

THE VASCULUM

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Edited by

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

BY THE WAY

BRANDING SEALS

Recently, a number of complaints about the experimental branding of seals on the Fame Islands has reached us from our members. Independently of the immediate cruelty of the original operations, our readers draw attention to the fact that statements made by competent authorities demonstrate that many of the animals develop a septic condition as a result of infection after branding.

Nearly sixty were branded on Staple Island, and, of a sample composed of eighteen individuals taken four days later in that area, Mrs. Hickling reported that this majority of them bore wounds with sepsis. That lady, whose experience with these seals is great, stated emphatically that, had she the decision to make when consent was given to carry out the branding, she would not have allowed it. Moreover, in a report concerning the seals' condition, made to the Nature Conservancy, she told them that, in her opinion, the method adopted was cruel.

We learn that the branding is being undertaken in order "to get very necessary scientific results". It would ease the minds of a large number of nature lovers if it is made clear (1) what these results are expected to be, and (2) granting that they are obtained, how long after that event will the experiments continue? One recalls other marking and ringing undertakings, parallel to those inflicted on the seals, which continue automatically long after the scientific facts expected are secured.

THE DISTRIBUTION OF HERB PARIS IN DURHAM

In Winch's *Flora* (1838), *Paris quadrifolia* is recorded as occurring in Durham in Hawthorn Dene and Castle Eden Dene on the Magnesian Limestone and, elsewhere, in Urpeth, Beamish and Ravensworth Woods. On the other hand, Baker and Tate (1868) say that it is "frequent in shaded woods from the denes of the coal country and Magnesian Limestone upwards, ascending to 350 yards in Teesdale near High Force". Besides these stations, we have notes, drawn up by Mr. T. Robson, describing the occurrences of the plant in the Team Valley and along the Stanley Burn in 1847.

In addition, he records the plant in Northumberland at Netherwitton in 1843, in Scotswood Dene in 1847, and at Alnwick in 1870. Many local botanists have searched for *Paris quadrifolia* recently, and, although new habitats have been found in Northumberland in Newham Bog, at Pigdon and in Bothal Woods, none have been detected in the sister county. There, much work has been done in its old stations in woods along the Team Valley, and also in those higher up the stream near Urpeth and Beamish but without success. Similarly, exploration of Ryhope Dene, Hawthorn Dene, Castle Eden Dene and Crimdon Dene has proved quite fruitless as has examination of Elemore Woods, Cassop Vale and those at Quarrington Hill. In view of these facts, we would welcome any reports of recent finds in County Durham.

RED AND WHITE PRIMROSES

In general, botanists regard the primrose as being more or less constant in the type of inflorescence, the individual flowers and its leaves. Nevertheless, it varies greatly in all of these respects. In the present note, we are concerned with flower colour only. For the most part, primrose flowers are of a hue which one is accustomed to call primrose yellow. In spite of this, careful examination of various habitats reveals the fact its flower colour ranges from white through yellow to red.

Whilst the bulk of our local populations display nothing but yellow flowers, very occasionally, as on Kilhope Law and south of Corbridge, colonies exist in which red flowered plants preponderate. More frequently, populations are encountered in which a few plants bearing flowers of varying shades of pink are to be found. Such stations have been discovered recently in woods at Elemore, Lambton and Cornforth. Plants from all of these three colonies show no change in flower colour when transplanted to garden soil.

A very curious fact about primrose colouration, which has not been emphasized hitherto, lies in the circumstance that, very often, colonies producing red-flowered individuals give rise to a few white-flowered forms as we have seen at Elemore, Co. Durham and Allendale, Northumberland as well as in various localities in South-West Wales.

Curiously enough, in experimental cultures resulting from the crossing of red-flowered primroses with typical cowslips, occasionally, in second generation hybrids, white-flowered forms appear just as happens in second generation crosses between *Primula vulgaris* and *P. juliae*.

We shall be much obliged if readers will supply us with additional facts concerning the distribution and relative abundance of coloured primrose forms in Durham and Northumberland.

LAMBTON CASTLE RESIDENTIAL COLLEGE

We should like to draw our readers attention to the fact that the Lambton Castle Residential College is running two courses devoted to Natural History, one at Easter, and the other at Whitsuntide. The latter, in all probability, will include a visit to the Fame Islands whilst the former will give instruction in the Natural History of birds, insects, plants etc., with an emphasis on field and recognition work.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

By the friendly invitation of the Natural History Society of Northumberland and Durham, the Thirty-seventh Annual Meeting of the Union was held in the Hancock Museum on Saturday, 11th March, 1961. This was attended by a record number of members and associates from Durham, Newcastle, Annfield Plain, Consett, Birtley, Chester-le-Street and elsewhere.

The reports of the Secretary and Treasurer were read by Mrs. Gibby and Mr. T. C. Dunn, respectively. Both were regarded as satisfactory more especially as Mr. Dunn was able to report a strong influx of new members, including a noteworthy number of young people.

Next, the election of officers for 1961-62 took place, Professor J. H. Burnett, Professor of Botany at King's College, being chosen as President to succeed Mr. Dunn who became Vice-President. No changes were made in respect to other offices.

Before vacating the Chair, Mr. Dunn proposed that Prof. J. W. Heslop Harrison, F.R.S., should be elected an Honorary Life Member of the Union in recognition of his long-continued services over the past forty years. This proposal was received with acclamation.

After the preliminary business was completed, Mr. Dunn gave his Presidential Address in the form of a very interesting address on the topic 'Insects and Flowers'. This was illustrated by a long series of slides in colour, made by the lecturer himself, showing various flowers with their insect visitors. Not the least important of these were flash-light photographs of moths at sallow catkins in the dark. The speaker emphasized the varied reasons for which insects came to flowers, and described the wide range of insects and flowers involved. The proceedings ended with a hearty vote of thanks to Mr. Dunn for a very successful talk and for his work on behalf of the Union.

This was followed by tea for which lady members, Mrs. Harris, Mrs. Weatherly and Mrs. Stock, from the Birtley Natural History Society, were responsible. To these ladies we tender our sincere thanks.

There followed the usual display of exhibits and, as we have

learnt to expect at our Spring Meeting, Mr. R. B. Cooke's array of flowers took pride of place. That gentleman was able to bring for our inspection almost a hundred species of spring flowers from his garden at Corbridge. Other exhibits included a striking group of postage stamps depicting natural history subjects, brought by Mrs. Gibby; a case of mounted moths illustrative of the smaller groups found in our area collected by Mr. Dunn; mounted specimens of wild rose hybrids found in Northumberland and Durham, a fasciated rose-bay willow-herb from Fatfield and a collection of grasses made a hundred and fifty years at Gateshead—all shown by Prof. Heslop Harrison.

ANNFIELD PLAIN AND STANLEY NATURALISTS' CLUB

The Annual Meeting was held in the Public Library, Annfield Plain, on Saturday, February 11th, 1961 with over a hundred members present.

Mr. V. Richards, the President, in opening the meeting, remarked on the attendance and drew attention to the educative value of the Club and to the spirit of friendship it had built up.

The Secretary, Mr. Fred Wade, reported that the past had been a most successful year for no fewer than thirteen rambles had taken place. The most outstanding of these were the walk down the River Rye to Rievaulx Abbey and Helmsley, that from Bowes to Cotherstone via Baldersdale and that making a circular outing from Aira Force. Mr. Atkinson, the Treasurer, also announced that the Club's finances were in a sound condition in spite of heavy expenditure on a new projector and screen. Part of this expense had been borne by Stanley Urban District Council. Another important item was the typing and binding of the Secretary's book "*The Story of West Stanley*" which demonstrated how Stanley had progressed from being a remote hamlet to the status of a flourishing town.

Mr. A. Reay, Excursion Secretary, also reported a credit balance on the year's working.

Before the election of officers, Mr. Richards, our President, announced his resignation as he had now left the district and thought that a younger man should replace him. His resignation was received with regret. The election of officers resulted as follows: President, Mr. Jack Hall; Vice-President, Mr. Walter Toyn; Secretary, Mr. Fred Wade; Treasurer, Mr. Jack Atkinson; Excursion Secretary, Mr. A. Reay. All of the other officers were re-elected.

The proposed summer rambles were next discussed when, out of 40 suggestions put forward, a series, representative of all types of country in Durham, Northumberland, Cumberland, North Yorks and the Borders, was adopted.

Mr. Hall next moved that some recognition of the Secretary's long-continued hard work on behalf of the Club should be made.

This was seconded by Mr. Toyn and adopted. Tea was then taken in the adjacent schoolroom after which coloured slides were shown by Mr. G. Evans, Mr. Hall and Mr. Parry. Many of these slides were taken on the summer outings. In conclusion, Mr. Richards thanked all who had contributed slides, or had otherwise helped to make the social evening a success.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On November 29th, Mr. J. J. Robson gave us a very useful talk on "Some Sea Bird Sanctuaries" during which he described his visits to the Shetland and Orkney Islands. The last meeting of the year was held on December 6th. when Messrs Wanless, E. Hall, R. Harris, E. Burns, J. Thompson, and Prof. Heslop Harrison gave a lantern display of slides reminiscent of various holidays. On January 10th, 1961, we had with us Mr. L. P. Hird, who gave an interesting lecture on the birds and flowers of the Bass Rock and adjacent mainland areas.

Our Annual Dinner was held on January 24th in Hall's Cafe, Chester-le-Street, when 75 members and friends sat down to dinner. After the usual toasts, Mr. Hall showed a film illustrating happenings on one of our field meetings. On February 7th, we resumed our lecture programme when Mr. Dunn talked about "Butterfly Wanderers", again with the aid of slides. The lecture on February 21st was concerned with "Glass Making" and Mr. G. M. Scott of Reed, Millican and Co., was responsible for it. He gave an excellent illustrated account of advances in the process of glass-making. On March 7th, Mrs. H. H. Clark took up the topic of "Folklore". She not only described the results of her own studies but, in addition, suggested lines of research which the Society could follow. This lecture was illustrated by exhibits bearing on folklore; of these, the so-called "Corn Dollies", aroused great interest and a long discussion.

Throughout the winter, we have continued a very successful series of field meetings; these have worked limited areas close to Birtley and Chester-le-Street.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

Bird Notes.—Observations have been kept up on the very large roost of starlings near Sherburn Village. This was again occupied during the 1960-61 winter, and estimated then to contain half-a-million birds. I have been informed by the British Museum that a dead bird, found in this roost on January 2nd, 1960, had been ringed on June 6th, 1958 as a juvenile at Tallinn on the Baltic coast of Estonia. On the Tanfield Ponds, Stanley, a single female of the smew, was present on October 16th. This is the first record of this rare species for the area. On the same sheets of water, a male scaup was seen on September 18th and 19th; this is 13 miles from the sea whilst from August 31st to September 11th two immature shelducks were also observed on the ponds. Elsewhere, on October 29th, a flock of 53 common pochard, were observed

at the Seaton Burn Ponds, and, on December 29th, a party of goldeneye, including 4 birds, was noted on Killingworth Mere. On October 22nd, three examples of the great grey shrike were seen together in the Stanley area during a westerly inland movement of hundreds of fieldfares and redwings.—R. Marston Palmer.

