

# THE VASCULUM (SUBSTITUTE)

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*Edited by*

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

## BY THE WAY

Material intended for publication in our June issue should be in the Editor's hands before June 1st, 1952.

### THE NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE ENTOMOLOGICAL SOCIETY

Recently, there came into our possession an original prospectus of the Newcastle upon Tyne Entomological Society which, seems to contain much of interest to local entomologists. It states that the Society was founded in 1870 and, as it quaintly puts it, asserts that it was formed "for the diffusion, amongst its members, of information in Collecting, Naming and Exchanging Specimens in Entomology" Further, we are told that the "Place of Meetings is the Committee Rooms of the Natural History Society."

Some of its officers, as set out on page two of the pamphlet, have left their mark in local entomological annals, and their monuments lie in the records they supplied to Robson more than fifty years ago to assist him in the compilation of his "Catalogue of the Lepidoptera of Northumberland, Durham and Newcastle upon Tyne". Amongst such workers were the President, Mr. W. Maling, and two members of the Committee, Mr. T. H. Hedworth of Dunston and Mr. M. Henderson, The Cemetery, Jesmond. Other officers were the Treasurer, Mr. Wm. Johnston, Newcastle, the Secretary, Mr. J. Hamilton, Shieldfield and, completing the Committee, Mr. T. Richardson, Gateshead, Mr. D. P. Morrison, Bulman's Village, Mr. J. Skelton, Shieldfield, and Mr. T. Crossling, Newcastle.

Of these, we had the pleasure of meeting Mr. T. Richardson in his own home in 1902 when he was a very old man, but still capable of making his annual pilgrimage to Easington in search of the insect he always called the 'Castle Eden Argus'. Moreover, we once went night-collecting with him and Mr. J. R. Johnson at Winlaton Mill, when he informed us that the best way of sugaring a tree was to squirt a thin stream of rum and treacle from the mouth ! He also told me that he was the last person to collect the Lady's Slipper Orchid in quantity in Castle Eden Dene. According to his account, he picked a large bunch of its blossoms which he brought down to the sea banks and hid under some low willows whilst he continued his entomological activities. When he returned later in the day, his orchids had vanished. Of the remainder, we have only been able

to obtain information concerning Mr. D. P. Morrison. That gentleman lived in King Street, Perth, in 1857, but had moved to Pelton Colliery, Chester-le-Street, in 1859, and further, to Bulman's Village in 1869. Although his work escaped J.E. Robson's notice, he published several very important records in a series of notes in the Entomologists' Intelligencer.

It would be interesting if any of our readers could supply information about the other gentleman mentioned above and about the fate of their collections.

Lastly, we can add that we have read the contents of the Minute Book of the Society, and can say that it was of extreme importance in the tracing of changes in our local fauna. Unfortunately, although the book had been in the hands of Mr. J. R. Johnson for many years, when he died it could not be found amongst his books and notes.

#### THE WALL RUE AND COMMON POLYPODY FERNS

In 1868, Baker and Tate described both of these ferns as common on rocks and walls in Northumberland and Durham, adding, in the case of the Common Polypody, an additional type of habitation "on old trees". This is certainly not the case now for, until quite recently, we were not acquainted with any station for either of them in the lowlands of Durham. However, within the last two years Mr. J. A. Richardson has discovered the Wall Rue (*Asplenium Ruta-muraria*) on rocks near Raisby whilst we have detected it growing plentifully on an old wall between Birtley and Portobello where, most assuredly, it did not occur twenty-five years ago. As for the Common Polypody (*Polypodium vulgare*), neither of us has seen it at any point in the eastern half of Durham. Can any one give further habitats for the Wall Rue in East Durham which would help to confirm the view that it is recovering its lost ground in our county? Similarly, we should like to have information about recent occurrences of the Common Polypody in the same area,

#### PEG-TOPS

In these counties, peg-tops seem to have vanished completely, no doubt vanquished by the "superior" attractions of the "pictures". Nevertheless, several of us, interested in preserving records of the games played by children sixty years ago, would like to have facts concerning peg-tops and "farden-diddlers". In particular, we need information about the game known elsewhere as "Peg-in-the-Ring" and in Northumberland and Durham, more especially on Tyneside, as "Top-boory". In this game the top of one of the players was placed in a circle drawn on the ground, and the other players attempted to split it when their tops were thrown down to spin. If the spinning of tops so thrown was defective in any way, they entailed certain penalties, and were placed in turn in the ring. Thus, if the top span a little and then swerved away on its side, the shout was "slentyone", and one attempt to strike it was allowed to the other players. However if the top fell quite dead, the cry was "deedy-three", and

three blows at it were allowed. Again, when the top failed to spin and whirled on its side, "blocky-fower" was the label. Finally, if the top did not leave the string, but hung on it, a shout arose of "hangy-nine" or, alternatively, "hangy-nine-upon-the-twine", the numeral once more indicating the number of times the delinquent top had to be in the ring to be "pegged". Can anyone add further facts concerning this game, especially variants in the method of playing it and additions to the penalties imposed for other spinning defects ?

## THE SOCIETIES

### NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Twenty-eighth Meeting of the Union took place in the Hancock Museum on Saturday, March 1st, 1952. Once again, there was a large attendance of members and associates.

After the admission of an additional school society, the usual Treasurer's report was read by Mr. Ruxton and that of the Secretary by Dr. K. B. Blackburn. In spite of rising costs, both were deemed quite satisfactory.

The election of officers for 1952-53 followed. Mrs. A. N. Gibby was elected as successor to Prof. J. B. Cragg as President whilst the two retiring Vice-Presidents were replaced by Prof. Cragg and Mr. J. Wilkinson.

After these preliminaries, Prof. Cragg gave a very interesting and instructive address on the "Natural History of Flat Worms". This part of the proceedings concluded with a well-merited vote of thanks to the speaker.

Tea followed at 4.45 p.m., and members took full advantage of the occasion to renew old friendships and to discuss points of common interest.

Amongst the exhibits, pride of place was taken by Mr. R. B. Cooke's display of spring flowers which included various species of crocus, snowdrops, Rhododendrons, Viburnums, heaths, Primulas and Cyclamens. Dr. Blackburn and Miss D. B. Blackburn showed a selection of plates from Sowerby's Botany and a herbal by an unknown author. Mr. A. E. J. Vickers reminded us of the Riding Mill excursion by his exhibit of photographs, whilst Mrs. Gibby had set out French botanical textbooks. Prof. Cragg brought a number of living Planarians to illustrate his Presidential address.

### KING'S COLLEGE NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

This Society held its third Annual Conversazione on Saturday, 2nd February, at the Hancock Museum by the kind permission of the Natural History Society. About 120 visitors from local Natural History Societies, Training Colleges and Schools were present.

The usual lecture, entitled "The High Tide Mark", was delivered by Dr. E. A. R. Ennion, Warden of Monk's House Field Centre. In his address, profusely illustrated by drawings and specimens, Dr. Ennion stressed that the High Tide Mark was noted for the great profusion of its life, both in individuals and species. He also showed that it had

evolutionary interest as a testing ground for species in transition between marine and terrestrial modes of life. Throughout his talk, he emphasised the many opportunities for individual research this area affords. The brisk flow of questions which followed formed an adequate proof of the appreciation of the audience.

For the second part of the meeting, we proceeded to the East Corridor to take tea and to look at the exhibits. These included British Ferns and Fungi, as well as birds' wings, shown by Mr. Lacey, Variations on a Leguminous Theme, with a working model of a pea flower, by Mr. Cannon, Sand dune plants by Mr. Sowerby, Bivalve shells and tropical butterflies by Mr. Robertson, Cultures of the Ringworm fungus by Mr. Hughes, West African Marine life by Messrs. Eggleston and Murry, Ecology of the Scourie district by members of the 1951 expedition, Variation in butterflies and moths by Mr. Wolf, Ant-lion larvae by Dr. Burt and-Insects from the South Coast by Mr. Boyce.—J.F.M.C.

#### BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On December 4th, 1951, our lecturer was Mr. T. Taylor who gave us a racy and interesting lecture on "Quaint Northern Customs and Superstitions". Owing to unforeseen circumstances, the lecture fixed for December 18th was postponed. To fill the gap, a "Quiz" was arranged with Mr. T. C. Dunn, Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison and Mr. J. A. Richardson giving the answers.

We began our 1952 programmes on January 8th with a series of films in colour provided by the Central Office of Information. Next, on January 22nd, we had a visit from our old friend, Mr. J. Walton, who brought an excellent series of lantern slides of his own making illustrating "Wild Life in Lambton Park". In addition, he showed a series of photographs of his lioness at home. Dr. E. T. Burt visited us on February 5th to lecture on the topic of "Social Insects". Dr. Burt confined his remarks, for the most part, to ants, bees and wasps. Everyone was delighted to hear his exposition of the dance language of the hive bee. On February 19th, Mr. T. C. Dunn gave us an very interesting talk, illustrated by lantern slides, dealing with "The Wanderings of Butterflies". This provoked a good discussion which was rendered the more valuable by the specimens Mr. Dunn had on view.

#### NOTES AND RECORDS

##### NOTES

**Notes on the Small Winter Moth, *Cheimophila salicella* Hb.**—Meyrick, in his Textbook, asserts that the caterpillars of this peculiar moth feed on "*Myrica*, *Potentilla anserina* and probably other plants". When I first discovered it in Durham, I observed that the preferred food plant was bramble, although larvae could be found in limited numbers on the silverweed. On the bramble, the caterpillar spins two or more overlapping leaves together and hides when not feeding in the cavity so formed. From that refuge it emerges at night and feeds in such a way as to skeletonise the leaves of its foodplant. Larvae are best collected in September and early October although some persist until November. Of the samples brought indoors most spun up and pupated in bramble leaves just as they do in nature. Nevertheless, many, which escaped, spun their cocoons in all sorts

of positions in the house. Such specimens gave rise to the perfect insects early in March, but those emerging in the wild state did not do so until the last two days of the same month, when males were observed flitting about in the sun in search of the tiny wingless females. Early in April, I discovered cakes of whitish eggs, which soon turn pink, pushed into all kinds of cracks and crevices. Females placed in match-boxes deposited in similar places inside the box.—C.R.

**Cotoneaster Simonsii Baker in Durham**—In the course of recent investigations on the flowering plants of the Magnesian Limestone, I have twice encountered examples of this species of Cotoneaster. One of the stations was near Raisbury, and the second not far from Bishop Middleham. It was perfectly obvious that in both stations the plants had originated from bird-sown seed. The habitats occupied were situated on barish soil composed almost solely of powdered Magnesian Limestone. The plants seemed perfectly naturalised and, had one not known that the species was an alien, they would have been regarded as quite ordinary members of the flora of such habitats.—J. A. Richardson.

**An Inland Locality for the White-line Dart (*Euxoa tritici* L.) in Durham**—In Robson's Catalogue of the Lepidoptera of Northumberland and Durham, it is stated that this moth is "Another coast species and very abundant from Seaton Carew at the Teesmouth along the shores wherever there are loose sandhills". Until last year, all the examples taken by me had been obtained from ragwort flowers in such habitats. However, during August, 1951, I was surprised to find a single specimen in my greenhouse at Birtley. Whether the insect had been driven inland from the coast, or had actually been bred in the vicinity it was impossible to decide, although several seaside plant species grow quite naturally on sandy ground just west of the village.—J.W.H.H.

