner [It should be recorded that this insect which, as its name indicates, seems to mimic a hook-tip moth, occurs at Wolsingham, and specimens captured there are in the museum of the Grammar School.—J.W.H.H.]	

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Lycænopsis argiolus L. Holly Blue.	66
I took a specimen of this "blue" near Barnard Castle on September 1st, 1950. It was feeding at flowers of <i>Epilobium</i> .—J. P. Robson. [This novelty, first recorded in recent years locally by me in 1948, seems now to be well distributed. As it was recorded this year in Dumfries, it must occur in Northumberland. Who can produce the first reliable record?—J.W.H.H.]	
Pelurga comitata L. Dark Spinach	66
Taken at Waldrige, July 19th.—T. C. Dunn.	
Polychrisia moneta Fab. Golden Ear.	66
This fine insect occurred on the Delphiniums in my garden at Chester-le-Street on July 25th.—T. C. Dunn.	
Phalera bucephala L. Buff-tip.	66
Many caterpillars of this moth were found under lime trees in the grounds of Chester-le-Street Grammar School on September 13th. They were apparently preparing to pupate.—T. C. Dunn.	
Brachyonycha sphinx Esp. Sprawler.	66
Three specimens were found on the afternoon of October 17th on tree trunks in the woods at Barnard Castle; this appears to be a very early record.—J. P. Robson.	
Apamea unanimitis Hb. Small Clouded Brindle.	66
This used to be extremely numerous in the Team Valley area, but I had not observed the larvae recently until this year when I saw them in numbers in their tubular shelters on the Ribbon Grass, <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> in Urpeth Woods.—J.W.H.H.	
Hepialus hecta L. Gold Swift.	68
Flying in the rain in daytime in Newham Bog on July 1st.—J.W.H.H.	