A Census of Local Reptiles and Amphibia.—An up-to-date study of the distribution of reptiles and amphibia in the British Isles is now being made, but difficulty is being experienced so far as the common species are concerned. This is due to the fact that their occurrence is seldom placed on record.

I have so far obtained the following records from our area: slow worm (*Anguis fragilis*) Hexham (1949); viviparous lizard (*Lacerta vivipara*), Seahouses (1950), Newton by the Sea (1959), North Blyth, (1960); viper (*Vipera berus*), Wooler (1949), Rowley (1960); common frog (*Rana temporaria*), Rothbury (1960); common toad (*Bufo bufo*), Bellingham, Newton Bog, Rothbury (1960); smooth newt (*Triturus vulgaris*), Bedlington (1960). I shall be glad if members of the Northern Naturalists' Union will let me have further records. These I shall summarise, and send to the organiser of the work. Such letters should be sent to me at my home address, 30 Berkeley Square, Gosforth, Newcastle upon Tyne, 3.—C. J. Gent.

(It is not generally known that what was considered to be a complete list of our local reptiles and amphibia appeared in the *Newcastle Weekly Chronicle* during the latter half of the year 1881. This list has always been a sort of puzzle as it contains records of species and localities quite unknown to the naturalist of today. The most important of these are: (1) the edible frog, which was naturalised in the 1850's in a pond near Newton Hall (68) and is recorded as having sent out colonies to adjacent quarry ponds. The writer of the list who signs himself "J.A." writes of these colonies as existing in 1881; (2) the natterjack toad, stated to be found in Northumberland and Durham, and to be fairly plentiful at Belford (68); (3) the grass snake, described as more plentiful in Durham than Northumberland, although Northumbrian stations are mentioned. We ourselves can vouch for its having occurred in Durham, more commonly formerly, but only as single individuals recently. It will help the project greatly if the present position of these species in our counties can be determined correctly. Any new facts concerning them should be communicated to Mr. Gent.—Editor).

Yet Another Station for the Gipsy Wort (66).—*Lycopus europaeus* occurs in some quantity along the banks of the River Wear, just below Durham Cathedral. A large patch of the wood stitchwort (*Stellaria nemomn*) was found a few yards away, also along the river banks.—A. N. Gibby.

The Hay-scented Buckler Fern (*Dryopteris aernula*)—a Correction.—We wish to withdraw our claim (*Vasculum*, 1960, 45, 7) that the Hay-scented Buckler Fern still occurs in Rugley Wood. Our specimen proved to be simply a form of *D. austriaca*, and we understand from Mr. G. W. Temperley that Mr. R. B. Cooke and he revisited Rugley Wood, but failed to find *D. aernula*.—G. A. & M. Swan.

Fasciated Plants of the Rosebay Willow-herb.—On February 8th, 1961, whilst botanizing near Fatfield (66), I discovered a large colony of the rosebay willow-herb growing on the railway banksides. Most of the plants were perfectly normal and averaged 3ft. 6in. in height. One individual had an extraordinary appearance. This plant, when examined closely, proved to be fasciated.

However, it was peculiar in its fasciation for, about ten inches from its base, and, springing from the fasciated portion, was a normal shoot, circular in cross-section. Its length was eleven and a half inches, and its breadth three-quarters of an inch.

The affected shoot displayed fasciation throughout its whole length for the flattening persisted from the base to the tip of the inflorescence. The average breadth of this shoot, which varied but slightly in this respect, was a little over three-quarters of an inch. It bore an abundance of flowers which had developed as usual, but their form was bizarre, and none had produced functional seeds.

A hundred yards away from this plant, another colony was observed which likewise included a fasciated plant. In this instance, the fasciation was not complicated by the presence of other abnormalities.—J. Thompson.

Remarks on the Roseleaf Cutter Bee, *Megachile Circumcincta*, and its Parasite, *Coelioxys elongata*.—These two species are well-distributed in the lower areas of Northumberland and Durham. According to my observations, *M. circumcincta* appears the earlier, for I have captured the males at flowers as early as May 29th, and both sexes on June 3rd. On these occasions, the bees were probing flowers, or making their burrows and nests. The flowers chosen cover a wide range of species. Brambles and wild roses are freely patronized as are leguminous flowers. Prominent amongst the latter are the red clover, yellow vetchling, blue vetch and bush vetch. Much less often, species like the hawk-weeds and stonecrop are chosen. In the whole of the leguminous species, whilst the bee generally enters at the mouth of the flower, often enough, it probes them illegitimately i.e. by biting a hole in the corolla tube through which nectar may be extracted. The parasitic *Coelioxys elongata*, for which my earliest date is June 15th, whilst visiting hawkweeds, brambles and wild roses, seems to treat leguminous flowers with some degree of neglect. In *Coelioxys*, both sexes emit an odour recalling that of certain species of fungi, and both can produce a feeble hum. From the very nature of the relationship between the two species, examples of *Coelioxys elongata* may often be captured at the burrows of the host species *Megachile circumcincta*. It seems worthy of mention that females of another parasite bee, belonging to the genus *Nomada* have been detected at *Megachile* burrows.—C.R.

The Limestone Quarries at Bishop Middleham.—It is with regret that we have to report that the quarries at Bishop Middleham can now, from the botanical standpoint, be written off. Still, in July, we did manage to find amongst the orchids, the fragrant orchid, the spotted orchid, the pyramid orchid, the frog orchid and tway blade. However, instead of the swarms of the tea-leaved willow and its hybrids, only a few persisted. The only speciality of the quarry that has maintained its numbers was the mountain St. John's wort. The rest were buried beneath limestone debris.—T. W. Wanless.

RECORDS

FLOWERING PLANTS, FERNS ETC.

Carex pauciflora Lightf. Few-flowered Sedge	67
Peat moss on the N.side of Irthing, opposite Wreayhill House.	
Littorella uniflora (L.) Aschers. Shore-weed	70
Tindale Tarn.	
Lycopodium alpinum L. Alpine Clubmoss	70
Moor, S.W. of Tindale.	
Peplis portula L. Water Purslane	66, 67, 68
Smiddyshaw Reservoir (near Waskerley) (66). Pond to the S.E. of Lanehead(Featherstone) (67).	
Small pond near Craggyhall (Belford), pond S. of Wandonand W. of Broomhouse (Chatton), site of old pond in a wood, largely cut down, E. of Hazeltonrigg (Ainham) (68).	
Scirpus tabernaemontani C.C.Gmel. Glaucous Bulrush	61
Pond just S. of Newton Seahouses.	
Carex muricata L.	68
Spindlestone Crags. Roddam Dean. Near Hazeltonrigg (Ainham).	
Biysmus compressus (L.) Panz. ex Link Broad Biysmus	67, 68, 80
W.Bank of S.Tyne near Lintley; N. Tyne near Lewie and also near island half a mile N. of Wark (67). Snook on Holy Island (68). E.bank of Jed Water near bend, N.W. of Southdean (80).	
Equisetum variegatum Schleich, ex Weber and Mohr. Variegated Horsetail	67,68
Keilder Burn near Kielder Castle (67). Ross Links and the Snook on Holy Island (68).	

Catapodium rigidum (L.) C. E. Hubbard	Hard Poa	67, 68
Coast links S. of Bamburgh (68). Still on Holy Island and on the old lime, kiln near Craggyhall (68), as well as at Thornbrough lime quarry (67).		
Stachys arvensis (L.) L.	Field Woundwort	68
Cultivated field between Fenham Lowmoor and Lowmoor Point.		
Eleocharis multicaulis (Sm.)Sm.	Many-stemmed Spikerush	68
Peat bog at N.W. end of Kyoee Hills, with <i>Drosera</i> , <i>Oxycoccus</i> , and <i>Narthecium</i> ,		
Anagallis tenella (L.) L.	Bog Pimpernel	68
Very abundant around the Harehope Burn.		
Apium inundatum (L.) Reichb.f.		68
Very abundant in a pond N.N.E. of Harehope.		
Rorippa islandica (Oeder) Borbas	Marsh Yellow-cress	66, 67, 68
Reservoir near Tunstall House (66). Small pond between Robsheugh and Heugh Moor, N.W. of Dalton (67). Pond N.N.E. of Harehope (68). N.Bank of Till, W. of Weetwood Bridge (68).		
Lythrum salicaria L.	Purple loosestrife	68
N. bank of Till, W. of Weetwood Bridge.		
Silene noctiflora L.	Night-flowering Campion	68
Near Wandon (Chatton). Field near Mere Burn (Acton).		
Lysimachia nummularia L.	Creeping Jenny	66
By the reservoir near Tunstall House.		
Clinopodium vulgare L.	Wild Basil	67, 70
By the Wansbeck at Molesden Mill (67). W. Bank of N.Tyne, S. of Choller- ford Bridge (67). N. Tyne, near island, half a mile N. of Wark (67). By the Butter Burn at Gowk Banks (70).		
Carlina vulgaris L.	Carline Thistle	66
Stated (<i>Vasculum</i> , 1960, 45, 32) to be at its furthest west in Co. Durham at West Butsfeld. However, in addition to the station, known to us for many years, on the old heaps near College by the Bumhope Burn, we can give the following: old lime quarry between Healyfield and Dean Howl Farm and also by the old railway track near Salter's Gate, N.W. of Tunstall Reservoir.		
Lilium martagon L.	Martagon Lily	67
W. bank of N. Tyne, S. of Chollerford Bridge.		
Centaurea scabiosa L.	Great Knapweed	67
Railway near Gunnerton Quarry. Old lime quarry E. of Ryal, with <i>Poterium sanguisorba</i> , <i>Scabiosa columbaria</i> , and <i>Plantago media</i> .		
Montia sibirica (L.) Howell		67
Wood by the Houxy Burn near Bridge House (N.W. of Wark).		
Aethusa cynapium L.	Fool's Parsley	67
W. bank of N. Tyne at Wark.		
Carex extensa Gordon	Long-bracted Sedge	68
The Snook on Holy Island. Ross Links.		
Selaginella selaginoides (L.) Link	Lesser Clubmoss	67, 68, 70, 80
Near the head of the Belling Burn, at approx. 1,000 feet. (67) W. Bank of S. Tyne opposite Featherstone Castle (67). By the side of the road between Lord- enshaw and Great Tosson (67). Abundant along the Tarn Beck and along the Irthing by Irthing Head, Paddaburn, Chimsike Lodge, Tudhups Holm, Butter- burn and near Forster's Hill, as well as by the Butterburn at Gowk Banks (67 & 70) Snook on Holy Island (68). Peat bog at approx 1550 feet, S.E. of Sightly Crag, with <i>Oxycoccus</i> , <i>Menyanthes</i> , <i>Drosera</i> and <i>Pinguicula</i> (70). Huntford Burn near Huntford, N.N.W. of Carter Bar (80).		
Scirpus lacustris L.	Bulrush	67
In the Irthing at the Road-bridge near Chimsike Lodge at approx 900 feet.		
Andromeda polifolia L.	Marsh Andromeda	67
Peat moss on N. side of the Irthing opposite Wreayhill House. In three peat mosses near Spy Rigg on E. side of the Irthing.		
Trollius europaeus L.	Globe flower	66, 67, 70
South bank of Derwent near Ridding, presumably doomed to extinction by the new reservoir under construction (66). By the Irthing near Butterburn (67) and the Butter Burn at Gowk Banks (70). G. A. & M. Swan.		