**The Food Habits of Wasps**—During a series of seasons, I have made many observations on the feeding habits of wasps. In the case of *Vespa vulgaris*, in addition to their normal probing of flowers for nectar, I have noted queens at the expanding buds of hawthorn and workers at the calyces of the white deadnettle as well as at the glands on the stipules of the common tare. Moreover, I have seen workers capturing and eating house flies on the windows inside the house. Further, workers of both *V. norvegica* and *V. sylvestris* possess the same habit of working at the calyces of the dead-nettle. Except in one instance, when it was preying on dungflies, I have invariably found *V. rufa* to restrict itself to various flowers when the favoured plant of the queens was the common gooseberry. It is perhaps worthy of special remark that, on April 25th, I captured a queen of *V. rufa* at the blossoms of the wood anemone—a most unusual plant. C.R.

**The Occurrence of Fool's Parsley (*Aethusa Cynapium* L.) in Durham**—Baker and Tate in their Flora remark of this plant that it is common in cultivated fields. This, in my opinion, does not hold true of its present-day status. As a matter of fact, I have only met with the plant on two occasions, once on disturbed ground at Coxhoe, and once on the crumbling edge of a clay-pit just south of Birtley. I should much like to have the opinions of other workers concerning the position of the plant in our two counties.—J. A. Richardson.

**The Abundance of the Small Copper Butterfly (*Lycæna phlaeas*) in 1951**—Last year, a season very disastrous for many butterflies, proved favourable for the Small Copper in the Team Valley area. Normally, the insect may be taken as it visits the flowers of the ragwort, hawkweed and dandelion. However, on June 8th, when I was walking along the railway bankside at Vigo in search of orchids, I came across a specimen of the insect engaged in extracting nectar from the flowers of the stitchwort. This is the first time I have ever seen a butterfly at the blossoms of that plant.—J.W.H.H.

**The Gall-gnat, *Perrisia muricatae*, at Birtley**—During the war, owing to the flooding of the clay-pits, the fox sedge (*Carex Otrubae*) has greatly increased in numbers in this area. Apparently as a direct result of this, the gall-gnat, *P. muricatae*, once so rare in this district, has also become very abundant. In one claypit between Birtley and Brown's Buildings, where the sedge is extremely plentiful, almost every fruit on the plants was galled. The population of the gnat, therefore, must have numbered many thousands. It will be interesting to note how long this abundance will last.—J.W.H.H.

**The Occurrence of Viviparous Sweet Vernal Grass (*Anthoxanthum odoratum* L.) near Coxhoe**—Just to the east of a mineral line near Coxhoe there is a swampy area fringed by a strong growth of the sweet vernal grass. Of the plants composing this colony, quite a heavy percentage bore viviparous inflorescences in 1951. Although I have kept a sharp look out for plants exhibiting vivipary for a considerable time, this is the first occasion on which I have observed this grass displaying the phenomenon.—J.W.H.H.

**Larvae of the Buff Tip (*Phalera bucephala*) in the Team Valley**—For a long time, in spite of the fact that I have looked for batches of Buff Tip larvae, I have never been able to find them. On August 22nd, however, as I was walking down the Featherbed Lane between Birtley and Lamesley, I was pleased to find two groups on *Salix atrocinerea*. These lots were obviously from different parents for one batch was almost full-grown, whilst the larvae in the other were all in their second instar.—J.W.H.H.

**The Durham Form of *Cirsium eriophorum* (L.) Scop.**—In the October 1951 issue of the *Vasculum*, an account was given of the discovery of a new Durham station for this fine thistle which had not been observed in our counties for over a hundred years. It has now been demonstrated that our form of the plant differs markedly from the Central European type and is hereby named var. *praetermissa* (*Planta seminibus maioribus quam in typo*). The two plants differ, of course, in other characters, and a full account of these will be given later. In addition, Mr. J. A. Richardson will publish a general description of the ecology of the plant, and of one or two other plants having a similar distribution.—J.W.H.H.

**Plusias at Valerian**—In a narrow border in my back yard, I have a single plant of Valerian. During recent years I have taken the following nine species of the Plusiadae at its blossoms: Bumished Brass, Gold Spot, Gold Spangle, Plain Golden Y, Beautiful Golden Y, Silver Y, Golden Plusia, Dark Spectacle, and Light Spectacle.—J.P. Robson.

## RECORDS

### FERNS AND FLOWERING PLANTS

- Asplenium Ruta-muraria** L. Wall-rue 66  
On limestone rocks near Raisby in some quantity.—J. A. Richardson.  
Also on a wall near the Springs Farm, Birtley.—J.W.H.H.
- Phyllitis Scolopendrium** (L.) Newm. Hart's Tongue Fern. 66  
On limestone debris near Old Wingate.—J.W.H.H.
- Cardaria Draba** (L.) Desv. 66  
This plant forms a large colony around a clay-pit near Tanfield. J. A. Richardson.
- Cytisus capitatus** Jacq. 66  
About half a dozen well-grown plants of this interesting alien were detected just east of the by-pass at Portobello, Birtley. As there no gardens near from which the plants could have been derived, it is difficult to account for their presence in this locality.—J.W.H.H.
- Sagina apetala** Ard. Pearlwort. 66  
This inconspicuous plant occurs commonly near Garmondsway in Mid-Durham. This is the first time I have ever seen and collected the plant in this county. In my opinion, it is something of a rarity with us.—J.W.H.H.
- Melilotus altissima** Thuill. Melilot. 66  
Common on the hillside at Pittington.—J. A. Richardson.
- M. alba** Medic. White Melilot. 66  
This melilot used to grow freely along the field path between Fatfield and Portobello, but it has been extinct there for ten years. It is now reported as existing in a strong colony near Blythe's brickyard, Birtley.—J.W.H.H.
- M. officinalis** (L.) Lam. Common Melilot. 66  
Also noted near Pittington.—J. A. Richardson.

- Rorippa sylvestris** (L.) Besser. 66  
This species seems to be decreasing rapidly in this county so that a record of its presence near Witton-le-Wear seems desirable.—J.W.H.H.
- Rosa Sherardi** Dav. Downy Rose. 66  
The uniseriate form *cinerascens* Dum. of this rose occurs at two points on the side of the road between Pittington and Elemore.—J.W.H.H.
- R. canina** L. x **R. obtusifolia** Desv. 66  
As far as I know, this hybrid has not been described or recorded before. It, however, may be found near the rough path leading up the hill at Pittington.—J.W.H.H.
- Comarum palustre** L. Marsh Cinquefoil. 66  
This plant is sufficiently rare in the eastern areas of Durham to make a record of its occurrence near Hetton desirable.—J. A. Richardson.
- Eryngium maritimum** L. Sea Holly. 62  
As this plant has now almost vanished from the north-east coast of England, it seems necessary to place on record the fact that it was collected at Saitburn in August, 1950.—J.W.H.H.
- Dipsacus fullonum** L. Teasel. 66  
This unusual plant for our area turned up near Ferryhill.—J.W.H.H.
- Senecio squalidus** L. 66  
This new arrival has now reached as far as Hamsterley in its advance up the Wear Valley.—J.W.H.H.
- Salix atrocinerea** Brot. x **S. Caprea** L. 66
- On the pitfall in the field north of the Featherbed Lane and east of the railway near Lamesley.—J.W.H.H.
- S. phyllicifolia** L. x **S. repens** L. 66  
Another hybrid occurring in the mixed willow thicket at Bishop Middleham ; new to the county.—J.W.H.H.
- S. phyllicifolia** L. x **S. Caprea** L. 66  
This hybrid, also new to Durham, occurs in the same thickets as the preceding. J.W.H.H.
- S. pentandra** L. Bay-leaved Willow. 66  
New localities for this fine willow in East and Mid-Durham are near Moorsley and Bishop Middleham.—J.W.H.H.
- Lilium** Martagon L. Martagon Lily. 66  
Now naturalised in the woods lining the sides of Hawthorn Dene.—J.W.H.H.
- Dactylorhiza latifolia** L. Marsh Orchid. 66  
The variety *pulchella* Pugsf. of this orchid is now recorded for the first time from Durham ; it occurred at Ferryhill in a mixed colony of *D. Fuchsii*, *D. purpurella*, *Gymnadenia conopsea* and *Coeloglossum viride*. Growing amongst these species were the hybrids *D. latifolia* var. *pulchella* x *D. Fuchsii* and *D. latifolia* var. *pulchella* x *D. purpurella*, two combinations now reported for the first time in Britain.—J.W.H.H.
- Bromus erectus** Huds. 66  
After a period of years during which no one had noticed this species in Durham we were able to supply a recent record for it at Garmondsway in the October number of *Vasculum*. We can now report it on a further station near Bishop Middleham.—J.W.H.H. and J.A.R.
- Carex pendula** L. Great Pendulous Sedge. 67  
The number of stations in which this sedge now occurs in South Northumberland is now very small so that its presence in a damp wood near Cambois should be known.—J.W.H.H.

## LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

<b>Conistra vaccinii</b> L. Chestnut.	66
On Christmas Eve, despite the very inclement weather, I captured a female specimen of this moth, flying in the streets of Birtley. The species generally so common is, nevertheless, quite rare in the Team Valley.—R. Harris.	
<b>Harpya hermelina</b> Goeze. Poplar Kitten.	66
A single specimen of this moth was taken near the river at Chester-le-Street, on July 7th.—T. C. Dunn.	
<b>H. furcula</b> Cl. Sallow Kitten.	66
Taken at light on June 14.—T.C.D.	
<b>Cilix glaucata</b> Scop. Chinese Character.	66
This pretty little moth was not rare on tree trunks and walls near Chester-le-Street during June and July.—T.C.D.	
<b>Cryphia peria</b> Schiff. Marbled Beauty.	66
Also common on tree trunks and walls during July.—T.C.D.	
(It should be noted that, just as is the case at Birtley, this species has regained ground lost in the Chester-le-Street area over fifty years ago.—J.W.H.H.)	
<b>Amathes sexstrigata</b> Hb. Six-striped Rustic.	66
This noctuid, which has never been more than a rare species in Durham, turned up on Waldrige Fell in August.—T.C.D.	
<b>Lampra fimbriata</b> Schreb. Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing.	66
This beautiful species, which is of local abundance in Durham, came to light at Chester-le-Street in July.—T.C.D.	
<b>Rhizedra lutosa</b> Hb. Large Wainscot.	66
This moth, only known in our area from Greatham and on the cliffs between Ryhope and Seaham, was captured on the river banks at Chester-le-Street on October 4th, 1951.—T.C.D.	
<b>Orthosia gracilis</b> Schiff. Powdered Quaker.	66
Common at sallow in May ; another species-on-the upgrade with us.—T.C.D.	
<b>Zenobia subtusa</b> Schiff. The Olive.	66
One taken at light on June 30th, 1951. This species has only occurred once previously in this district, when Prof. Heslop Harrison took one not far from Birtley.—T.C.D.	
<b>Cirrhia gilvago</b> Schiff. Dusky Lemon Sallow.	66
Another noteworthy capture of a moth steadily increasing its northward range in our counties.—T.C.D.	
<b>Cucullia chamomillae</b> Schiff. Chamomile Shark.	66
This species is of sporadic occurrence with us ; two specimens were taken at light in our garden at Chester-le-Street on May 21st.—T.C.D.	
<b>Plusia festucae</b> L. Gold Spot.	66
One at light at Chester-le-Street on July 27th, 1951.—T.C.D.	
<b>Euchoeca nebulata</b> Scop. Dingy Shell.	66
Captured at Waldrige Fell in July.—T.C.D.	
<b>Sterrhia seriata</b> Schr. Small Dusty Wave.	66
Common on walls in July.—T.C.D.	
<b>Colotois pennaria</b> L. Feathered Thorn	66
One in Lumley Woods, October 10th, 1951.—T.C.D.	