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J. W. HESLOP HARRISON, D.Sc., F.R.S.
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BY THE WAY

VANDALISM?

Recently, the known range of the Toothwort in Durham was increased by the discovery of two additional colonies in Upper Weardale. Now neither exist. In the case of one, visited by us in May, the limited area in which the plant grew had been stripped down to the bare soil, and no reasons for the occurrence were apparent. At the same time, an examination of the other station revealed the fact that the whole of the grass and other vegetation around, and in it, had been removed, leaving one very fine toothwort spike standing completely exposed, like a monolith, for every passer-by to see. Two other very poor spikes lying on the edge of the colony also remained. A fortnight later, not a trace of the plant could be found in either station.

In the better of the two localities, the reasons for its clearance, and the consequent disappearance of the plant, were obvious for numerous flash-light bulbs were strewn near the site of the favoured inflorescence; it had clearly been sacrificed in an endeavour to make what had been considered a picture. Surely, the reasons for taking photographs are to demonstrate how plants grow in their natural habitats and not how they may be artificially arranged?

Later, in June, we visited a station known to produce both species of Butterfly Orchid. There we saw the actual preparation of selected specimens for photographic purposes. Fortunately, the nature of the habitat in this instance makes it very unlikely that many visitors will find and injure it.

May we, remembering the fate of the two toothwort colonies' ask photographers to leave the plants they wish to depict in their natural positions? .

IMMIGRANT LEPIDOPTERA

For many years entomologists have been studying the fascinating problems presented by the entry into this country of butterflies and moths originating in North Africa and elsewhere, in these investigations our counties used to play a considerable part when

Dr. F. C. Garrett acted as secretary to the immigration group of workers. Gradually, however, local interest in the matter has fallen off to such an extent that very few records from Northumberland and Durham appear in this entomological magazines.

In the main, this change depends upon the diminished numbers of local entomologists. In general, only records from Mr. T. C. Dunn and Mr. C. J. Gent are sent in. To help to remedy this state of affairs, may we ask our readers to supply Mr. Dunn with early information about the presence of such immigrants in our two counties? He will ensure that such occurrences will be listed when national records are assembled.

The actual species concerned, like the Red Admiral, the Painted Lady, and the Silyer Y moth, have received frequent mention in earlier numbers of the *Vasculum*, and readers may refer to such records to learn what species are concerned. Perhaps, this is the place to record the fact that an immigrant specimen of the Red Admiral was seen at Cornforth on May 31st, 1961.

MR. FRED WADE

Everyone connected with the Northern Naturalists' Union realises the great work done on its behalf by Mr. Frederick John Wade. Moreover, its field meetings would not be complete without his genial presence.

Therefore, it is with the greatest pleasure that we record the recognition of Mr. Wade's value to natural history in this area expressed by the gift of a camera made to him by his own Society, the Annfield Plain and Stanley Naturalists' Club.

Mr. Wade is Secretary of that Club, of which he was a foundation member, and has striven for its success for the past twenty years.

The actual presentation was made by Mr. Vernon Richards, also a foundation member and Past President of the Club, on the occasion of its ramble through the Derwent Valley. In handing over the camera, Mr. Richards pointed out that its recipient had carried most of the responsibilities entailed in organizing the Club's outings, and had spared himself in no way in his endeavours to secure the Club's success.

In his reply, Mr. Wade expressed his hope that he would be able to maintain his efforts, and, in the course of his remarks, emphasized the necessity for enrolling more young people on the Club's lists.

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The 98th Field Meeting of the Northern Naturalists' Union took place on June 3rd, 1961, in the Hermitage Woods, Chester-le-Street,

when Mr. T. C. Dunn was leader. There was a large attendance of members and associates from all parts of the two counties.

The vegetation noted was much the same as that observed by the Birtley Natural History Society a month previously. Nevertheless, quite a number of plants species were new to our lists but, in studying these, great care had to be taken to determine whether these novelties were genuine natives, or relics of attempts at naturalisation in the past.

Almost certainly, the lily of the valley, the wood geranium, the mountain speedwell, hemlock, beautiful St. John's wort, wood avens, ground ivy, water forget-me-not, sweet cicely, hairy wood-rush, wood sedge, the great pendulous sedge, cherry, bird cherry and millet grass represented true components of the former primitive woodlands whilst the Alpine currant, Welsh poppy, columbine, leopardsbane, orange hawkweed and Oxford ragwort are very doubtful forms in respect to their origins.

One red campion colony attracted special attention for it was found to contain a wonderful mixture of forms. It included a few specimens of the pure white campion and a very large proportion of true red campions, exceedingly variable in respect to the depths of their red coloration. Besides these, there were many first crosses between the two species named, representatives of hybrid generations later than the first, various back crosses and a single example of the white red-campion.

To the known list of forest trees and shrubs, we were only able to add the grey sallow and its hybrid with the eared sallow. Another point of importance connected with the forest trees was the observation that the nearer we approached the Hall, the greater became the proportion of silver birches seen. On the other hand, as Waldridge Fell was approached the percentage of common birches rose steeply. This, no doubt, depends upon the proximity of the natural birch woods on the Fell.

As far as ferns were concerned, individuals were many but species few. However, a few hard ferns and one oak fern were noted. The latter fact is of special note for that species is vanishing from East Durham.

Very few insects were seen. These included four species of humble bees, several solitary bees, the green-veined white butterfly, the white wave moth, the silver ground carpet and the heart and club moth. Galls, on the whole, were few; still, currant and marble galls on oak were far from rare.

Bird life, too, was poorly represented, the only important novelties on the bird lists being the two species of woodpeckers.

Another unusual sight for most of the party was the presence of badger "sets". This animal has established itself in this and other woods in the area quite recently.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On March 21st, we had a visit from Mr. S. J. Cox of Houghall who gave us a very interesting lecture on Bees and Beekeeping. This resulted in many questions to which our lecturer made suitable replies.

Our last indoor meeting, on April 4th, took the form of a *Conversazione* preceded by the Annual General Meeting. Many slides, illustrative of the Society's activities during the past year, were shown. In addition, a large number of exhibits were brought and discussed by their owners.

During May and June, we arranged two major excursions, one to the Fame Islands to see the seals and birds there, and the second to Warkworth to examine the dunes and saltmarshes. Further, we have continued our policy of arranging outings in our own area to enlarge our knowledge of its natural history. These have taken us to the Hermitage Woods, Waldridge Fell, Tanfield Ponds and Sherburn Hill.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

The Flowering of the Twayblade and the Frog Orchid in 1961.—During a recent unsuccessful search for the Green-winged Meadow Orchid (*Orchis morio*) in Durham, I was greatly impressed by the quantities of flowering spikes of both the Twayblade (*Listera ovata*) and the Frog Orchid (*Coeloglossum viride*) we encountered. In particular, the Twayblade was collected freely in places not known to produce it. Throughout the areas investigated, where normally one would observe a few dozen flowering spikes, they were present in hundreds this season. The inflorescences varied remarkably in point of size, and this may depend upon the distribution of moisture during the season of 1960. The same abundance of the two orchids was observed in several localities in other parts of Northumberland and Durham.—T. W. Wanless.

Notes on the Flowering of Certain Plants.—This season, many plants seem to have indulged in a spate of flowering. The most noteworthy of the species involved were the Red Campion, the Wood Avens, the Water Avens, the Bird's Foot Trefoil, the Spring Vetch, the Stitchwort and the Wood Anemone. It seems worthy of special mention that the hybrid between the Wood and the Water Avens also occurred in unusual numbers at many points in Durham.

Flowering Plants on the Roman Camp at Lanchester.—As we were on our road to Widdy Bank Fell on May 28th, we halted to introduce some of our companions to the Roman Fort at Lanchester for they had not seen it previously. Some of the plants growing on the walls were of considerable interest and were therefore listed. They included Thale Cress, the Ivy-leaved Toadflax, the Vernal Whitlow Grass, the Germander Speedwell, Parsley Piert, Wall Speed-well, Heath Bedstraw, Lady's Bedstraw, the Hairy Bitter Cress, the Thyme-leaved Sandwort and the Common Pearlwort. It is very interesting to note that Winch, in his *Flora* (1838), reported the Thale Cress as flourishing then on the Roman Station. At that period, the Thale Cress was regarded as somewhat of a rarity.—T.C.D.

The Distribution of the Vernal Whitlow Grass (*Erophila verna*) in Northumberland and Durham.—In reply to our request for information about the range of *E. verna* in our counties, very little new information was obtained. However,

the plant was reported as abundant in Durham (v.-c. 66) on Widdy Bank Fell, Heathery Cleugh, Cowshill, Laneheads, St. John's Wearhead, Eastgate, Middle-hope, Wolsingham and Lanchester; from Northumberland (67) we observed it at Wylam, Rothley, Colwell, Crag Lough, the Roman Wall (at several points) whilst v.-c. 68 produced it on Ratcheugh Crag and Holy Island. It will be observed that, except for Holy Island, no coastal stations are mentioned, and this occurrence is rendered the more noteworthy by the total absence of the species from the lowlands of Durham and Northumberland.

Curious Companions.—A visit to the lake near East Rainton (66) for the purpose of studying the variation of the Marsh Orchid (*Dactylorhiza purpurella*) was productive of several interesting plants which will be discussed elsewhere. However, one grassy slope leading to the water supplied a special attraction. There, countless numbers of the Blue Dragon-fly (*Coenagrion puella*), many of them in a teneral condition, were flitting about. Amongst them, and often alighting on the same grass stalks, was the Large Skipper butterfly (*Ochlodes venata*). This station for the butterfly marks an extension of its known range in Durham.—J.W.H.H.

Salices and their Galls in Newham Bog (68)—A week ago, when exploring Newham Bog, we found the willows so interesting that we made a few notes about them and the galls they bore. The *Salix* species examined included *Salix phylicifolia* and *S. nigricans*, carrying galls of the sawfly *Pontania phylicifoliae*, *S. repens* with galls of *P. collactanea*, *S. atrocinerea* with *P. bridgmanii*, and *S. pentandra* to which last years galls of *Euura amerinae* were still attached.

In addition to the pure species of *Salix* just named, we examined critically many unusual hybrids; these included *Salix phylicifolia* x *S. nigricans*, *S. phylicifolia* x *S. repens*, *S. atrocinerea* x *S. viminalis*, *S. nigricans* x *S. atrocinerea*, *S. atrocinerea* x *S. phylicifolia* and *S. caprea* x *S. atrocinerea*.

Practically every bush of *S. phylicifolia*, *S. nigricans* and their hybrids displayed numerous galls of *Pontania phylicifoliae* on the undersides of their leaves. Some of these galls were small and yellow; others, somewhat larger, were turning red. Occasionally these galls were irregularly shaped. Only one example of *S. repens*, which was fairly common, produced galls of *P. collactanea*. Similarly, only a single example of *S. atrocinerea* displayed galls of *P. bridgmanii*. As far as the hybrid plants were concerned, all of those with one parent *S. phylicifolia* or *S. nigricans* supported galls of *P. phylicifolia*.—J. Thompson.

Two Interesting Beetles in Co. Durham (66).—On May 28th, a visit was made to Widdy Bank Fell, where, during a glimpse of sunshine, a beautiful specimen of the beetle, *Carabus nitens*, was observed running over the heather then still maintaining its blackish coloration. This insect was resplendent in its garb of glittering green and gold.

Another beetle, beautiful enough in its way, the Tiger Beetle [*Cicendela campestris*], was noted on several occasions near Bradbury, West Cornforth and Walldridge. In colour, this species is green, with yellow pointing; nevertheless, it cannot approach the beauty of *C. nitens*. It takes easily to the wing and makes short flights in the sunshine over hard paths crossing moorlands and similar places. Moreover, its running powers are just as highly developed as one finds when one attempts to catch it on the ground.

The Ringed, or Grass Snake in Durham (66).—It will, no doubt, be of value to Mr. C. J. Gent in connection with his request for information about snakes to have the following record. Many years ago, when the old Durham County Naturalists' Union held its October Quarterly Meeting at Durham on October 4th, 1902, a couple of grass snakes was exhibited by Mr. Alfred Brock. These had been caught a short time previously in Pelaw Woods near the city.—J.W.H.H.

Bird Notes from the Two Counties.—On March 14th, a single example of the Great Grey Shrike was observed at Cockle Park (67) near Morpeth whilst on March 25th several individuals of the Great Spotted Woodpecker were noted in Greencroft Wood, near Annfield Plain (66). About a fortnight later, on April

10th, a very early date, a Chiff-chaff was heard near Cockle Park. On May 3rd, a single Grasshopper Warbler was singing not far from the Tanfield Ponds (66). During March, a new rookery, consisting of three occupied nests, was established in the grounds of St. Thomas' Church in the built up area of Newcastle upon Tyne. In April, two Wood Pigeons frequented gardens in Eldon Place, also a built up area. In April also, several Jackdaws were observed on various occasions picking hair from a horse in a field near Shield Row, Stanley (66); they were almost certainly taking it for nesting purposes.—R. Marston Palmer.

A Note concerning the Red-backed Shrike.—On June 7th, when Mr. J. Thompson and I were exploring the woods along the River Team near Beamish a single example of the Red-backed Shrike (*Lanius collurio*) flew across the valley near the site of the old forge.—J.W.H.H.

RECORDS

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Ochlodes venata Br. & Gray Large Skipper	66
Near the lake adjoining the old North Pit, East Rainton.	
Ourapteryx sambucaria L. Swallow Tail Moth	66
Larva on lilac behind Durham Road, Birtley, also in gardens in the Avenue on ivy.	
Chesias legatella Schf. Streak	66
Larvae not scarce on broom along the banks of the Team, also more sparingly in the Brooms.	
Euclidimera mi Cl. Mother Shipton	66
On the old Target Heap, Birtley, and in an old sandpit at Bradbury.	
Apamea unanimitis Hb. Small Clouded Brindle	66
Near the football field, Blaydon and around the ponds at Tanfield; in both cases as larvae feeding on the grass <i>Phalaris arundinacea</i> .	
Arenostola pygmina Haw. Small Wainscot	66
Flying by day near West Buttsfield; both the typical and the reddish forms occurred.	
Callimorpha jacobaeae L. Cinnabar	68
Taken in the Fame Islands on the Inner Fame, also on Holy Island; plentiful on the mainland as larvae on ragwort.—J.W.H.H.	

FLOWERING PLANTS

Schoenus nigricans L. Bog Rush	66, 68
Found on Widdy Bank Fell, the furthest inland station known; also in New-ham Bog.	
Desmazeria rigida (L.) Tutin Hard Poa	66
On the wall on Widdy Bank Fell.	
D. marina (L.) Druce Darnel Poa	67
On the sand dunes at Warkworth.	
Juncus inflexus x effusus (J. diffusus Hoppe)	66
In a boggy patch ground near the lake at East Rainton.	
Erigeron acris L. Blue Fleabane	66, 68
On the dunes at Warkworth; also in the big quarry and on the railway line at Aycliffe.	
Halimione portulacoides (L.) Aell	68
Not rare in the salt marsh north of Warkworth; apparently its northern most station.	
Hippuris vulgaris L. Mares' Tail	66
In the bigger pool near the old pit at East Rainton.	
Scirpus tabernaemontani (C. C. Gmel.) Palla	66
Quite plentiful with the preceding plant and in the same stations.	
Trifolium fragiferum L. Strawberry Clover	66
Discovered near Birtley on June 28th; the first time the plant has been reported from this district.	

Antennaria dioica (L.) Everlasting	66
Several new colonies have been noted in the West Cornforth area this season	
Carex diandra Schrank	68
Quite plentiful in Newham Bog.	
C. pendula L. Pendulous Sedge	66
Discovered recently in the Hermitage Woods near Chester-le-Street; also in the Lambton Woods adjoining the New Bridge, Urpeth, and woods near Penshaw Hill.—J.W.H.H.	
Veronica filiformis Sm.	62
Forming dense mats on a lawn in a garden at Osmotherley.—J.W.H.H.	
Neottia nidus-avis (L.) L. C. Rich. Bird's Nest Orchid	66
Two spikes of this rare orchid were found in a wood near Westgate, Weardale —Eric Burns.	
Equisetum hyemale L.	66
This horsetail, previously only known from one rather large station in the wood near Cowshill, has now been found to cover an enormous area along the river on the opposite side of the road. Curiously enough, a large amount of the forget-me-not, <i>Myosotis sylvatica</i> , was growing amongst it.	
Barbarea stricta Andr. Small Yellow Rocket	66
A single specimen of this somewhat rare casual was noticed on the shingle at Wolsingham on May 2nd.	
Centaurea scabiosa L. Greater Knapweed	66
Likewise observed on the same shingle bed; not often recorded so far west.	
Potamogeton pectinatus L. Fennel-leaved Pondweed	66
A small amount of this somewhat local plant with us occurred in the lake near East Rainton.	
Acer campestre L. Maple	66
Along the Bollihope Burn far away from any planted trees.	
Foeniculum vulgare L. Fennel	66
In Lambton Park just above the race course.	
Prunus padus L. Bird Cherry	66
Sufficiently rare in the Bradbury area of Co. Durham to warrant a note its occurrence in Gipsy Lane.	
Rumex hydrolapathum Huds. Great Water Dock	66
Not at all rare in some boggy woodland near Newton Hall.—J. Thompson.	
Calluna vulgaris L. Heather	66
It is now known that the hairy form, var. <i>hirsutum</i> , is well-distributed in Co. Durham. However, it is worthy of note that on Beamish Moor many plants are excessively hairy.	
Polygonum bistorta L. Bistort	66
In some abundance on waste land near Buttsfield, N.W. Durham.	
Diplotaxis tenuifolia (L.) DC Wall Rocket	66
On the old North Pit heap at E. Rainton.	
Chenopodium urbicum L. Goosefoot	66
In some abundance in the limestone quarries at Aycliffe.	
Juniperus communis L. Juniper	66
Along the Euden Burn; not common.—J.W.H.H.	
Galium boreale L. Northern Bedstraw	70
Gowk Banks on the Butter Burn.	
Crepis biennis L. Rough Hawk's Beard	67
By the side of the road, just S. of Burnstones near Slaggyford.	
Botrychium lunaria (L.) Siv. Moonwort	67
Gunnerton Crags.	
Carex laevigata Sm. Smooth Sedge	67, 68
West Dipton Burn, N.W. of Dipton mill (67). Roddam Dene (68).	
Anthriscus caucalis Bieb. Bur Chervil	68
Abundant around Newton Seahouses.	
Ranunculus sardous Crantz. Hairy Buttercup	68
Field near Spindlestone Crags.	

Hippuris vulgaris L. Mare's Tail Burnhope Burn, near College (66). Tipalt Burn between Cadgerford and Scotchcoulterd (67). Pond just S. of Newton Seahouses (68).	66, 67, 68
Saponaria officinalis L. Soapwort, Bouncing Bett By the side of the road between Spindlestone and Waren Mill.	68
Thiaspi arvense L. Field Penny-cress Field near Easington Grange, N.E. of Belford.	68
Vicia sylvatica L. Wood Vetch Site of cut-down wood on N. bank of the Coquet near Warkworth Moor. Roddam Dene.	68
Osmunda regalis L. Royal Fern One plant in a wood near Edmondbyers, presumably planted, although not near a house.	66
Ranunculus lenormandii F. W. Schultz. Lenormand's Water Crowfoot Ditches near Smiddyshaw Reservoir and also near the Hisehope Burn Reservoir, both near Waskerley.	66
Anacamptis pyramidalis (L.) Rich. Pyramidal Orchid Between the quarry and crags at Gunnerston.	67
Polygonum viviparum L. W. Bank of S. Tyne, near Lintley and also between Softley and Eals.	67
Phyllitis scolopendrium (L.) Newm. Hart's-tongue fern On a wall by the roadside near Cheeseburn Grange (67). Near Kielder Castle (67). Old mine buildings on the Belling Burn near Bellingham Head in the Falstone area (67). In the well at Dunstanburgh Castle (68). Roddam Dene (68). By roadside near White House, N.W. of Ainwick (68).	67, 68
Lycopodium selago L. Field Clubmoss Harehope Burn at Corbie Crags (68). Between Kelpie Strand and the summit of Hedgehope (68). Moor S.W. of Tindale (70). Crag on S.E. side of the summit of Sightly Crag (70).	68, 70
Lycopodium clavatum L. Common Clubmoss Forest Burn, just S. of Selby's Cove (67). Moor S.W. of Tindale (70).	67, 70
Geranium pyrenaicum Burm. f. Mountain Cranesbill By side of road between Middleton and Swinhoe Farm, near the Hall.	68
Vicia lathyroides L. Spring vetch On the basalt near the <i>Meum athamanticum</i> station N. of Thockrington (67). Usway Burn, near Shillmoor (68).	67, 68
Carex dioica L. Dioecious Sedge Berry Bank, N.W. of Edmondbyers (66), Near Linshiels Lake (67). Glen- due Burn, W. of the Lambley-Slaggyford road (67). Between Scotchcoulterd and Wallshiel Crags, near the Tipalt Burn (67).	66, 67
Trientalis europaea L. Chickweed Wintergreen Near Linshiels Lake (67). Abundant around the Harehope Burn (68).	67, 68
Senecio squalidus L. Oxford Ragwort Newcastle Town Moor.—G. A. & M. Swan.	67
Comus suecica L. Dwarf Cornel When rambling from Wooler to Kirk Yetholm on August 7th, I found the Dwarf Cornel near the summit of Newton Tors, a craggy-topped hill north of Wooler.—Fred Wade.	68
Lemna trisuica L. Ivy-leaved Duckweed Quite plentiful in a pond near Oxclose, and also in the old brick-yard pool at Birtley.—J. Thompson.	66
Daphne laureola L. Spurge Laurel A large colony of this interesting shrub, containing over a hundred plants, was observed in hedge rows near West Falloiden.—T. W. Wanless.	68
Cornus sanguinea L. Plentiful as an undershrub in woods and hedgerows near Deansmoor.— T. W. Wanless	68
Beta maritima L. Beet A single specimen of this plant was found on July 24th along the Mucky Fleet near the Greatham Marshes; apparently decadent there now.—J.W.H.H.	66

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Edited by

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

BY THE WAY

"NATURE NOTES"

Recently, we received from Mr. E. M. Burns, B.Sc., of Chester le-Street, a modest publication entitled "Nature Notes". Its appearance is mainly due to Junior Members of the Birtley Natural History Society working under the direction of Mr. Burns, and its chief object is to encourage field work locally amongst members of all age groups so that they "may become more familiar with the animals and plants of the locality".