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## BY THE WAY

Secretaries of the Societies and other contributors are requested to send material intended for inclusion in our October issue to the Editor before September 15th, 1952.

### A LIST OF HERBALS

Many of our readers other than professional botanists are interested in Herbals, and we should, therefore, like to direct their attention to a useful pamphlet produced by Dr. W. S. Mitchell, Librarian at King's College.

Although this pamphlet bears the simple title "A List of Herbals in the Library of King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne," it is much more than a mere list, for it not only gives a brief account of the contents of each of the works included, but, in addition, supplies important facts concerning their authors. Moreover, in each case there is set out, as far as is known, the history of the actual copies now in the Library's possession. We recommend all of our readers interested in such matters to procure a copy of Dr. Mitchell's "List."

### EARLY INSECT IMMIGRANTS

Until the end of June, reports of immigrant butterflies and moths in our counties have been very few indeed. In fact, movements of only two species, the Painted Lady (*Vanessa cardui*) and the Silver Y (*Plusia gamma*), have been noted by local observers. Of these, the Painted Lady has been seen by five workers, Mr. T. D. Straker-Smith, Mr. T. C. Dunn, Mr. W. S. Craster, Mr. C. Hutchinson and J.W.H.H. The most important of these observations is that due to Mr. Straker-Smith, inasmuch as it demonstrates that contingents of one of the earliest migratory waves recorded in the British Isles and seemingly almost restricted to western areas in the north, actually reached our area. The Silver Y was reported by one observer only, and he saw it at two points in Mid-Durham.

In view of this paucity of early records, and the amount of sunshine we have had, entomologists are asked to keep a close watch for the appearance of other species. Details of such observations will help to fill the gaps in respect to northern areas which so often characterize Captain T. Dannreuther's yearly summaries.

## OBITUARY NOTICE

DR. W. M. MORISON

It is with great regret that we record the passing of Dr. W. M. Morison, President of the Annfield Plain and Stanley Naturalists' Field Club, at the age of 86. He came to the district for a short stay of three weeks, but became so attached to the people that his stay extended over 58 years.

He was Medical Officer to the old Annfield Plain Council from 1895 to 1937, and served as a magistrate from 1905. He became President of the North West Durham Liberal Association and a prominent member of the Consett Scottish Society.

The doctor was greatly interested in place names, and strove to develop the view that many local habits and customs were Celtic rather than Anglo-Saxon in origin. He was a poet of no mean order and made contributions to leading newspapers dealing with national events, as well as to those of local importance.

Later, his interest in nature and local history made him a powerful factor in the success of our Society over which he presided for so many noteworthy years until just before his death. We greatly admired his versatility, his extensive knowledge and the zeal he displayed on our summer rambles. Further, we rejoiced in the honour he brought us when he was elected President of the Northern Naturalists' Union.

After his retirement, he devoted much time to our local library, taking a special interest in its books, lectures and art displays.

The funeral service on Tuesday, March 25th, was private in view of the distance to his last resting place near Stornoway in the Outer Hebrides, where his brother, now in his 92nd year, had officiated so long. Truly one of the district's real old gentleman has returned to the land of his fathers after a long sojourn amongst other friends.

The memory of his kindly and cheery personality will long be cherished by the members of the Annfield Plain and Stanley Naturalists' Club. —F. Wade.

## BOOK REVIEWS

### HISTORICAL ASPECTS OF ORGANIC EVOLUTION.

by Philip Fothergill, B.Sc., Ph.D.

Early in the year, the appearance of Dr. Fothergill's book gave great pleasure to his friends and colleagues. We had watched the idea of the book gradually grow from the stimulating controversy on evolution started by Dr. Fothergill in the correspondence columns of the *Catholic Herald*. We had seen it slowly take manuscript form, and had been irked, like its author, by the various circumstances which delayed publication. When finally we saw it pass from printer's proof to published book, some of us felt like foster parents!

Dr. Fothergills work is not "another book on evolution," but one of the very few dealing with the *history* of evolution available to English readers. In the first six chapters, he traces the development of evolutionary thought through twenty-six centuries, and against this background the evolutionary arguments of the nineteenth century assume their true stature. We realize that the theories of Darwin and his contemporaries were the natural outcome of seeds sown in the minds of philosophers centuries earlier. It was inevitable that sooner or later, the "Origin" should be written.

To me the most interesting section of Dr. Fothergills book is that in which he discusses the impact of the publication of Darwin's evolutionary views on the minds of his fellows. Nowadays, we are conditioned to accept without question almost anything we read or hear. If Darwin were to give a broadcast talk on "Natural Selection" not a dissentient voice would be raised, and it is not difficult to imagine what a radio discussion between Charles Darwin, T. H. Huxley and Bishop Wilberforce would sound like in 1952 ! But it was not so a century ago ! Biologist, cleric and layman joined a fray which raged violently on both sides of the Atlantic. Everyone held an opinion, and did not fear to express it. As Dr. Fothergill says, "there was no room for compromise; a biologist, or indeed, any educated person, was forced to be either pro-or anti-Darwin *in toto*."

By far the greater part of the book deals with evolutionary thought during the present century, a period of experimental evolution following the rediscovery and appreciation of Gregor Mendel's work. To many readers this will be the most valuable part, for, just as we learn that evolution has an extensive preDarwinian history, we discover the magnitude of twentieth contributions.

Valuable, too, are the several appendices which round off this fascinating book which I recommend, wholeheartedly to both the professional and lay reader. H. H. Clark.

## THE SOCIETIES

### NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The seventy-fifth Field Meeting of the Union was held in Shincliffe and Croxdale Woods on Saturday, June 7th, 1952, when a large party under the leadership of Mrs. A. N. Gibby, had a most enjoyable outing.

We commenced our walk at the Rose Tree Inn, and entered the woods at the Shincliffe end. It was soon apparent that the reason was an early one, for many of the usual spring flowers like the bluebell, garlic, wood sanicle, wood forget-me-not, water avens, red campion, tuberous-rooted bitter vetch and primrose showed signs of going back. Nevertheless, we did exceedingly well with the usual shrubs for crab apple, bird cherry, broom, holly, elder and

the like were at their best whilst the wild roses, of which the most noteworthy were *Rosa mollis*, *R. Sherardi*, *R. glauca*, *R. coriifolia* and *R. arvensis* were just beginning to scent the air. Of these, *Rose arvensis* yielded a new and very important record of a species which has gradually disappeared from all its former stations in both counties. In its Shincliffe Woods habitats, it was very far from rare. The *R. glauca* forms were interesting, too, as most bore pure white flowers, a very unusual happening with us. The entomologists had a fair amount of success as they captured the Small Heath, the Green-veined White, the Orange Tip, the Ding Skipper, the Small Tortoiseshell and several Carpet moths, In particular, Mr. T. C. Dunn was so fortunate as to discover eggs of the Sandy Carpet on the young capsules of the red campion. This moth has rarely been recorded from Co. Durham.

Amongst the bees observed were the humble-bees, *Bombu terrestris*, *B. lucorum*, *B. hortorum*, *B. pratorum*, *B. muscorum* and *B. agrorum* whilst other Hymenoptera included several species of Cynipids from the oak trees.

As we approached Butterby, we were delighted to be able to re examine these interesting marshes made famous by the researches of our former President, Dr. B. M. Griffiths. Many plants he discovered here came under our observation, and none gave us greater pleasure than the sweet flag and the great water dock. However, we all regretted that the latter plant appeared in greatly diminished numbers. Of the dragon flies only the large red damsel fly and the common blue damsel-fly were netted.

A very interesting and profitable walk had a fitting close in the excellent tea provided for us at the Bridge Inn.

#### BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On March 4th, 1952, we had a very instructive lecture on "Seaweeds and their Uses" by Dr. B. Moss. Dr. Moss gave a lucid account of the various species and their ecology, illustrating her remarks by a series of appropriate lantern slides. She concluded her lecture by telling us about the very many uses that had been discovered for seaweeds and their products during the past dozen years or so. On March 18th, we had our Annual Dinner which was well attended. It ended with a display of lantern slides in colour made by Mr. J. Thompson. In general they depicted British Shrubs, and Prof. Heslop Harrison and Mr. Thompson described the interesting features each presented.

Our Winter Session closed on April 1st with an illustrated lantern lecture by Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison in which he dealt with the scenery and natural history of the Outer Hebridean Islands lying between the Butt of Lewis and the Isle of Eriskay.

## NOTES AND RECORDS

### NOTES

**The present position of the Black and the White Bryony on the Team Valley.**— It has long been known that the last northward stations of these two plants lay between Birtley and Lamesley. Not long ago, they were quite abundant in these habitats, but soon after the first war, road-widening operations seriously diminished the area occupied by the latter plant. Further, its position was again weakened by the straightening of Lamesley Lane carried out last year. Nevertheless, there are enough plants left to ensure that it will persist for a considerable time.

The position of the Black Bryony is much worse. Soon after 1918, the Square Wood, south of Lamesley Station, was felled, and, as we thought, the Black Bryony exterminated. However, on May 14th, a close examination of the remaining fragments of the wood revealed that an odd plant or two of the plant still existed.— J. Thompson.

**Fasciation.**—One of the odd things about plants which seems to interest people greatly is the occurrence, for no apparent reason, of large flat stems where small cylindrical ones would be expected. Recently a very striking example was sent by Mr. Atkinson of Blyth in which a stem of a Dame's Violet was flat, more than an inch wide, and carried leaves on its flat sides. A flat stem of Grape Hyacinth, brought in the other day, bifurcated and then produced twin stems of flowers.

Dandelions are prone to similar peculiarities, but there the stem more usually has two "flowers" back to back or a row of "flowers" at the top of the flattened stem. Other different appearances also come under the category of fasciation:— the leaves of the four-leaved clover, the big flattened strawberry and again the tomato fruit which instead of having two compartments has a large number. Most cultivated tomatoes have an excess of sepals and petals too and this is also related to the fasciation.

The flattened stem type is, however, much the commoner, and occurs very widely in flowering plants for it is recorded in over one-third of the known families. The first question that people ask when they find such a structure is "What causes this ?" and the answer to that is not so easy. Professor O. E. White of the University of Virginia has for many years been interested in fasciation and has summarized the results of some 200 papers which have been written on this topic, but he has to acknowledge that the explanations given in many cases are inconclusive, chiefly for the lack of real experimental evidence. There are, however, some conclusions which can be safely drawn. To begin with, the actual formation of the flattened structure seems to be due to flattening out and increase in size of one growing point rather than the lateral fusion of several, which Linnaeus thought was what happened. A number of cases of fasciation are due to mutations which are inherited in a normal Mendelian manner, though "modifying genes" interfere with the simplicity of the story. A good example of a mutation is to be found in the Cock's-Comb (*Celosia cristata*) a common bedding-out plant derived from *Celosia argentea* and differing from it by the occurrence of fasciated stems.

Fasciations which are not hereditary have been ascribed to various causes, of which the following seem the best authenticated. A fasciation in sweet pea has been shown to be due to a bacterium which when re-inoculated into seedlings will produce fasciation in them. Fasciation in species of Evening Primrose is described as being produced by microscopic injuries to the growing point due to moth *Mompha*. This is considered to be the primary cause but an abrupt increase in nourishment, consequent on the insect bite, is thought to be the real cause. Artificial formation of fasciation can be produced by cutting off the main stem of the Broad Bean above the seed-leaves. Cutting off of root tips crushing the young plant or injuring the growth tip may have the same effect.

These and other examples of non-inherited fasciation suggest that it may be ascribed to a wide range of environmental accidents which cause either direct or indirect interference with the conditions of nourishment of the growing point. K.B.B.

**Another Durham Locality for the Hybrid between the Frog Orchid and the Purple Marsh Orchid.**—On June 15th, a visit was paid to the Bishop Middleham area to see how far the orchids had advanced at this date. We were quite surprised to find that at least four species, including the Pyramidal Orchis, *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, were already in flower. Growing amongst the last named species, was a specimen of the cross named above, *Coeloglossum viride* x *Orchis purpurella*. The locality is several miles from the original station discovered by Professor Heslop Harrison, and a quarter of a mile from the second recorded by him.—J. A. Richardson.

**Variable Primroses in Lambton Woods.**—In order to study the variation of certain plants in these woods a journey was made thither on April 30th, when primroses were flowering in enormous quantities. We were astonished to observe, however, that those exhibiting the usual "primrose yellow" colour in their flowers were distinctly in the minority, for the bulk of the flowers were distinctly whitish in colour; the effect of the massed blossoms was very striking. One plant with an umbellate inflorescence was seen whilst another bore reddish flowers. Judging from its position, and the shade of its colouration, it does not seem likely that this plant was of garden origin.—J. Thompson.

**The Known Range of the Large Skipper Butterfly, *Ochlodis venata*, still extending in Durham.**—As readers of the Vasculum will know, since Mr. J. E. Nowers made the first recent record for this insect in Durham, in 1945, it has turned up in various places like Sherburn, Blackhall Rocks, Wynyard Park, Birtley, etc. This year I have seen it at Bishop Middleham and at Aycliffe. In view of its widespread occurrence in Durham, it must exist in Northumberland. Can anyone provide a record?—J.W.H.H.

**The Currant Moth (*Abraxas grossulariata*) in April.**—On Saturday, April 19th, 1952, I found a living male specimen of the Currant Moth in the dining room at home at Winlaton, and I wonder if the insect has been recorded previously for such an unusual time of year. Both gooseberry and currant bushes are backward in this area although our blackcurrant bushes are just breaking their dormancy. The specimen may represent a spring emergence after an early feeding up on currant buds, but, on the other hand, the larva may have fed up in 1951 and passed the winter as a pupa.—D. Morgan.

**The distribution of the Wall Rue and Hart's Tongue Fern in Durham.**—In the current number of the Vasculum the distributions of *Asplenium Rutamuraria* and *Polypodium vulgare* in this area are discussed. I think it worthy of note that I found the Wall Rue on an old mortared brick wall at Cocken when the last N.N.U. outing took place there. After the main party had left, I also discovered the Hart's Tongue Fern (*Phyllitis Scolopendrium*) on the steep side of a wooded dene a little to the east of the main area worked. The plant was a large one with several fronds, and looked to be of some age.—D. R. Glendinning.

**The Flowers of Hybrid Roses.**—This season, during the month of June, I had opportunities for observing the flowers of several hybrid roses. Of these three had the parentage *Rosa mollis* x *R. pimpinellifolia*, two had originated in a crossing between *Rosa rubiginosa* and *R. pimpinellifolia* and the last represented the combination *R. glauca* x *R. pimpinellifolia*. Of the first three, one bore white flowers and had therefore for its *R. mollis* parent the white-flowered variety *relecta*. One produced a display of striped white and pink flowers whilst the last carried pink flowers. Most of the flowers on the last plant were quite normal except for their sterility, but one was over three inches in diameter. Both of the *R. rubiginosa* x *R. pimpinellifolia* specimens bore flowers which were of a pinkish hue passing into a zone nearest the disc of a whitish colour. A flower on one of the plants only slightly distorted in the petals carried a calyx in which the sepals resembled foliage leaves. The flowers on the *R. glauca* x *R. pimpinellifolia* bush were bright pink.—J.W. H.H.

**The Common Blue Butterfly (*Polyommatus icarus*) and the Six-spot Burnet Moth (*Zygaena filipendulae*) at Orchid Flowers.**—It is only rarely that one sees insects, especially Lepidoptera, at the flowers of our native orchids. Nevertheless, on June 15th, I observed a male Common Blue probing the flowers of the Pyramidal Orchid and also several Six-spot Burnets visiting the inflorescence of the Spotted Orchid (*Orchis Fuchsii*)—J.W.H.H.

**Early Spring Moths in Durham.**—With evening temperatures of 45 F. and 46° F. in February, spring moths were more in evidence than usual. *Phigalia pedia* was the first to appear on 24th February, the specimen being of the dark-peppered form but all subsequent examples were of the dark smoky form *monacharia*. *Erannis leucophaearia* was taken on March 3rd, and the first of large numbers of *E. marginaria* on March 8th. On the same night *Eupsilia transversa*—a hibernated specimen—came to light in my garden at Chester-le-Street. The first *Alsophila aescularia* were seen on March 9th, and the first *Orthosiagothica* on March 11th. On this date, *E. marginaria* seemed to be at its best, for large numbers came to light and flitted along hedgerows.

Then followed a period of rain and north-east winds which effectually stopped collecting until early April. A sudden rise in temperature on April 8th brought out many of the Orthosids, so that by April 11th *O. gothica*, *O. incerta*, *O. stabilis* were all on the wing in the evenings. *Chimabacche fagella* was very common on all beach and elm trunks, occurring in great numbers from quite black examples to grayish-white specimens.

The first sallowing outing was on the evening of April 14th, Easter Monday. This proved an excellent night, the moths noted being *Orthosia gothica*, *O. cruda*, *O. stabilis*, *O. incerta*, *O. advena* (in great plenty), *O. gracilis*, *Cerastia rubricosa*, *Alsophila aescularia*, *Colostygia multistrigaria* and *Depressaria nervosa*. Further sallowing produced nothing fresh on other evenings. The trend at sallow this year seems to be toward a greater number of *O. advena*, but *O. gracilis* was not so plentiful as usual.

The present heat-wave (May) has also produced a very different picture in the insect world from what it was in 1951. Already moths are appearing which one generally associates with midsummer, so that I think we can expect a good season, provided that a sudden deterioration in the weather does not occur. T. C. Dunn.

**Butterflies at Rowlands Gill.**—This season I made my first acquaintance with the Orange Tip for I saw it in my garden on May 24th and 25th. Similarly, on May 24th and 28th, the Painted Lady was in the garden. These specimens, in all probability, formed part of the second migratory wave into the British Isles in-1952. On July 6th, I encountered a colony of the Dark Green Fritillary Butterfly in the railway cutting at Lockhaugh. This affords a further proof that this insect is regaining lost ground in our area.—C Hutchinson.

**An Unrecorded Capture of the Oleander Hawk (*Daphnis nerii*) at Birtley.**—On May 4th, I had handed to me a box containing a dated, but unmounted, specimen of this rare hawk which had been captured at Birtley in 1927. The specimen had been a very good one but now showed slight signs of attack by clothes moth! It is at present in the possession of Mr. T. C. Dunn- W.M.H.

## RECORDS

### FLOWERING PLANTS

**Adenocarpus commutatus** Gay 66  
In our last issue, I recorded the alien *Cytisus capitatus* from the banks of the Birtley by-pass. In May, on the same bankside, I found a single well-grown flowering example a second alien, *A. commutatus*. This occurrence heightens the difficulty of explaining the presence of these alien plants.—J.W.H.H.

**Fumaria Vaillantii** Lois. Fumitory. 66  
Although this fumitory has been recorded from Yorkshire, we seem to be much further north than its recognised territory. Nevertheless, in late May, I found several plants amongst corn in a field near Portobello.

- Orchis praetermissa** Dr. Marsh Orchid. 60  
 In view of the destruction of the Billingham colony of this plant, it is well to record that a single example of the species was detected in June on disturbed ground near Old Wingate. The plant was not removed although flowers were taken. Almost assuredly, there must be an established colony of the orchid elsewhere in the vicinity.—J.W.H.H.
- Aquilegia vulgaris** L. Columbine. 66  
 This plant was noted along a small stream which formerly fed the dam at the Moor Mill at Lamesley. It is very likely a garden escape.—J. Thompson.
- Bromus erectus** Huds. 66  
 Further investigations have demonstrated that this grass has a much wider distribution on the Magnesian Limestone tract than we had supposed. We have now collected it at Catley Hill, and also near Highland House. Moreover, in the original locality near Garmondsway, where we observed it last year, we have shown that it covers many acres of mixed scrub.—J.W.H.H. and J.A.R.
- Viola odorata** L. Scented Violet. 66  
 On May 10th we encountered a large patch of this violet near Old Wingate growing under hawthorns.—J.W.H.H. and J.A.R.
- Salix atrocinerea** Brot. x **S. purpurea** L. 66  
 A single bush near the parents at Bishop Middleham. This occurrence seems to provide the first English record for a plant already recorded from Perthshire and Dumfries by Linton.—J.W.H.H.
- Ophioglossum vulgatum** L. Adder's Tongue. 66
- Botrychium Lunaria** L. Moonwort. 66  
 Both these interesting ferns turned up near Old Wingate.—J.A.R.
- Cirsium eriophorum** L. Woolly Thistle. 66  
 Careful examination of the area in which we found thistle has shown that it exists as several hundred examples spread over a very considerable area near Garmondsway.—J.W.H.H. and J.A.R.
- Carex lepidocarpa** Tausch. 66  
 On clayey soil near Birtlev with cotton grass.—J.W.H.H. and T.A.R.
- C. pendula** L. Pendulous Sedge. 66  
 Common in the Lambton Woods along the riverside near the Castle
- C. laevigata** Sm. Smooth Sedge. 66  
 Still in its only Durham station on Waldrige Fell.—J. Thompson.
- Empetrum nigrum** L. Crowberry. 66  
 After a period of decadence during which the black crowberry had seemingly vanished from Waldrige Fell, we were able by means of a careful search to prove that it still maintained a precarious existence there.—J. Thompson.
- LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS
- Phalera bucephala** L. Buff-tip. 66  
 Early in July, a batch of eggs of this species was noted on a hybrid sallow, *Salix phylicifolia* x *S. Caprea*, at Bishop Middleham. A week later a well grown lot of larvae of the same moth was observed on *S. atrocinerea*.
- Laothoe populi** L. Poplar Hawk. 66  
 On the same day, and in the same locality, as that which produced the Buff tip larvae, three eggs of the Poplar Hawk were collected from *Salix Caprea*.
- Cidaria fulvata** Forst. Barred Yellow. 66  
 Larvae on wild rose at Bishop Middleham. - J.W.H.H.



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*Edited by*

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

## BY THE WAY

Material intended for insertion in our December issue should be in the Editor's hands before December 1st, 1952. Secretaries of the Societies are asked to take special note of this request.

### PROTECTING OUR RARER FLOWERS

In our last number, Mr. J. Thompson drew attention to the fact that the Black Crowberry (*Empetrum nigrum*) and the Smooth Sedge (*Carex laevigata*) still existed on Waldrige Fell. Unfortunately, the same cannot be said about the Juniper (*Juniperus communis*) and the Butterwort (*Pinguicula vulgaris*). The former plant was quite abundant fifty years ago, both in the alder carr and on the open moorland. Nevertheless, although its old habitats are substantially the same as they were in 1900, for no obvious reasons, the plant has now disappeared. Very different has been the course of events with the Butterwort. Its loss is entirely due to overcollecting by biology students, and it is that circumstance which has, in the main, caused this paragraph to be written in the hope that teachers will discourage the collection of our rarer and more interesting plants.