The price charged (one penny per copy!) is very small, but it should be remembered that postage will be extra. All correspondence about "Nature Notes" should be sent to Mr. E. M. Burns, B.Sc., 4 St. Cuthberts Avenue, Chester-le-Street.

OUR FIELD MEETINGS

For many years difficulties have been encountered in the selection of localities suitable for our Field Meetings. Such localities have not only to be suitable for our investigations but, in addition, easy of access. However, year after year, matters have worsened progressively as various developmental operations have destroyed once favoured areas. In spite of that, districts apparently favourable for our investigations have been suggested. Yet, when arrangements had to be made for our visit, it was often discovered that transport difficulties were so great that our excursion became very difficult, or even impossible. This inevitably meant that many of our members and associates were excluded from such outings. Under these circumstances, we shall welcome suggestions about convenient localities for excursions, some involving little travel and others easily reached by bus. It should be remembered that the majority of those participating in our outings do not possess cars!

FIELD MEETINGS IN 1961

In spite of transport troubles in 1961, our excursions have been uniformly successful. On every occasion we have been favoured by good weather and a large attendance. However, even more

important than these factors were the types of members present. In the first place, amongst the adults, there were at every meeting many more field workers than we have seen since the old Wallis Club days. Moreover, these were interested in a wide range of subjects, both botanical and zoological, and freely played a useful part in helping junior members. Of the junior members themselves, we had contingents from many schools. These emphasized by their enthusiasm, and anxiety to learn field methods, the trend of much of modern biological teaching in local schools. Quite obviously, in many cases, the approach to biological teaching was being made via field work, and the old routine indoor biology abandoned at least in part. On the whole, field studies locally seem to be in a flourishing and progressive condition. We trust, therefore, that our members will endeavour by every means to keep them so!

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

For our 99th Field Meeting we visited the Bollihope Burn area on July 29th, 1961. There was a very large and interested attendance of members, and amongst them was the veteran W. Ellerington.

The party, led by Professor J. W. Heslop-Harrison, assembled near the bridge spanning the burn on the Frosterley-Middleton Road, two miles from Frosterley. There, almost immediately, a rare stranger was found in the form of the little New Zealand Willow-herb, *Epilobium pedunculare*. Thence we proceeded down the stream and were soon at work. In a marsh, not far away, a new station in Co. Durham for the Lesser Skullcap was detected, and some of its members photographed. Soon after this, we came to the Bishopley Craggs, where the stream passes through a narrow gorge with cliffs 150 feet high, upon which we were pleased to see a colony of wild yews. Supplementing this gap is a second, cut to serve the lead mines and limestone quarries.

At this point we found the vegetation very rich and varied. Amongst the trees and shrubs present were the Wych Elm, Ash, Alder, Birch, Rowan, Field Maple (one tree), the three common Sallows, Hazel, Hawthorn, Sloe, Guelder Rose, Juniper and enormous crowds of our northern roses like *Rosa mollis*, *R. sherardi*, *R. dumalis* and *R. coriifolia*. Plants of more lowly stature detected included, the Fragrant Orchid, the Spotted Orchid, Marsh Orchid, Tway blade, Bulrush, the Nettle-leaved Bellflower, Wood Sage, Yellow Pimpernel, Honeysuckle, Lady's Bedstraw, Marsh Bedstraw, Wall Lettuce, Musk Mallow, Golden Rod, Flax, Betony, Raspberry, Marjoram, Spring Sandwort, Lousewort, Grass of Parnassus, Butterwort, Agrimony, Broom, Whin, Large Bittercress, Hybrid Avens, Carline Thistle, Marsh Speedwell, Beautiful St. John's

Wort, Perforate St. John's Wort, Hairy St. John's Wort, Square stalked St. John's Wort, White and Yellow Stonecrops, Bog Pond weed, Melic Grass and the Black Spleenwort.

As their investigations continued, the entomologists under Mr. Dunn worked hard with meagre results. On the wing, amongst the butterflies and moths, they observed only the Green-veined White, the Ling Pug, the Yellow Shell, the Twin-spot Carpet and the Silver-ground Carpet.

Amongst the entomologists we were delighted to welcome Mr. A. M. Tynan, B.Sc., Curator at the Hancock Museum. His interests lie with the Hymenoptera—Bees, Wasps etc.

Mr. C. J. Gent and his helpers reported that bird life was not much in evidence. The song periods of most having ended, only the songs of the Wren and Yellow Hammer were heard. A Meadow Pipit was observed carrying food, and judging from its anxiety, seemed to have young in the vicinity.

A nest of a Song Thrush was found containing two young, 2/3 days old. Sandmartins were fairly numerous, hawking after insects, and an odd House Martin was seen. Redpolls were plentiful, and two Snipe were disturbed from a small marsh. Other species noted included the Dipper (recorded by Mr. Fred Wade), Wood Pigeon, Jackdaw, Ring Ouzel, Blackbird, Whitethroat, Grey Wag tail and Linnet. Of other animals, a rabbit was seen hopelessly suffering from myxomatosis, whilst a single adder was found amongst the heather as was also a lizard. Frogs were not uncommon. Fred Wade.

The 100th Field Outing of the Union took place in the place in the Butsfield-Satley district on September 23rd, 1961, when a large and representative group of members and associates met at Satley. Leaving Satley, the party walked along pleasant country lanes until the Butsfield Quarries were reached. There, Mr. Tyerman took charge. Under his directions, we were divided into two groups one to take what was termed the "easy" route through the quarries and the other the "hard".

It was at once clear that, dense and rich as the vegetation was, it represented quite a recent colonization of the quarried area. As a result, except on the margins of the workings, the trees observed were limited in species. The chief of the trees were the Rose Bay Willow, *Salix pentandra*, the three Sallows, (*S. caprea*, *S. aurita*, *S. atrocinerea*) and the two birches. However, at scattered points, we saw Wych Elm, Alder, Oak, Rowan, Hazel, Juniper, Sloe, Guelder Rose, Bird Cherry and many wild roses, chiefly *Rosa dumalis*, with a goodly sprinkling of *R. mollis*, *R. sherardi* and *R. spinosissima*.

As we tramped, we noted flowering plants of very varied predilections. Amongst these were the Common Scabious, Devil's bit Scabious, Foxglove, Marsh Ragwort, Lesser Spearwort, Beautiful St. John's Wort, Wood Groundsel, Honeysuckle, Hedge

Bedstraw. Marsh Bedstraw, Angelica, Wood Avens, Black Crowberry, Bilberry, Heather, Fine-leaved Heath, Golden Rod, Valerian, Tansy, Kidney Vetch, Carline Thistle, Woodsage, Bulrush, Betony, Lesser Spearwort, Knotted Pearlwort, Tormentil, Water Cress, Brooklime, Toad Rush, Black Knapweed (with radiate flowers). Blue Moor Grass, Tall Fescue, Mat Grass, the Hard, Male and Lady Ferns and the Wood Horsetail.

Once again, the entomologists had very poor bags although Mr. Dunn and his colleagues worked really hard. Amongst the Lepidoptera, captures included the Green-veined White, the Red Admiral, the Dark Marbled Carpet, the Silver Y, the Flounced Rustic, the Sallow, with larvae of the White Wave, Scalloped Hazel and the Pebbled Hook-tip. Of these, the Pebbled Hooked-tip is quite important as it has recently shown a tendency to vanish from our woodlands.

Amongst the bees Mr. Gent noted *Bombus hortorum*, *B. lucorum* and *B. agrorum* although *B. muscorum* was also seen.

In addition, two dragon-flies were observed, *Aeshna juncea* by Mr. Gent and *Cordulegaster boltonii* by Prof. Heslop Harrison.

Very few galls were collected, but the usual spangle and marble galls on oak were common enough whilst galls of the sawfly, *Cryptocampus medullarius* were very plentiful on *Salix pentandra*.

A single species of scale insect, *Chionaspis salicis*, abounded on *Salices* of the Caprea group. Normally, this species favours all three of the common willows. Here, even when the three grow intermingled, it shows a marked preference for *Salix aurita*.

Mr. C. J. Gent made his usual notes on the birds. He reports that the songs of the Robin and Wren were heard, and that a party of about 50 swallows was observed near Satley. In Buttsfield Quarry the note of the Willow Tit attracted attention, although only fleeting glimpses of two birds were obtained. Other species recorded included Woodpigeon, Carrion Crow, Rook, Jackdaw, Great Tit, Blue Tit, Coal Tit, Mistle Thrush, Blackbird, Meadow Pipit, Pied Wagtail, Starling, Linnet, Redpoll, Chaffinch and House Sparrow. The party broke up at the entrance of the quarries, after a fine, and on the whole, a profitable day had been spent.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On July 23rd, 1961, we visited Holy Island, where we spent the bulk of our time in examining the Flora of the area. Although we discovered very little new, we managed to confirm old records of several important plants not seen recently. Plants so noted were the Sweet Briar, *Rosa rubiginosa*, actually new to the Island, the Henbane, *Solanum nigrum*, the Rough Trefoil, *Trifolium scabrum*, the Swine Cress, *Coronopus squamatus*, and the Ivy-leaved Duck weed, *Lemna trisulca*. Perhaps, too, our finding of the Green veined White butterfly, the Meadow Brown, the Grayling and the

Cinnabar moth and the two humble bees, *Bombus hortorum* and *B. ruderarius*, deserves mention.

Throughout the summer, we have continued our plans of making a series of short excursions to localities near to Birtley and Chester le-Street. These have taken us to Holmside, Newton Hall, Brasside, Sherburn Hill, Cocken, East Rainton and Waldrige Fell. The results of these expeditions we hope to publish collectively later.

Our indoor meetings commenced on September 19th, when Prof. Heslop-Harrison gave a lecture, illustrated by lantern slides, on "Heredity". On October 3rd, we were shown three films by the North Eastern Electricity Board. All were useful and interesting, but that illustrating the evolution of methods of making heat and light from the Stone Age to the present day was of special importance.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

Observations on Birds.—The following notes for the most part refer to occurrences on the Tanfield Ponds (66); Ringed Plover, from July 30th to August 7th a single bird was noted; Ruff, from July 24th to July 26th an adult male was seen as was a single bird on June 30th, an early date; Wood Sandpiper, one occurred on July 3rd, from July 15th to July 17th a second appeared, whilst on July 24th one flew in from the north in company with a Green Sandpiper; Common Sandpiper, present on most days in July with a maximum of 4 on July 9th; Jack Snipe, a single bird was noted on August 7th; Green Sandpiper, one with the Wood Sandpiper; Dunlin, three observed on July 3rd, one from July 23rd to July 29th, three from July 30th to July 31st; Great Crested Grebe, on May 27th a pair seen on a pond in Co. Durham (66); Common Pochard, at least one pair bred successfully on a Durham (66) pond where a brood of two ducklings was seen on July 22nd (the only breeding site of the species in either Northumberland, Westmorland and Durham); Tufted Duck, bred again on a pond in Durham (66) where on July 22nd four broods consisting of a total of thirteen ducklings were counted; Grasshopper Warbler, during July two different birds were often seen and heard "reeling".—R. Marston Palmer.