A similar fate, sooner or later, awaits the Spring Gentian (*Gentiana verna*) and, in some of its stations, the Bird's Eye Primrose (*Primula farinosa*). This position depends upon two factors: (1) the ruthlessness of alleged botanists who most certainly know better and (2) the enormous numbers of specimens presented every year for inspection by candidates taking biology examinations. In the latter case, once again, the remedy lies in the hands of the teachers.

### COUNTY BOOKS : DURHAM

Recently, there have appeared in the "County Books" series (Publisher, Robert Hale) two volumes, from the pen of Sir Timothy Eden, dealing with County Durham. It is not our intention to review this work here, but we do wish to protest vigorously against the contents of the chapter in volume II pretentiously labelled "Bird, Beast and Flower" and, in particular, against those few lines devoted to our plants and insects. Very few phrases in the account are even approximately correct, and, moreover, they create the impression that we possess no insects other than butterflies and one moth.

In the first place, one strongly doubts the occurrence within the last hundred years of *Orchis laxiflora* at Hartlepool, where it was collected long ago on ballast heaps discharged from sailing ships. Again, we rub our eyes when we see a yellow saxifrage, presumably *Saxifraga hirculus*, reported from Widdy Bank Fell, and alleged to be found elsewhere only in Yorkshire and Westmorland, and when we learn that the Spring Gentian (*Gentiana verna*) is to be found on hills near Stanhope. Even the inclusion of the shrubby cinquefoil amongst Widdy Bank specialties is incorrect. And what are we to say about the flowers one "recognises as familiar friends" ? Of these plants, apparently thirteen in number, some like the autumnal crocus at High Force, the snowdrops at Redworth, the winter aconite at Windlestone, the daffodils at Croxdale, are well-known aliens ; others are supplied with very misleading localities whilst the casual coupling of the lady's slippers (long since extinct!) at Castle Eden with the yellow broom on the Derwent moors leaves one gasping!

Turning now to the butterflies, we are informed that "only about a dozen of the thirty-five species of butterflies once recorded in this county can now be found to grace its flowers". As a matter of fact, there are recent records of at least twenty-three species. Further, what are we to make of the statement that "the days are gone when Painted Ladies danced their quadrilles with bold Red Admirals" ? To state the exact truth, these two butterflies, immigrants at best, sometimes occur in great abundance, and, even in 1952, both species have been far from rare. There was no need to single out for special remark an errant Painted Lady from Heighington in 1946 as, almost assuredly, the butterfly will be found there most seasons. In addition, the statement about *Erebia blandina*, "once to be seen in Castle Eden dene, and there only, in the whole of England" needs revision. The insect was once plentiful in certain Lancashire, Westmorland and Yorkshire localities, and was captured not so long ago in Northumberland. In the case of the only moth considered worthy of mention, the Elephant Hawk, we are told that it is *still* occasionally seen. The exact position is that, until recently, no records of the occurrence of this beautiful insect in Durham existed. After the 1914-18 war, however, the Elephant Hawk made its first appearance with us, and increased so rapidly in numbers that now it can be described as being really abundant.

It seems to us that, if this is the general level reached by the books in this series when matters concerning natural history are being considered, then it is the urgent duty of the publishers to see that the matter is remedied as soon as possible. This could be carried out most safely by referring the sections in question to competent authorities to be "vetted".

## BOOK REVIEW

" FLORA OF THE BRITISH ISLES " by A. R. Clapham, T. G. Tutin and E. F. Warburg, published by the Cambridge University Press, 50/- net.

This book forms a valuable contribution to our science and should be in the hands of all British botanists. Nevertheless, it needs discretion in its use, and one would not be surprised to find amateurs continuing to avail themselves of earlier and less pretentious floras.

Considering its high price, the get-up of the book seems unsatisfactory. Even the illustrations appear inadequate and, in some cases, inaccurate. As for the matter it contains, criticism can be levelled at several of the keys. In the case of the grasses and roses, we defy anyone to make successful *ab initio* determinations with the keys provided.

In mentioning the roses, a protest should be made against the unevenness of the treatment of various groups. Thus, the genus *Sorbus* is subjected to intense pulverization whilst in *Rosa* forms of equal rank to those regarded as species in *Sorbus* are neglected. In particular, we have a telescoping of *Rosa canina* and *R. dumetorum* and of *R. confolia* and *R. dumalis*. The authors seem utterly unaware that the members of each of these two pairs show marked differences in distributional pattern and ecological requirements. Another strange fact in the roses is the use in *R. villosa* of " straight prickles " as a critical character. We can produce local examples of that species with strongly curved prickles, and similar forms occur elsewhere in Britain and on the continent.

Again, the distributions supplied for the various species are often ambiguous, and, sometimes, incorrect. Thus, to take the Hebrides alone, the statements made about *Spergularia rubra*, *Geum rivale*, *Saxifraga aizoides*, *S. nivalis*, *Knautia arvensis*, *Anacampta pyramidalis*, *Naias flexilis* and *Paris quadrifolia* are erroneous whilst the description of Lewis *Sjlbthorpia europaea* as "probably introduced" is subtly euphemistic. In the case of *Potamogeton rutilus*, the range is correctly set out as "Shetland and Outer Hebrides", but the number of vicecounties assigned to it is four—obviously a careless copying from Druce's *Comital Flora*! Another example of the same type of uncritical treatment is seen in *Rosa micrantha* which is alleged to occur in sixty-six British and four Irish vicecounties— a statement also derived from Druce who includes under *R. micrantha* practically the whole of the ancient records of glandular *R. coriifolia*

Similarly, local botanists will receive some curious information about the floras of Northumberland and Durham. They will find that we lack *Hypochaeris maculata*, *Tilia cordata* and *Monotropa hypophegea* whilst *Carex maritima* is not given for v.c. 67. On the other hand, we are credited with *Blackstonia perfoliata*. As for the

wild privet, thickets of which dominate many hollows on Durham coastal cliffs, we learn that it is "common in Southern England, naturalised elsewhere"!

Even statements concerning the general biology and ecology of British plants should not be accepted uncritically. *Melandrium rubrum* is alleged to be visited by long-tongued humble-bees and hover flies and its congener *M. album* by moths. As a matter of fact both attract both sets of insects. Similarly, our authors seem not to know that the flowers of all the *Ribes* species are visited by moths at night. On the ecological side, we glean that *Potamogeton gramineus* occurs "chiefly in acid water", and is "absent from districts with calcareous water". We find it to be one of the first species to vanish as waters become acid, and to abound in calcareous waters in the Hebrides. Further, *Hypericum Androsaemum* is stated to occur in damp woods and hedges; in the Hebrides it is a plant of cliff ledges and crevices.

We have singled out only a few of the defects of the book, but they should suffice to show that it the book, as useful and welcome as it undoubtedly is, must be used with a certain degree of caution.

## THE SOCIETIES

### NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

For the second Field Meeting of the year, the President, Mrs. A. N. Gibby, led us on July 5th to the marble quarries at Frosterley. Although the day was suitable, and the attendance good, very little of special interest was observed.

Amongst the butterflies we saw on the wing were the Common Blue, the Meadow Brown, the Small Heath, the three Whites, an early Small Tortoiseshell and a belated first-brood Small Copper. On a large patch of nettles near the entrance to the quarries, the characteristic tents of the larvae of the Red Admiral were discovered in small numbers. The plants noted were, for the most part, those generally encountered throughout the county in July, although the Spotted Orchid (*Orchis Fuchsii*) and Stephenson's Marsh Orchid (*O. purpurella*) with a hybrid swarm resulting from their hybridization attracted attention. Other plants seen included the two sedges, *Carex lepidocarpa* and *C. tumidocarpa*, stonewort, (*Chara* sp.) the Bur-reed (*Sparganium neglectum*), the two pond weeds, *Potamogeton natans* and *P. polygonifolius*. Whilst emphasising the fact that we were on calcareous ground were the Carline Thistle (*Carlina vulgaris*) and the Slender False Brome-grass (*Brachypodium sylvaticum*). More noteworthy, perhaps, from the ecological standpoint were the masses of the Cotton Grass (*Eriophorum polystachion*), more usually seen in acid moorland bogs.

An open air tea, taken in the quarries, formed a satisfactory end to a very pleasant day.

The last meeting of the season was held on September 6th in the woods surrounding Beamish Hall when Mr. T. Hutton was our leader. On this occasion, our work was spoilt by the exceptional earliness of the season which had speeded up the flowering of the plants, and hurried out the usual autumnal insects. However, by careful search, we managed to find much of interest. Amongst the insects, we captured examples of the three White butterflies, the Small Tortoiseshell, the Pink-barred Sallow and the Gray Chi with larvae of the Small Clouded Brindle on the Ribbon Grass (*Phalaris arundinacea*), of the Gray Dagger on oak and of the Common White Wave on birch. Whilst working the oaks, we saw multitudes of spangle galls as well as artichoke galls getting ready for the eclosion of their tenants next season. In addition to these galls, we collected those of several species of gall-mites on birch, alder and sycamore. Humble-bees were distinctly rare, only the common *Bombus lucorum*, *B. terrestris*, *B. hortorum* and *B. agrorum* being observed. The plants, still in flower and collected by us, included Wall Lettuce, Nipplewort, Marsh Ragwort, Cat's Ear, Herb Robert, Hairbell, Rose-bay Willowherb, Marsh Willowherb, Enchanter's Nightshade, Lesser Stitchwort, Foxglove, Ivy-leaved Toadflax, Wood Sage, Hedge Woundwort, Red Campion, Honeysuckle, Lady's Mantle (*Alchemilla glabra*) and the Giant Fescue. Out of flower, but noteworthy, were numerous examples of the true White Beam (*Sorbus Aria*) and Solomon's Seal. Two or three members of the party, despite the effects of the long drought, interested themselves in the fungi and collected *Cantharellus cibarius*, *Boletus edulis*, *Polyporus versicolor*, *P. betulinus*, *Hypholoma fasciculare*, *Clavaria flava*, *Phallus impudicus* and several species of *Russula*.

A satisfactory, if not exciting day, ended with a good tea served in the rooms of the Beamish Golf Club. To the members of that club we tender our hearty thanks for the kind attention we received.

## NOTES AND RECORDS

### NOTES.

**Botanical Notes from Woodburn and Colt Crag Reservoir.**—An excursion planned to examine the present position of the colonies of the Ringlet Butterfly, formerly known to inhabit the Redesdale area of Northumberland, was ruined by persistent rain. However, a few plants collected on the journey seem worthy of note. An examination of Colt Crag Reservoir yielded *Potamogeton perfoliatus*, *P. gramineus*, *Callitriche intermedia* and *Ranunculus peltatus* whilst on the shore amongst a tangle of *Salix repens* and *S. atrocineria* the hybrid between the two willows was found. In the wood, obviously planted in the first place, but now seeding itself, was the Red-berried Elder, *Sambucus racemosus*, with its lacinate-leaved form. Near Woodburn a stagnant pond in the quarry produced *Potamogeton berchtoldii*. On the railway track, not far away, the Lesser Toadflax (*Linaria minor*) turned up, whilst on the road side the Frog Orchis (*Coeloglossum viride*) and the hybrid sallow, *Salix Caprea* x *S. aurita*, were collected.—J. K. Morton.

**A Further Locality for *Rosa Hurstiana* in Durham.**—In the first week in September, whilst I was collecting specimens of our local wild roses for photographic purposes, I came across a plant which at first I could not recognise. Later examination showed that it belonged to the species *Rosa Hurstiana*, discovered

in the Team Valley over twenty-five years ago. Professor Heslop Harrison took me to the type bush which still flourishes on the roadside between Lamesley and Urpeth. This interesting rose seems now to have been extirpated from its former stations near Fatfield and along the waggon-way leading across Birtley Black Fell.—J. Thompson.

**The Foodplants of the Moth *Depressaria angelicella* Hb.**—On May 25th, I observed the unfolding basal leaves of the Cow Parsnip (*Herncleum Sphondylium*) to be infested with the gregarious larva of a small moth. As I could not name these, a selection was collected and reared at home. Later, on July 10th, I examined umbels of the same plants and found many heads to contain larvae of a second moth, *Depressaria heracleana*. These were almost full-grown. On the other hand, larvae of the first moth taken, which had later attacked the foliage and inflorescence of the Cow Parsnip indiscriminately, had now vanished. Clearly, judging from the position of the pupae produced from the larvae I had taken indoors, in nature these pupate in the ground. In this respect they differ from those of *D. heracleana* which spin up in the hollow stems of their foodplant. Later, in July and August, my pupae produced an ally of the species *D. heracleana* in the form of *D. angelicella* Hb. This moth is reported by Meyrick (*Revised Handbook of British Lepidoptera*, page 687) to feed in spun shoots of *Angelica sylvestris* in May and June. This plant is certainly not favoured in Co. Durham.—C.R.

**Abnormal Inflorescences of the Fragrant Orchid (*Gymnadenia conopsea*).**—Amongst a series of orchids collected on July 19th at Bishop Middleham, two plants bore remarkable inflorescences. One, otherwise normal, showed bifurcation half way up the stem. In the case of the other specimen, whilst most of the florets were of the ordinary type, several seemed to have been formed by the fusion of two flowers. Thus they appeared to be endowed with two spurs and certain other malformed organs. They undoubtedly represent a phase of the phenomena described under the title "Fasciation" in the last number of the *Vasculum* by Dr. K. B. Blackburn.—J.A.R.

**The Common Blue (*Polygonatus Icarus*) and the Small Heath (*Coenonympha pamphilus*) Double-brooded in Durham in 1952.**—As a general rule, except for the three Whites and the Small Copper, none of our local butterflies produce two broods in the year. However, this season a second batch of Common Blues began to appear along the Vigo railway on August 20th. This brood continued for about four weeks and occurred quite freely in many Mid-Durham stations. Later, early in September, second brood *Coenonympha pamphilus* turned up on the slag tip at Birtley and also on railway banksides. Of the butterflies ordinarily bivoltine with us, the Small Copper appeared for the second time in 1952 in the third week in August. This brood was not so strong and seemed to be of shorter duration than usual. In ordinary seasons it greatly outnumbered the June brood. Second brood Green-veined Whites emerged in the middle of August, and they, too, did not last long. On the other hand, there seems to have been a succession of broods of the Small White, one of which is still on the wing in the fourth week of September.—J.W.H.H.

**Aberrant Leaves of the White Beam (*Sorbus Aria*).**—Recently, as I was examining the leaves of the white beam trees growing near St. Thomas's Church, Newcastle upon Tyne, I came across a single tree with all the leaves on the upper shoots wholly normal. However, those produced by the adventitious buds growing just above ground level could scarcely be distinguished from the leaves of the mountain ash. This may indicate that the tree in question is of hybrid origin, the putative parents being the white beam and the mountain ash, but, in my opinion, this is not the case.—J.W.H.H.

**Viviparous Cock's-foot (*Dactylis glomerata*) at Birtley.**—Last year, the occurrence of viviparous Sweet Vernal Grass at Coxhoe was recorded in the *Vasculum*. This season I can report the presence of fully viviparous Cocks-foot Grass on the old Target Heap at Birtley. It is perhaps worthy of note that the viviparous inflorescence was produced by a plant on which the normal flowers had been developed at the usual time, and the resulting seeds successfully shed.—H.H.C.

**Late Flowering Plants**—On the occasion of a visit to the Cupola Bridge near Staward, amongst the plants coming under notice was a large number of specimens of the Alpine Penny Cress (*Thlaspi alpestre*) and of the Vernal Sandwort (*Arenaria verna*). These flourished in the sandy soil along the river side. In spite of the lateness of the date (September 11th), both species were found in flower. Two days later, on September 13th, we proceeded to Wylam to inspect the tangle of salwos and willows which flourish there. Once more the same two plants turned up in considerable quantities although, in this locality, only the Vernal Sandwort was in flower. The Alpine Penny Cress existed in the state of overwintering rosettes.—J.W.H.H.

**The Two Sea-Lavenders, *Limonium vulgare* Mill. and *L. humile* Mill. in Durham.**—In their Flora (1868), Baker and Tate report the former species, under the name *Statice limonium*, as occurring sparingly about the lower part of the Wear and Tees. In my 1918 paper, in which I described the vegetation of the Lower Tees marshes, I stated that *Statice limonium* was plentiful on both sides of Greatham Creek in the salt marshes. On the other hand, I recorded the second, under the name of *Statice humile*, as very rare in the same area. Of its occurrence in Durham, Baker and Tate had no knowledge.

On August 3rd, when once again I paid a visit to Greatham, I was greatly astonished to discover that the picture was entirely changed. The Common Sea Lavender was a little less abundant, but the Lax-flowered Sea Lavender was in much greater quantity and obviously still gaining ground.—J.W.H.H.

## RECORDS

### LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

**Argynnis aglaia** L. Dark Green Fritillary. 66, 67

This butterfly not only seems to be re-occupying old stations but, in addition, is successfully colonising new ones. It was found not uncommonly on heads of the greater knapweed near Highland House, near Wheatley Hill and on Waldrige Fell.—J.W.H.H.

This species was captured by me at Monkseaton on July 25th, 1949. M. Fisher.

**A. euphrosyne** L. Pearl-bordered Fritillary. 67

In fair numbers at Blanchland.—M. Fisher.

**Aphantopus hyperanthus** L. Ringlet. 66, 67

Taken at Coldstream.—M. Fisher.

I was greatly surprised to see this butterfly in Chopwell Woods in the Derwent Valley in August, 1951. It was flying in small numbers, and a specimen was taken for reference. This proved, on examination, to be a good specimen of the var. *arete*, which has the spots on the lower side reduced to mere points. No examples of the species have been seen, or taken, in Durham for many years. J. E. Hull.

**Anthocaris cardamines** L. Orange Tip. 66

Observed in a little dene just east of Bishop Middleham and also at Aycliffe in the last week of May.—J.W.H.H.

**Aricia agestis** Schiff. Brown Argus. 66

On September 23rd, 1951, more from habit than because I expected to have any success, I examined the rockrose plants growing on a ridge by the roadside near Coxhoe for larvae of the Brown Argus. Almost immediately, I observed the characteristic mines of the young larvae feeding on the parenchyma of the leaves. A single specimen was brought home for inspection, and subsequently handed over to Mr. T. C. Dunn. This occurrence provides a new inland station for the butterfly in Durham, and one which is further south than any previously known in the county.—J.W.H.H.

**Thymelicus sylvestris** Poda. Small Skipper. 62

According to Ford, the northern limits of this skipper lie in South Yorkshire. On July 29th, 1951, I captured several specimens at Cowton in North Yorkshire.—M. Fisher.

<b>Cycnia mendica</b> Cl. Muslin Moth.	66
Two specimens taken at night at Chester-le-Street.—T.C. Dunn.	
<b>Parasemia plantaginis</b> L. Wood Tiger.	66
This handsome insect nowadays seems to be restricted to the coast and the moorlands with us. Nevertheless, I captured a fine male near Highland House in Mid-Durham.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Agrotis ipsilon</b> Hufn. Dark Sword grass.	66
Several examples of this species, obviously immigrants, were taken at night in October and November, 1951.—T.C.D.	
<b>Lampra firnbriata</b> Scheb. Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing.	66
Two specimens of this beautiful insect, so generally rare with us, were taken at night in July near Chester-le-Street.—T.C.D.	
I have taken larvae very sparingly on Birtley Fell and near Urpeth, but quite freely on low herbage in the Derwent Valley.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Hadena cucubali</b> Schiff The Campion.	66
One was taken on the river banks near Chester-le-Street by dusk on June 21st, 1951.—T.C.D.	
Larvae occur quite commonly on the bladder campion on the slag-tip at Birtley.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>H. lepidia</b> Esp. Tawny Shears.	66
Here and there near Chester-le-Street in June : not at all rare.—T.C.D.	
<b>Gortyna flavago</b> Schiff. Frosted Orange.	66
At ivy blossom at dusk on September and October, near Chester-le-Street. T.C.D. The pupae of this insect used to occur very plentifully in thistle and mugwort stems near Birtley. Now it is very rare, and this August I have found only a single larva in a thistle stem. I once captured the moth on the wing at heather blossoms on Birtley Fell.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Agrochola lychnidis</b> Schiff. Beaded Chestnut.	66
This insect, according to Robson and Meyrick, seems to reach its northern limits in Durham. Nevertheless, it is very common everywhere around Chesterle-Street, in September, from which area it was recorded nearly a hundred years ago by Morison.—T.C.D.	
It is not rare near Birtley, and, as it was recorded by Robson as being scarce locally, it must be increasing in numbers.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Zanclognatha grisealis</b> Schiff. Small Fan-foot.	66
According to Meyrick this insect does not occur further north than Yorkshire. In spite of this, I captured it at dusk in my garden on July 21st, 1951.—T.C.D.	
It flies in the same month in my garden at Birtley.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Eupithecia pulchellata</b> Steph. Foxglove Pug.	66
Near foxgloves in June.—T.C.D.	
Larvae in foxglove flowers near Urpeth, Ravensworth and Waldrige Fell in August.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>E. linariata</b> Schiff. Toadflax Pug.	66
A single female on a fence near Birtley on September 25th, 1952 ; obviously a second brood specimen.—	
<b>E. palustraria</b> Dbid. Marsh Pug.	66
Robson was unable to supply any localities for this species with us when he wrote his <i>Catalogue</i> in 1902. However, in 1912, Gardner in his "Supplementary Notes" to the <i>Catalogue</i> , was able to record two specimens taken in Cowpen Marshes by Mr. T. A. Lofthouse in 1912. Nothing more has been learnt about the occurrence of the species in Durham until June 3rd, 1952, when I took a female in Scott's Brickworks at Birtley.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Epione vespertaria</b> Fab. Dark-bordered Beauty.	67
This very rare species was reported from Learmouth Bog by Mr. Lamb in 1863 when that gentleman took two specimens. Later, in 1890, George Bolam secured a worn female in Newham bog. No further records were made of the insect in Northumberland until July 30th, 1952, when I captured a female amongst <i>Salix aurita</i> along the Fallowlees Burn. It should be noted that this locality lies in v.c. 67 and the earlier stations in v.c. 68. No Durham habitats are known although its headquarters as a British insect lie on Strensall Common, near York. J.W.H.H.	



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

## BY THE WAY

Contributors are asked to note that all material intended for insertion in our March number should be in the Editor's hands before 1st March, 1953.

### CHARLES CARDALE BABINGTON

Every British botanist is acquainted with the name of Charles Cardale Babington and with his *Manual of British Botany*. Very few, however, are aware of the fact that Professor Babington had local connections. It is true that these links are of ancient date. Nevertheless, they are not the less interesting because of that fact.

The Babington family is a very old one, and of Norman origin. Still, the name itself is derived from one of the Northumberland Babingtons, Babington Parva, now known as Little Bavington. This hamlet lies about eleven miles from Hexham.