Bird Migration in Spring, 1961.—Meadow Pipits were plentiful in the fields north of Holywell Dene (67) on March 27th. A Willow Warbler was singing at Gainsford (66) on April 8th; several were in Gosforth Park (67) on April 11th, but became plentiful there on the 18th when 5 Sand Martins were circling over the lake. Two Wheatears were seen on the moors near Walltown (67) as were two near Featherstone Park where a Cuckoo and a Tree Pipit were heard. At the same time, Willow Warblers were plentiful and well distributed. A Common Sandpiper was observed beside the small tarn on Blenkinsop Common. On April 29th. Swallows were well-spread in the Riding Mill (67) area where several Whitethroats were seen, and a Grasshopper Warbler heard in song. Five Swifts arrived at their breeding site in Gosforth (67) on May 8th, their numbers increasing to 13 by the 11th, when Sedge Warblers were present in June near the reed-beds around Gosforth Park Lake. A Chiff-chaff was also heard singing at this date.—C. J. Gent.

Biological Races in *Claviceps purpurea* Fr.—I found a colony of the grass *Glyceria fluitans* in a swamp near Pitlington (66) in which practically all the plants were infected, many of them having 8 or 9 ergots on them. Within a radius of five yards the following grasses were noted: *Deschampsia caespitosa*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*, and *Lolium perenne*. None of these were infected.

A patch of *Lolium* was found at Brasside which was also infected. Here a five yard radius produced the following grasses; *Dactylis glomerata*, *Holcus lanatus*, *Festuca sp.*, *Milium effusum*, *Arrhenatherum elatius*; none displayed signs of ergots. Rarnsbottom discusses the occurrence of biological races restricted to certain grass species; presumably these are two of them. J. Thompson

The Colonisation of a Gravel Heap in Durham City.—This summer the remains of a heap of gravel, used the previous winter for gritting the roads, which had been placed on the grass verge of a main road running through Durham City, bore the following plants:—one large plant of *Echium vulgare* L. (Viper's Bugloss) which flowered profusely and was much picked by passers-by; several plants of *Arenaria leptoclados* (Rchb) Guss. (Lesser Thyme-leaved Sandwort), *Senecio squalidus* L. (Oxford Ragwort) and *Reseda lutea* L. (Wild Mignonette). A short distance away were several plants of *Lathyrus sylvestris* (Narrow-leaved Everlasting Pea) growing in a hedge and flowering well, but these were considerably damaged before long by Corporation hedge trimmers.—A. N. Gibby.

Interesting Garden Weeds.—In our Garden, in Durham City, several large plants of *Datura stramonium* L. (Thorn-apple) appeared again this year and flowered freely, one of them now bearing eighteen spiny fruits. For the first time *Senecio squalidus* (Oxford Ragwort) has been seen, in close proximity to a colony of *Senecio vulgaris* var. *radiatus* Koch (Rayed form of the Common Groundsel). A few yards away were several fine specimens of *Verbascum thapsus* L. (Mullein), one measuring well over six feet in height, and two plants of *Hypericum androsaemum* L. (Tutsan).—A. N. Gibby.

The Gray Sallow (*Salix atrocinerea*) flowering a Second Time.—On July 12th, 1961, I discovered a bush of *S. atrocinerea* near Brasside (66) with a second crop of female catkins just beginning to emerge from the bud. A search revealed a second bush, about 200 yards away, with male catkins at about the same stage of development. The female bush was revisited on August 17th, when we found that some of the catkins had developed, and about a third of the ovaries contained seeds. I am unable to state whether these were viable.—J. Thompson.

The Hunting Spider, *Epiplatys scenicum*, captures its Prey.—On June 21st, as I was sitting at my table, I observed a female Common Pug Moth, *Eupithecia vulgata*, sitting on the pane outside my eastern window, with its wings, as usual, fully and flatly expanded and adpressed to the glass. Sitting over it, at a very short distance, was an adult spider, *Epiplatys scenicum*, obviously intently watching the motionless moth. Very soon, the spider pounced upon the moth, which was larger than itself. Then the attacker with its strongly struggling prey, were swinging in the air, whirling round and round suspended by the obviously strong thread which this hunting spider invariably pays out as it prowls about over vertical objects in search of prey. The spider had seized the moth by the thorax, and slowly, but surely, had quietened the struggling moth which, as it died, extruded half a dozen ova.—C. R.

Coast and Hill Examples of the Burnet Saxifrage, *Pimpinella saxifraga*.—On October 6th, as I was working the wild roses in the Linnold's Bridge (67) area, I discovered a patch of the Burnet Saxifrage, the furthest west I have seen the plant. On the following day, October 7th, I visited the Durham (66) coast to study the colonies of the Dusky Sallow, *Salix nigricans*, existing there, and once again I encountered a group of examples of the Burnet Saxifrage. When fresh specimens from the two stations were brought together I found that the coast form was completely glabrous and smooth whilst the Northumberland plant was strongly puberulent and rough.—J.W.H.H.

A "Hen and Chickens" Marigold.—Many have heard, or seen, the freak popularly known as the "Hen and Chickens" Daisy. This plant turns up both in the wild and in the garden. Nevertheless, it is just a common daisy which, after it has sent forth what ought to have been a normal inflorescence, produces from the flower head a series of miniature replicas of itself.

Recently, a marigold, growing amongst others in a garden at Catchgate, developed nine short stems from the faded flower head. Each of these gave rise to a

perfect flower, reproducing exactly the conditions of the "Hen and Chickens' daisy.—Fred Wade.

Lepidopteros Immigrants.—This season, immigrant Lepidoptera in Northumberland and Durham have been very scarce. Practically no early reports for the Large White have been received, although there seems to have been a small invasion in July and early August; these, no doubt, were the insects responsible for the damage done to cabbages and their relatives in September and October. Red Admirals, possibly the descendants of an early group of invaders, were first observed at Chester-le-Street and Brasside on September 14th, 17th and 20th, at Cocken on September 17th, at Wylam on September 28th and quite freely and generally in late September and early October at flowers of such plants as *Sedum spectabile*.

Plusia gamma, the Silver Y, was not seen in spring, or early summer, but it was noted at Newton Hall on September 17th and at Brasside on September 20th.—T. C. Dunn.

The Soft Hawk's-beard, *Crepis mollis*, in Co. Durham.—*Crepis mollis* (Jacq.) Aschers. was described by Baker and Tate as "not infrequent in the hill denes". However, no one seems to have seen the plant in our counties for very many years in spite of visits specially planned to look for it.

This year, and last, after we had almost despaired of rediscovering the plant, Dr. J. K. Morton and I worked firstly, a few localities not examined previously in Weardale, and then the woods near High Force (66) in Teesdale. To our surprise, we detected *Crepis mollis* growing there as a sort of fringe, where the area became drier, around the *Crepis paludosa* colony.—J.W.H.H.

The Champion Smut, *Ustilago violacea*, on Soapwort and Campions.—Along the River Wear near Cocken (66) for more than a mile, the Soapwort, *Saponaria officinalis* abounds in two forms. One of these is the ordinary typical form with single, pale pink flowers. In the other, the flowers are double, and their colours a somewhat brighter pink. Besides this, they show every possible grade of doubleness.

At one point, where only single-flowered plants occur, the whole colony is affected by the smut, *Ustilago violacea*. Very clearly, this has been derived from neighbouring plants of the Red Champion, *Melandrium rubrum*, which is also quite plentiful. In addition, there are odd plants of the hybrid between the Red Champion and the White Champion (*M. album*), with even fewer, ex-amples of the pure white species. All the campion forms, as well as the Soapwort, are, more or less, infected with *Ustilago violacea* which stands out very clearly on the stamens of the Soapwort and of the male plants of *Melandrium rubrum* and *M. album*.—J.W.H.H. and E. Hall.

The Range of the Sea Purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*) in Northumberland.—Dr. J. A. Swann points out that three years ago, he discovered the plant at Alnmouth which is, of course, further north than the station given for it by me in the *Vasculum* for July 1961.

RECORDS

ODONATA—DRAGON FLIES

<i>Cordulegaster boltonii</i> Donovan	66, 67
Not at all common: along the Bollihope Burn, Satley, Urpeth, Newton Hall (66); near Coanwood (67).—J.W.H.H. and C. J. Gent.	
<i>Aeshna juncea</i> L.	66, 67, 68
Generally distributed in our two counties.	
<i>Libellula quadrimaculata</i> L.	66
Near Wolviston but only singly.	
<i>Sympetrum striolatum</i> Charp.	66
Near a little marsh at Newton Hall.	
<i>Ischnura elegans</i> Van der Linden	66
Here and there but not plentiful.	
<i>Pyrrhosoma nymphula</i> Suizer	66
Very common near every sheet of water.	

Coenagrion puella L. 66
 Also quite abundant.—J.W.H.H.

HEMIPTERA-HETEROPTERA—PLANT BUGS

Zicrona caenilea L. 66
 Rarely seen but, nevertheless, not scarce on our moorlands, Widdy Bank Fell, Bedbum, Blanchland etc.

Pentatoma prasina L. 67
 This has been beaten quite freely from alders along the Devil's Water.—J.W.H.H.

COLEOPTERA—BEETLES

Carabus nitens L. 66
 Not plentiful on moorlands: last seen on Widdy Bank Fell.

C. arvensis Hbst. 66
 A rather dark form of this has also been taken on Widdy Bank Fell, but it has not been observed elsewhere.

Cicendela campestris L. Tiger Beetle 66, 67
 Quite common on moorland tracks and occasionally elsewhere; Waldrige Fell, Urpeth, Lamesley Lane, Dipton Woods etc.

Meloe proscarabaeus L. Oil Beetle 66
 On sunny banks in spring. Team Valley, Eastgate etc; never plentiful.

M. violaceus Marsh Oil Beetle 66, 67
 Hunstanworth, Upper Weardale, Teesdale and near Hexham.

Strangalia armata Herbst. 66
 Sparingly on Waldrige Fell.

Rhagium bifasciatum Fab. 66, 67
 Found in many dead and dying trees: Team Valley, Waldrige. Dipton Woods, Corbridge.—J.W.H.H.

HYMENOPTERA—BEES, ETC.

Bombus terrestris L. 66, 67, 68
 Not rare generally, and especially fond of bilberry and other moorland flowers

B. lucorum L. 66, 67, 68
 Common everywhere from localities like Upper Weardale to the coastal areas of both counties.

B. lapidarius L. 66, 67, 68
 Not so common as it used to be, but still to be found from stations like Langdon Beck, Blanchland and Wark on Tyne to the coast.

B. pratorum L. 66, 67, 68
 One of our commonest bees form the uplands to the coast: hibernated queens appear very early.

B. lapponicus Fab. 62, 67
 Another patroniser of bilberry flowers, but only occurring locally as on Eston Moor (62) and moors south of Corbridge and Healey.

B. soroensis Fab. 67
 Very rare: Gosforth is the only known locality.

B. hortorum L. 67, 66, 68
 Generally distributed, but scarcer in our uplands.

B. latreillellus L. 66, 67, 68
 In the 1880's this species was not really rare in the middle zones of our area, but it seemed to disappear for no apparent reason. Now it occurs sparingly in areas not far from the sea.