The first Babington known to have lived there was William de Babington, who flourished toward the end of the twelfth century. Next in line of descent was Sir Bernard de Babington, of Babington Parva (1237). He was succeeded by Sir John de Babington, who was Chief Captain of Morlaix in Brittany, and died before 1355. He married a lady, Alice by name, who was also born at Babington Parva. The family apparently migrated to East Briggeford, Nottinghamshire, before the year 1409, for after that date all contact with Little Bavington seems to have been broken.

### THE NAME OF THE PRIMROSE

In the name primrose we have an entirely mistaken association of ideas, just as in the cases of the tuberose and rosemary. On the face of it, it looks as if the word were derived from the Latin *prima rosa* through a French *prime rose*, so named because the plant blossoms in the early spring. This, of course, is the obvious and popular origin of the name. Nevertheless, like many popular etymologies, it is quite erroneous. Actually, even in English, one of its earliest names was *Pryme rolles* for the Grete Herbal says " It is called *Pryme Rolles* because it beareth the first floure in prime tyme". Chaucer, it should be noted, writes "*primerole*". This "*primerole*" is capable of two interpretations. In the first place, it may represent a shortened form of the French *primeverole*, a

derivative of *prima vera*, meaning the first spring blossom. Alternatively, like Skeat, we may see its origin in a late Latin *primerula*, a diminutive of the late Latin *primula*, now the botanical name of the genus to which the primrose belongs.

In any case, soon after its introduction into English, the word *primerole*, obviously foreign, was familiarized, like many modern introductions (typified by "Gallant Soldiers", distorted from the Latin *Galinsoga*), into *prime* or *pryme voiles* and, finally, into *primrose*.

This word lends itself naturally to the interpretation suggested above, that the flower is the first rose of the spring, a completely unwarranted explanation, inasmuch as neither the plant, its leaves nor its flowers can be regarded as resembling a rose in any respect.

A further curious point deserving emphasis is that the name, in all probability, belongs to the common daisy. Parkinson, as a matter of fact, assigns the name to both primrose and daisy.

As for the tuberose, its name is a gross corruption of the Latin adjective *tuberosus*, meaning bulbous or tuberous, whilst rosemary comes *via* a French *romarin*, from the Latin *ros marinus*, implying sea-dew.

## THE SOCIETIES

### NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

By the kind invitation of Prof. J. B. Cragg, the Autumn Meeting of the Union was held in the Zoology Department at Durham, on Saturday, October 18th, 1952. Once again there was an excellent attendance.

Mrs. A. N. Gibby, the President, was in the Chair, and the usual lecture entitled, "Variation and Adaptation" was given by Mr. Watkin Williams, M.Sc., of the Department of Agriculture, King's College, Newcastle upon Tyne.

Mr. Williams began by showing how the analysis of variational patterns, with respect to physiological characters necessary for survival, has contributed much to the understanding of evolutionary forces and trends. He proceeded to discuss four species of the genus *Camelina* and demonstrated how *C. sativa*, the only summer annual of the group, is considered to have originated by selection from the winter-annual species *C. microcarpa* and *C. pilosa* which are polymorphic in several physiological characteristics. He then indicated that the attainment of the strictly annual habit by *C. sativa* enabled it to colonize flax fields. Once established as a weed, a combination of selective forces led to the evolution of the subspecies *linicola*. He closed by pointing out that, similarly, in various families of higher plants, the evolution of seed size, dispersal mechanisms, etc., can be related to the effects of environmental factors "sieving out" those combinations of characters which give greater fitness for survival.

The address was illustrated by lantern slides, and after a thoroughly well-merited vote of thanks had been given, we adjourned to inspect the exhibits and to partake of tea.

Amongst the exhibits was a fine and unique series of Teesdale Alchemillas, including many forms new to the district, brought by Miss M. E. Bradshaw. Mr. J. B. Svendsen interested us with his specimens illustrating the systematics of earthworms. On this occasion, Professor Heslop Harrison's exhibit consisted of a series of twigs, with hips, of *Rosa Sherardi*, *R. arvensis*, *R. mollis*, *R. dumetorum*, *R. obtusifolia* and the hybrid *R. mollis* x *R. pimpinellifolia*. Also concerned with Durham roses was Mr. J. Thompson's fine set of photographs of forms collected locally, with others illustrating fungi. Very interesting, too, were the various insects, chiefly Lepidoptera and Orthoptera, captured by Durham students who had taken part in the 1952 expedition to Morocco. Finally, Mrs. Gibby had on view, amongst other botanical works a "Flora of Israel".

#### DARLINGTON AND TEESDALE NATURALISTS' FIELD CLUB

On September 6th, the Excursion Programme was resumed with a visit to Stanwick Earthworks to examine discoveries made during recent excavations whilst bird life engaged us when we went to the Teesmouth on September 13th.

A ramble to Roseberry Topping occupied us on September 20th. Sunday, September 27th concluded the summer outings. On that occasion, we held our annual Fungus Foray in the Bedburn Valley. The yields of fungi was satisfactory, and a number of interesting species was collected.

The Autumn Session opened on October 7th with an interesting talk on Achill Island by Mr. A. Ball ; this was illustrated by his own slides and photographs. On October 14th, Mr. G. H. Richardson gave us an excellent account of "Roman Piercebridge", in which he discussed the part it had played in Roman times, and the relics found there recently. For October 21st, we paid a visit to the Public Library to make members appreciate its facilities and the methods of utilizing them to the full. Next, on October 28th, we had a lecture on the "North Yorks Moors National Park" given by Mr. A. Falconer. Following this, on November 4th, Mr. A. Stainthorpe presented his report on Bird Life during 1952. He mentioned that the Blackcap and Swallow seemed to be decreasing locally, whilst the Corncrake and the Gold Finch seemed to be on the increase.

On November 11th, our President, Miss F. M. Spence, described her "Ramble in Galloway in 1952". Further reports followed on November 18th, when we heard that of Miss Martineau dealing with Plant Life, and another by Mr. G. H. Burdon concerned with Farm Crops. Both reports gave a survey of the effects of weather conditions on flowering plants and crops. The general conclusion

was that both had fared well during the fine summer and the long dry period. Mr. H. M. Collier followed with his account of Insect Life in 1952. He, too, considered weather conditions, but had concluded that, despite the fine season, insect life had been rather scarce. He mentioned that hive bees had flourished, and emphasized that black fly had done much damage to broad beans and kindred plants. He pointed out that lady birds had been scarce and that, no doubt, the abundance of black fly depended upon that fact. He drew special attention to the excessive numbers of webs of the Small Ermine Moth in Swaledale. —T. N. Scaling.

## BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

The Winter Session began with a course of two lectures by Professor J. W. Heslop Harrison. The first of these dealt with "Early Man and his Origins," when the speaker described all the finds that have been made of fossil man in comparatively recent years. He attempted to link the various types discussed with their general culture as exhibited in their art, weapons, utensils etc. The second talk was concerned with "Men of the New Stone and Bronze Ages". Again, he described their lives, abodes, utensils, weapons, agriculture, etc. On October 21st, Mr. W. B. Graves showed a magnificent film illustrating his visit to Switzerland. We were especially interested with those sections depicting the glaciers, lakes and flowers. Mr. J. W. Oxberry followed on November 4th with a racy and enjoyable account of the River Tyne and its history from early times. On November 18th. Dr. E. Elliot gave an excellent illustrated account of "How Plants Reproduce". She dealt with vegetative reproduction as well as with the sexual method.

## NOTES AND RECORDS

### NOTES

**Second Flowering of the Rose Hybrid, *Rosa rubiginosa* x *R. pimpinellifolia***— Early in October, when I proceeded to the bush to which reference was made on page 14 of the current volume of the Vasculum, I was astonished to find that, in addition to the hips which I wished to photograph, the plant bore a number of flowers which expanded during the following week. This meant that there was an interval of four months between the two flowering periods of this beautiful plant.—J. Thompson.

(Perhaps this is a suitable place to state that, on October 20th, on the sand dunes near the old rifle range at Hart, the Bumet Rose, *R. pimpinellifolia*) was also in full flower so that most of the plants bore full complements of flowers and ripe hips.—J.W.H.H.

**An Odd Note from Rowlands Gill.**—During a sunny period on 8th October, a Peacock butterfly and a Silver Y moth were observed in the garden. This occurrence of *Nymphalis io* seems worthy of record inasmuch as the butterfly has been rarely seen during the past three years in Durham. The Silver Y was feeding on a second crop of single-flowered Brompton Stocks, and stayed a few hours.—C. Hutchinson.

**An October Red Admiral at Birtley.**—On October 10th, I noticed a fine fresh Red Admiral sunning itself on a bush in a garden in Jones Street, Birtley. This was evidently one of the progeny of immigrants which had reached the Team Valley earlier in the year.—M. Dinsdale.

**A Hibernating Herald Moth, *Scoliopteryx libatrix*, at Chester-le-Street.**— This very pretty moth is far from plentiful in this area. Nevertheless, I disturbed a female, in perfect condition, as it was hibernating in the coal-hole at the Hospital, Chester-le-Street. This situation seems to suit the insect for hibernation purposes, as I have seen it resting there in previous seasons. Its caterpillar feeds on the willows growing in the grounds.—R. Harris.

**Interesting Plants from the Banks of the River Alien near Staward Peel.**— These banks carry a noteworthy assemblage of plants comprising both alpine washed down from higher ground and others. They included *Thlaspi sylvestre* Jord., *Minuartia verna*, *Cochlearia alpina*, *Alchemilla glabra*, *A xanthochlora*, the alpine variety of *Cerastium vulgatum* (*C. fontanum* Baum.) the hybrid willow, *Salix Caprea* x *S. atrocinerea*, and *Mimulus guttatus* on the river shingle whilst, on the wooded banks below the bridge, *Chrysosplenium altemifolium*, *C. oppositifolium*, *Crepis paludosa*, *Hypericum hirsutum* and the lowland form of *Solidago Virgaurea* were seen. Not far away, near the farm, *Mentha rotundifolia* and the hybrid woundwort, *Stachys ambigua* (= *S. sylvatica* x *S. palustris*) occurred in plenty.—J. K. Morton.

**The Sheep's Fescue and the Mat-grass on Abandoned Pit-heaps.**—In the course of my investigations into the vegetation of derelict pit-heaps, several curious circumstances have been observed. For instance, on an old heap near Springwell, over large areas the vegetation consisted of an almost pure stand of the Sheep's Fescue (*Festuca ovina*), a grass very rarely encountered in such localities. At this stage the reasons for this occurrence are not understood, but the colonies are being critically studied in an endeavour to elucidate the position. On another heap, not far away, but situated in Washington parish, the vegetation includes a considerable number of moorland species like the heather, *Calluna vulgaris*, the tormentil, *Potentilla erecta*, and the mat-grass, *Nardus stricta*. Of these, the first two have been noticed in similar stations elsewhere, but this is the first time the grass has appeared in such a habitat. However, the reason for the presence of all on this heap lies in the fact that when the original shaft was sunk nearly two hundred years ago, the surrounding area was all open moorland. The three plants named are the impoverished remains of a formerly widespread heath flora.—J. A. Richardson.

**The Marsh Pug, *Eupithecia palustraria*, in Durham.**—In case the fact becomes important for distributional purposes, it seems necessary to emphasize the fact that Professor Heslop Harrison has overlooked my earlier record of this species in the Bamard Castle area. The record appears in the Vasculum for April, 1948.—J. P. Robson.

**The Progeny of a Brown Female of the Riband Wave Moth.**—In the Vasculum for December, 1951, I pointed out that I had captured a brown female of the Riband Wave, *Sterrha aversata*, and that I was breeding from it. In June of the present year, I reared thirty imagines, half of these were grey and the others brown. Two of the latter group were mated, and from this pairing I have bred a second brood in September. All of the insects in this second brood are brown. From these facts it is clear that in *Sterrha aversata* the normal grey colour is dominant over the unusual brown, exactly the same as it is in the November Moth, *Oporinia dilutata*, although the two species are not closely related.—J. P. Robson.

**Insects at Forget-me-not Flowers.**—In Knuth's *Handbook of Flower Pollination*, various insects are reported as working the flowers of *Myositis sylvatica*, but in the case of the Hymenoptera, only a few species are named. To these, I can add males of the parasitic bee, *Nomada ruficornis*, and workers of the humble bee, *Bombus pratorum*. The latter were noted in a little copse near Shotley Bridge. In addition, although Knuth records the fact, I have taken hive bees at the flowers of the same plant.—C.R.

**The Moth, *Simaethis fabriciana*, at Flowers of the Field Convolvulus.** On August 28th, as I was studying the roses in a favourite area between Birtley and Portobello, I was struck by the abundance of the field convolvulus (*Convolvulus arvensis*) along the hedge side, and also that it was dimorphic in respect to

flower colour, some of the plants bearing white flowers and others pink ones. On inspecting these flowers more closely, I discovered that almost all the flowers were being patronized by second-brood specimens of the moth *Simaethis fabriciana*, larvae of which had abounded on the beds of nettles in the vicinity in July. Many of the flowers contained one tenant only, but many were favoured by up to five of these visitors.—J.W.H.H.

**The Foodplants of the Treble Bar, *Anaitis plagiata*.**—In his book, *Larval Foodplants*, Allan records this moth as feeding on the two St. John's Worts, *Hypericum perforatum* and *H. pulchrum*. In Durham, according to my experience, the former plant is preferred. In the Inner and Outer Hebrides, on the other hand, only the Beautiful St. John's Wort is chosen. On July 29th, however, I came across a colony of the moth on the railway banks at the mouth of Hawthorn Dene attached to the much rarer plant, *H. montanum*.—J.W.H.H.

**Another Curious Dweller on Pit-heaps.**—Amongst the unexpected plants found to take refuge on pit-heaps is the foxglove, *Digitalis purpurea*. This was first noted, fairly early in the present season, when I found hundreds of young plants of the species growing amongst almost bare shale on a heap near Ouston. Almost due east of this, a similar discovery was made on another heap adjacent to the railway between Birtley and Chester-le-Street. It seems certain that these colonies have originated in seeds blown eastwards from Urpeth Bottoms and the Brooms.—J. A. Richardson.

**The Black Bryony and Fasciation.**—I am prompted to write by two notes which appeared in the July *Vasculum*. A year or two before the war, about 1935, I found black bryony growing along the roadside near the Cox Green golf course. The reason the occasion lingers in my memory is that, along with the ordinary growth, there was a beautiful example of a fasciated stem. I cut it and sent it to Mr. Temperley at the Hancock Museum, who identified it for me. It remained on show in the entrance for several days.—A. G. Everett.

**A New British Sea Rocket *Cakile edentula* (Bigel.) Hooker.**—In 1941, I drew attention to the fact that Hebridean plants belonging to the genus *Cakile* were somewhat different from those with which I was familiar in our area. However, it was not until Love and Hulten sent me their papers discussing Icelandic and Alaskan material that I began to think that our Hebridean plants might belong to the American species *C. edentula*. After a period of hesitation, I was forced to recognize that my views were correct, and a short note registering this view is already in the press. I have seen *C. edentula* from Barra to Lewis in the Outer Isles and in the Isles of Coil and Tiree. My object in writing this note is to ask botanists who collect *C. maritima* in Northumberland and Durham to allow me to examine fresh material. In view of the Northumbrian distribution of the Vernal Squill, it is just possible that *C. edentula* may occur locally.—J.W.H.H.

**The Yellow Tail Moth, *Euproctis similis* in Durham.**—An interesting observation, made this year by Darlington workers, was the detection of the caterpillar of the Yellow Tail Moth in the southern outskirts of Darlington. Several were noted on wild rose bushes. The insect seems quite established there. This is the further north than any station given in any of the books, and it will be interesting to determine if it spreads to the north side of the town.—T. N. Scaling.

(Meyrick gives the distributional range of this moth as Britain to the Clyde, common, whilst I saw the larva on hawthorn hedges north of Chester-le-Street many years ago. Robson, in his *Catalogue*, gives Newcastle, South Shields, Upper Teesdale, Bishop Auckland, Hartlepool and Greatham. However, the observation is very welcome as the species has not occurred in Durham for 50 years.—J.W.H.H.)

**A Badger near Consett.**—A badger was killed on Saturday, November 1st, at the Grove, near Consett. It had evidently been observed and ill-treated by boys with dogs so that it was compelled to take refuge in an outhouse of one of the Council Houses. There it was seen by the tenant who sent for a policeman and had it shot (! !). Its body was buried in the garden belonging to the house. Mr. Cowen, M.F.H., says that it may have wandered miles from its home.—Wm. Ellerington.

## RECORDS

### LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

- Goleophora paripeunella** Z. 66  
This case-bearing moth, generally so plentiful, has only been noticed on rare occasions in County Durham, and never previously in the Team Valley. Nevertheless, the white larval cases occurred in numbers in 1951 on a plant of *Atriplex patula* growing near my garden gate at Birtley.—J.W.H.H.
- C. murinipemella** Dup. 66, 67  
According to Meyrick, the northern limits of this moth are reached in Yorkshire although Sang found it on Coniscliffe Moor near Darlington and Gardner at Greatham. Besides these records, Hodgkinson has stated that he took it in some undefined habitat in West Northumberland. This season, I have taken the larvae on its foodplant, the field woodrush, *Luzula campestris*, in County Durham and on the moors near the Fallowlees Burn, South Northumberland.—J.W.H.H.
- Biston betularia** L. Peppered Moth. 66  
In August, 1951, I beat a few larvae of this species from birch in the Barnard Castle district. This season, in June, there emerged a fine male intermediate between the black and the type forms. The remainder of the insects bred were all black.—J.P.R.  
Of many specimens taken from poplars and others at light in the vicinity of Chester-le-Street all belonged to the black variety *carbonaria* Jord.—T.C.D.
- Nonagria typhae** L. Bulrush Moth 66  
Quite common in all the Birtley localities in which the Reed Mace (Bulrush), *Typha latifolia* grows. Found on the same foodplant in a claypit pond at Tanfield—J.W.H.H.
- Panemeria tenebrata** Scop. Small Yellow Underwing 66  
Last year I was able to report this moth, so rarely seen in Durham, from a station near Ferryhill. This season the insect was plentiful enough amongst its larval foodplant, *Cerastium vulgatum*, on May 31st, near Bishop Middleham.—J.W.H.H.
- Hepialus sylvinus** L. Wood Swift. 66  
Less common than the Ghost Moth and Common Swift near Chester-le-Street ; occurs in August.—T.C.D.
- Pempelia betulae** Gn. 66  
Two larvae of this "micro" were beaten from birch near Barnard Castle in May, 1952. These were successfully reared, and produced imagines the following month. The only previous record of the species in Durham appears in Robson's "Catalogue" where he mentions a single specimen captured many years ago in Upper Teesdale by Mr. John Gardner.—J.P.R.
- Oporinia filigrammarea** H.-S. Small Autumnal. 66  
During the late August and early September of this year this species, so local with us, came to light in good numbers.—J.P.R.
- Anticlea derivata** Schiff. The Streamer. 66  
A single example of this moth was boxed from a tree trunk in Flatt's Wood, Barnard Castle, on May 25th. This is the first time I have seen it in Durham, although it is fairly common in Deepdale on the south side of the Tees.—J.P.R.
- Ectropis crepuscularia** Hb. Small Engrailed. 66  
This species is very rare in our county, but I was fortunate enough to take imagines and, later, larvae in a birch wood near Barnard Castle.—J.P.R.
- Geometra papilionaria** L. Large Emerald. 66  
I beat an odd female out of birch on Walldridge Fell on July 23rd, 1952. This is the first record for that area although I have beaten larvae from birch near Birtley on several occasions.—J.W.H.H.
- Selenia lunaria** Schiff. Lunar Thorn 66  
Captured in the Target Woods, Urpeth, in June and July —T.C.D.

<b>Colotois pennaria</b> L. Feathered Thorn	66
One in Lumley Woods on October 14th, 1951.—T.C.D.	
<b>Gnophos obscurata</b> Schiff. Annulet.	66
Apparently restricted, according to former records, to the coast in Durham However, on July 16th, 1952, I took a single example at Bishop Middleham. J.W.H.H.	

#### FLOWERING PLANTS

<b>Agropyron pungens</b> Roem. & Schult. Sea Couch-grass	66
This grass does not seem to have been recorded from Durham previously. In spite of this, it was plentiful along the north side of Greatham Creek on August 3rd, 1952—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Anacamptis pyramidalis</b> (L.) L.C. Rich. Pyramidal Orchis.	66
In addition to extending the known range of this orchid in its Bishop Middleham stations, we have discovered it in two further localities near Garmondsway and Highland House.—J.W.H.H. & J.A.R.	
<b>Sorbus intermedia</b> (Ehrh.) Pers. White Beam.	66
On a Magnesian Limestone Cliff near Aycliffe.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Alchemilla obtusa</b> Buser Lady's Mantle.	67
On sandy ground near the river Allen below Whitfield. Although the only previous British record of this species comes from Angus, the material obtained in Allendale can only be referred to this species.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Senecio erucifolius</b> L. Hoary Ragwort.	66
This species, thought to be restricted to the coast and the Magnesian Limestone in Durham, was found in a claypit just south-west of Birtley in September. It occurred in some numbers and seems to be increasing its range in this county. J. A. Richardson.	
<b>Alnus incana</b> L. Hoary Alder.	67
Apparently seeding itself and quite at home along the River Alien near Whitfield—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Dryopteris Borreri</b> Newm.	67
This fern was discovered amongst stones near Colt Crag reservoir; this is the first notice of its presence in v.c. 67.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Anemone nemorosa</b> L. Wood Anemone	66
A single patch of the var. <i>apetala</i> Salisb. was detected in the woods at Shincliffe.—J.K. Morton.	
<b>Ranunculus acris</b> L. Buttercup.	66
A very curious variety of this common plant bearing pure white flowers was noted amongst rough herbage near Bishop Middleham. The flowers were <i>not</i> ordinary yellow ones that had bleached as they had aged.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Trollius europaeus</b> L. Globe Flower.	67
By the Tyne at Falstone—J.K.M.	
<b>Polygonum mite</b> Schrank.	66
Very plentiful around a swamp in a field near Beamish.—J.W.H.H.	
<b>Corydalis claviculata</b> (L.) D C. Climbing Fumitory.	66
Over sixty years ago, this pretty plant occurred freely in hedges around the Fell to the east of Birtley, but, in spite of careful searches, it has never been seen there for some time. However, on October 19th, a flourishing colony was discovered in a hedge not far from the Mill Inn.—J.W.H.H., J.A.R.	
<b>Rosa arvensis</b> Huds. Field Rose.	66
In October the colony of this species in Shincliffe Woods was subjected to close examination in order to determine its variation range. Biserrate forms belonging to var. <i>biserrata</i> Crop., var. <i>laevipes</i> Grem., with smooth peduncles, plants approaching var. <i>baldensis</i> Kern, and typical plants were observed. J.W.H.H., J. Thompson.	