B. niderarius Muller 66, 67
 This species was formerly known as *B. derhamellus*, and was then regarded as very rare and local. Now it has gained much ground, and is often the commonest bee in old quarries on the Magnesian Limestone.

B. sylvarum L. 66
 Bold, in his list, 1869, described this species as "by no means rare". It is certainly at the present time exceedingly scarce for it has only occurred at Sedge field (J.W.H.H.) where a single queen was taken, and at Birtley where the late Mr. Charles Robson netted a few workers.—J.W.H.H. & C. J. Gent.

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Edited by

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

BY THE WAY

THE WORD "BUTTERFLY"

We have often been asked to explain the origin of the name "butterfly". In fact, at a recent lecture in the Lambton Castle Residential College, quite a lively discussion about it took place.

Concerning the second half of the name, there can be no dispute, whilst the first half has, almost certainly, a direct connection with the word "butter". If so, then "butterfly" is a hybrid word for our word "butter" is of Greek origin, and "fly" is a purely Anglo-Saxon product. It is not clear, however, why the word "butter" appears in the name. One suggestion is that the word here indicates an insect recalling in some respects butter. That being so, it seems quite likely that the insect originally receiving the appellation was the Brimstone butterfly, the male of which resembles butter in its colour. Nevertheless, it is not impossible that other butterflies, such as the Common Whites, were responsible for the name. A further suggestion depends upon a very old and wide-spread belief that butterflies stole milk and cream. However, the linking of the name with the colour of the insects concerned seems to us preferable.

THE EARED SALLOW

The Eared Sallow (*Salix aurita*), with its allies the Gray Sallow and the Goat Willow, has a very wide distribution in our two counties. However, considerable changes have taken place quite recently in their ranges with us. In the 1890's, *Salix aurita* was the commonest sallow in many places such as Waldrige Fell. Now, it forms a bad second as far as numbers are concerned. Undoubtedly, it has, to a considerable extent, been displaced by *S. atrocinerea*. For instance, on Waldrige Fell we had marked down, for genetical purposes, two colonies of *S. aurita* which bore intersexual catkins; now both are gone, and in their stead are strong *S. atrocinerea* populations. The same change has occurred in the sallow colony on the other side of the burn along the extreme east of the Fell.

Some distance away, in the Team Valley near Urpeth, similar developments have been observed. Can any of our members supply observations similar to ours ?

OUR LOCAL MOLLUSCA

Formerly, the study of our local Mollusca attracted considerable attention amongst naturalists. Thus, in Volume 1 of the *Transactions of the Tyneside Naturalists' Field Club*, there appeared an excellent piece of work in the form of a "Catalogue of the Mollusca of Northumberland and Durham" by Joshua Alder—one of the earliest Catalogues of our Flora and Fauna for which our counties have been famous.

Naturally, there was no scope for a second work of this caliber for a long period. Still, it served to stimulate and keep going interest in the group until 1934, when another fine catalogue, this time from the pen of the Rev. E. P. Blackburn, was published in the *Transactions of the Northern Naturalists' Union*, Vol. 1, Part 3. This bore the title "A Survey of the Land and Freshwater Mollusca of Northumberland and Durham".

Since the death of Mr. Blackburn, except for a few casual records, very little work has been done in the group. However, during the past few months, there has been an awakening, amongst certain sections of our younger members, of interest in the so-called neglected forms. May we suggest that any energy spent in the study of our local Mollusca will receive an ample reward ?

THE SOCIETIES

NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

By the kind invitation of the Cleveland Naturalists' Field Club, the Autumn Meeting of the Northern Naturalists' Union was held in the Leeds University Adult Education Centre, 37 Harrow Road, Middlesbrough, on Saturday, October 21st, 1961.

After a small amount of business had been transacted, we were privileged to hear a very interesting lecture, given by Dr. J. D. Summers-Smith, under the title "The House-Sparrow—A Success Story".

Dr. Summers-Smith began by describing various species of sparrows and their general distribution. To this he linked some account of the local races certain species had developed. Here, too, he told of the influence of the Glacial Period and its fluctuations had had upon the course of evolution in the group.

Following this, with the aid of various illustrations and lantern slides, the general natural history and their morphology and similar points were described.

The proceedings ended with a hearty vote of thanks, proposed by Mr. T. C. Dunn, for a very instructive and useful talk.

Tea followed, and then we adjourned to examine the various specimens brought by our members. These included a panel of newspaper cuttings, some favourable to the sparrow and others

against the bird, and an illustrated label, from a tin of "Smoked Sparrow", brought by Dr. Summers-Smith; Mr. D. G. Bell had on display a Teesmouth Bird Report listing all the species of birds observed there whilst Mrs. Gibby had on view humorous illustrations from various countries like South Rhodesia, Germany etc. appealing for Nature Conservancy. Other exhibits comprised: a collection of local *Salices* and a Jew's Bear Fungus on elder brought by Mr. J. Thompson; a fine set of herbarium plants from Hudson Bay, Canada, by Mr. K. W. Brown; A large and interesting series of moths and butterflies, some from the Channel Isles, with wonderful photographs of butterflies, moths and their larvae exhibited by Mr. N. W. Harwood; a number of sheets of plants, mainly of wool aliens, brought by Mr. L. Gee; leaves of many species of plants cut by the roseleaf cutter-bee for "nest" making purposes, white butterflies reared as a result of crossing the Small White butterfly with the Green-veined White and a herbarium sheet *Illecebrum verticillatum* from Kielder, Northumberland, exhibited by Prop. J. W. Heslop Harrison.

BIRTLEY NATURAL HISTORY SOCIETY

On October 17th we had Mr. W. Toyn as our lecturer. He gave us an excellent and useful talk dealing with the "Streets of Old Newcastle". Commencing with the early years of the eighteenth century, he demonstrated, by means of a device of his own, how, step by step, Newcastle as we know it today had been built up. On October 31st, thanks to Colonel Perry, we were privileged to see the "Three Rivers" film. Our thanks in connecton with this film are also due to Mr. George Wilson, B.Sc. The lecture on November 10th was given by Miss M. H. Oates, B.Sc., who described with a wonderful series of specimens, collected by herself locally, how to recognise the larger fungi found on our area.

Our plan of holding field meetings in the later months of the year has been continued, and has been extremely successful. On October 1st, we worked the area lying between Brasside and the Wear. Our most important find was a huge clump of *Rosa arvensis* whilst on November 12th the waste ground and old waggon ways near East Rainton were examined.

NOTES AND RECORDS

NOTES

The Badger in Co. Durham.—On October 1st, when we were exploring those parts of Cocken Woods lying behind the Farm, we discovered a badger "set" on the wooded slopes on the east side of the wood. Similarly, on October 16th, in the tangled stretch of woodland nearer the river another "set" was detected. Finally, on November 5th, as we were studying the plants on a limestone scar on Strawberry Hill, we found a beautiful female badger lying dead on the roadside. As it was quite limp, it was clear that it had been struck by some passing vehicle not long before we discovered it. E. Hall.

Autumn Bird Notes in 1961.—On September 7th a single Greenshank (*Tringa nebularia*) was observed at Gosforth Park Lake (67). On September 30th, a single Great Skua (*Stercorarius skua*) was noted off the North Gare, Teesmouth (66). On October 8th a party of the Long-tailed Tit (*Aegithalos caudatus*)

passed over my garden at Gosforth (67). This is the first time they have been noted there and they were travelling south. On October 21st, fresh corpses of an adult cock and an adult hen of the Goldcrest (*Regulus regulus*) were found on the sand dunes at the North Gare, Teesmouth (66). These were undoubtedly casualties from the wave of immigrants reported to have arrived in the area early in the week.—C. J. Gent.

Bird Notes from Tanfield Ponds (66).—The following observations refer, in the main, to birds seen on or near the Tanfield ponds (66). Green Sandpiper frequently present between August 9th to August 20th with a maximum of 7 birds on August 9th; Common Sandpiper, from August 9th to August 21st up to 5 birds were often seen; Spotted Redshank, four seen on August 20th, the first recorded for these ponds; Greenshank, commonly noted between August 9th and August 20th with a maximum of five birds on the latter date; Ruff, three on August 20th; Ringed Plover, one adult bird on August 20th thirteen miles from the sea; Jack Snipe, from August 9th up to three birds were often noted; Common Snipe, on August 9th at least 90 birds were counted.

(Most of the above migrant waders occurred at the ponds following a very strong easterly gale on August 8th.)

Pied Wagtail, a very large concentration was at Tanfield Ponds in late August, on August 30th at least 170 birds being counted, many more were present but not included in the count; Widgeon, after an influx on the east coast a single bird occurred at Tanfield on September 30th.—R. Marston Palmer.

The Hum of Humble Bees.—For some time I have been convinced that a difference in pitch existed between the hum of the parasitic humble bee *Psithyrus vestalis* and that of its host, the common garden bee, *Bombus hortorum*. In my opinion, the hum of the former, as it flies along banksides in search of nests in which to lay its eggs, is much more subdued and softer than the sonorous hum of *Bombi* of similar size.—C.R.

The Gall-gnat, *Contarinia steini*, near Finchale (66).—When I first discovered the galls of *C. steini* Karsh. in Co. Durham, they occurred on a colony of *Melandrium rubrum* growing in the Urpeth Woods near the Riding Farm. In October 1961, a single patch of the same plant, intermingled with a few examples of the pure white species *M. album* and odd specimens of the hybrid *M. rubrum* x *M. album* was found in Cocken Woods. This colony also supported a *C. steini* population, but it was easy to see that there had been a preferential selection of male flowers of *M. rubrum* for egg-laying purposes by the gall-gnat. Very few examples of hybrid flowers had been chosen, and still fewer of pure *M. album*.

A further curious phenomenon was observed in this Finchale colony; some of the affected male flowers of pure *M. rubrum* origin exhibited traces of intersexuality. This curious happening recalls a similar state of affairs, recorded by me long years ago, in which the plant affected was *Salix caprea* and the parasites mites of the genus *Eriophyes*.—J.W.H.H.

Immigrant Lepidoptera in the Derwent Valley (66) in 1961.—My first date for the Red Admiral in 1961 was 25th September, and then I saw a single specimen. On 2nd October, there were four, and for the next fortnight the numbers varied from two to six each day.

On the 12th, a Silver Y appeared, and during the next three days I noted the species at intervals, the latest time being this morning (30th October).

These were all seen in my garden. It has been a very poor year for butterflies with me. Even the Common Whites have been scarce.—C. Hutchinson.

Pontania Galls on Salices at Wylam (67).—As has been known for a long time, there is an enormous mixture of willow species and hybrids along the Tyne at Wylam. Moreover, that these willows supported galls of the sawfly genus *Pontania* has also been recognised for some forty years. Nevertheless, it is not always realised that amongst the willows are species with alpine proclivities, and amongst the sawflies forms of the same geographical tendency. Amongst the former are *Salix phylicifolia* and *S. nigricans*, and in the ranks of the latter, *Pontania phylicifolia*.

This season, although the crop of galls of genus *Pontania* has been smaller than usual, all the regular species have occurred with the exception of *P. pustulator*, which has failed even in the Durham stations in which it was first encountered in the British Isles.

The species actually collected at Wylam included *Pontania phylicifolia* found on *Salix phylicifolia*, *P. femoralis* on *S. nigricans*, *S. phylicifolia* and hybrids, *P. viminalis* on *S. purpurea* and x *S. rubra*, *P. proxima* on *S. fragilis* and *S. alba*, *P. pedunculata* on *Salices* of the Caprea group, and *P. bridgmanii* also on the Caprea group. Much the same fraternity was listed for the *Salices* reported from Newham Bog (68).—Jack Thompson.

A Middlesbrough Note.—On October 21st, when the Autumn Meeting of the Northern Naturalists' Union took place at Middlesbrough (62), a few of us examined the gardens of the Leeds Centre for galls. Amongst the galls collected were those of the psyllid, *Psylla buxi* on box, and those of *Pemphigus bursarius* on black poplar. In one of the latter galls we found three hibernating specimens of the two-spotted ladybird.—T.C.D.

The Dark-leaved Willow at Butterby (66).—Some years ago, when Dr. B. M. Griffiths was carrying out his ecological work at Butterby, I discovered *Salix nigricans* and its hybrid with *S. atrocinera* in the willow thicket. This I failed to record, and remedy the deficiency now.—J.W.H.H.

Variation in the Knapweeds.—On the occasion of the Union's excursion to the Buttsfield quarries, it was perfectly plain to all interested in the phenomenon that the further the Black Knapweed's range was followed westward the greater was the tendency to display neuter marginal flowers longer than the normal. In spite of this definite geographical connexion, such flowers have been collected elsewhere as in Fulwell quarries, near Cocken, Brasside and Sherburn Hill.

Another trend, observed in the same species, is the flit production of pure white flowers; such flowers, as well as others pinkish in hue, have been observed at Birtley and Bishop Middleham.

As far as the Greater Knapweed is concerned, it also can produce white flowers, but its usual variational trend is to display flowers with the marginal florets whitish or pinkish and the inner group of a much darker purple hue.

A Note from Wheatley Hill.—During the summer a short time was spent on a rubbish tip near Wheatley Hill. The search produced a white-flowered form of the Nipplewort, *Lapsana communis* and a large specimen of the White Clover, *Trifolium repens* with virescent (greenish) flowers. Such an occurrence in White Clover may be mutational. On the other hand, it is more likely to be due to mites of the species *Eriophyes plicator* var. *trifolii*.—T. W. Wanless.

Melanism in the Lepidopterous Genera *Oporinia* and *Cheimatobia*.—For many years, I have been investigating the development and heredity of melanism in the genus *Oporinia*. During these researches, enormous numbers of larvae of the species, both wild and experimental, have been reared, and imagines bred. Amongst the *autumnata* was a jet-black form, var. *nigerrima*, reared from wild larvae from Dipton Wood (67), Prestwick Carr (67) and Urpeth (66). Similarly, on October 23rd, 1958, a wild larva of *O. diluata*, beaten from oak in Lambton Park, yielded a pure black male almost identical with the melanic Urpeth *autumnata* appearing in my cages at the same time. This form is now named var. *nigerrima* to indicate its closeness to the corresponding *autumnata* variety.

All of my experimental *Oporinia* cultures were supplied with hawthorn as food. This was obtained from an old pit heap at Birtley.

On November 25th, 1960, amongst the *Oporiniae* bred there appeared a coalblack female *Cheimatobia brumata*. Clearly, this had been brought in as larva with the hawthorn used as food for my November Moth cultures. This was mated with a typical male captured wild in Birtley. The progeny from this mating are now appearing, and the females, like their female parent, are jetblack. The males carry the pattern of typical wild male *brumata* overlaid by black. In addition, the transverse band is more sharply marked and emphasized. The form is now named var. *obatra*.—J.W.H.H.

RECORDS

LEPIDOPTERA—BUTTERFLIES AND MOTHS

Ochloides veneta Br. & Grey Large Skipper 66
 Widespread in 1961; noted at Hawthorn, Birtley, East Rainton, Cornforth, Hisehope Burn, Fishburn.

HYMENOPTERA—BEES, ETC.

Bombus agrorum Fab. 66, 67, 68
 Our most plentiful bee, and to be found everywhere between March and mid October.

B. muscorum L. 66, 67, 68
 Less common than the previous species, but to be found from Kielder and Widdy Bank Fell, where we have taken its nest to areas like Prestwick Carr, Bishop Middleham quarries, Tunstal Reservoir, Seaton Carew and Hart.

Psithyrus rupestris Fab. 66
 The first of the bees parasitic on the *Bombi*. Only reported from Shotley Bridge.

P. vestalis Fourc. 66, 67
 Very common in S. Northumberland and Durham.

P. barbutellus Kirby 66, 67
 Like the preceding, well-distributed, but scarcer.

P. campestris Panz. 66, 67
 Also seen in the same districts, but somewhat rarely.

P. quadricolor auctt. 66
 Seen in fair numbers on the old pit heap north of Birtley.—J.W.H.H. & C. J.Gent.

FLOWERING PLANTS

Erophila verna L. Whitlow Grass 67
 On basaltic exposures near Walltown.—C. J. Gent.

Centaurea scabiosa L. Greater Knapweed 67
 A small colony exists on a disused railway track near Wark.—G. J. Gent.
 On the south bank of the Tyne half a mile below Knarsdale Church.—F. Wade.

Saxifraga granulata L. Meadow Saxifrage 68
 Found in Coquetdale near Felton.—F. Wade.

Rosa arvensis L. Field Rose 66
 A single large tuft was found along a hedge bordering the road near Brasside (J. Thompson), and a second, much larger, along a hedge in a field leading down to the Wear.—J.W.H.H.

Fumaria micrantha Sender Fumitory 66
 Found on a field edge near Newton Hall.

Trifolium arvensis L. Hare's Foot Clover 66
 On the bare land near the Brasside Ponds.

Melilotus altissima Thuill. Tall Melilot 66
 On the old railway banks near East Rainton.

Ribes alpinum L. Alpine Currant 66
 In the woods along the Wear near Cocken.

Nasturtium officinale x microphyllum 66
 In ditches near Oxclose and Bradbury.

Rorippa islandica (Oeder) Borbas. Marsh Yellow Cress 67
 In a boggy patch along the Tyne at Wylam.

Etuonymus europaeus L. Spindle-tree 66
 Scattered in the woods near Finchdale and the farm at Cocken.

Diplotaxis muralis (L.) DC. and **D. tenuifolia** (.) DC. 66
 Both of these grow together in great quantities on the pit heaps and waste ground near E. Rainton.

Genista tinctoria L. Dyer's Green-weed 67
 Along the banks of the Tyne at Wylam. The stations at Washington (66)

Blackstonia perfoliata (L.) Huds. Yellow-wort	67
There are about a dozen isolated patches of this plant in the old limestone quarries at Fulwell.	
Crepis paludosa (L.) Moench Marsh Crepis	61
Sparingly around the fish pond at E. Rainton.	
Thiaspi alpestre L. Alpine Penny-cress	66
In small numbers on a patch of ground on the north bank of the Wear halfway between Eastgate and Westgate.	
Arabis hirsuta (L.) Scop. Hairy Rock-cress	66
Several plants near Brasside Ponds.	
Symphytum peregrinum Ledeb. Blue Comfrey	68
In a hedge not far from Rothley Lake.	
Carex pendula L. Pendulous Sedge	62, 66
In the woods near Osmotherly, and in several patches in the woods near Cocken and Finchdale.	
Poa chaixii Vill.	67
In a small colony in one of the woods east of Dipton Woods. Introduced but looking naturalized.	
Carex diandra Schrank	66
In a hollow in a bank away from the River Tyne between Eastgate and Westgate; on the north side of the river.	
Schoenus nigricans L. Bog Rush	66, 67
On the edge of Dipton Woods, and near the river at Wylam,	
Zannichellia palustris L. Horned Pondweed	66
In the fish pond near E. Rainton, in the brick pond near Birtley and in the quarry at Aycliffe.	
Bromus erectus Huds. Upright Brome	66
Collected at Qarrington Hill, Sherburn Hill, Elemore, Hare and Hounds, Pittington and Cornforth.	
Desmazeria rigida (L.) Tutin Hard Poa	66
Plentiful in the limestone quarries at Fulwell, also found on Widdy Bank Fell.	
Salix phylicifolia L. Tea-leaved Willow	66
Near the quarry at the top of the Slit Wood in Weardale, there are some tank like structures in which, with others, grow examples of this willow.	
Bryonia dioica Jacq. White Bryony	66
The colony of these species known to exist down Lamesley Lane for 180 years is still there in spite of the enormous changes brought about by the construction of the new railway sidings.	
Phleum nodosum L. Cat's Tail	66
On the shingle, and amongst short grass, along the Wear between Eastgate and Westgate.	
Campanula latifolia L. Giant Bellflower	66
Plants bearing white flowers were found near the Lamb Bridge, Lambton Pk.	
Oenothera ammophila Focke Evening Primrose	66
Sparingly in the Elemore Woods.	
Asplenium viride Hudson Green Spleenwort	66
Abundant in a kind of cave near the Swinhope Burn in Weardale.—J.W.H.H.	
Gentianella amarella (L.) Borner <i>sensu lato</i>	67, 68, 70
By railway and old lime quarry, 1m. NNW. of Cambo (67). E. Bank of Irthing between Butterburn and Tudhups Holm (67). Abundant along Tarn Beck above Paddaburn (67 & 70). The Snook on Holy Island (68).	
Gentianella campestris (L.) Borner	67, 68
E. bank of Irthing between Butterburn and Tudhups Holm (67). By the Butter Burn at Gowk Banks (70). By a tributary of the Irthing near Wileysike House. (70)	
Plantago maritima L. Sea Plantain	67
Roadside on Ingoe Moor. By the track S. of Buck Shaw (Nunriding).	
Zannichellia palustris L. Horned Pondweed	67
Near the mouth of the Chevington Burn.	

Melilotis alba Medic	67
Roadside near Tongues in the Ingoe area.	
Senecio erucifolius L. Hoary Ragwort	67
Roadside near Chevington.	
Scirpus maritimus L. Sea Club-rush	67
Near mouth of the Chevington Burn.	
Ononis spinosa L.	67, 68
Near the mouth of the Chevington Burn (67). Ross Links (68).	
Scirpus sylvaticus L.	67, 68
W. bank of N. Tyne S. of Chollerford Bridge (67). E. bank of N. Tyne opposite Wark (67). Blackheddon Burn near Robsheugh (67). Stream near Easington Gfrange, N.E. of Belford (68). N. Bank of Till, E. of Weetwood Bridge (68). N. bank of Coquet at Felton (68).	
Juniperus communis L. Juniper	67, 68
Glendue Burn, W. of Lambley-Slaggyford road (67). By the stream both above and below Hepple Whitefield (67). Basaltic crags near Swinhoe Lakes and near Kyloe (68).	
Myrica gale L. Bog Myrtle, Sweet Gale	67, 68
Around Linshiels Lake (67). By the Coal Burn, near Hetton North Farm (68).	
Epipactis helleborine (L.) Crantz Broad Helleborine	66
In the Team Valley this orchid has previously been recorded from the Quarry Woods, Birtley only. Now it has been found in the Beamisn Woods and in the woods near the Riding Farm; in both cases along the Team.—G.A. & M. Swan	
CECIDA—GALLS	
Eriophyes padi Nal.	67
Common on bird-cherry at Pigdon, producing small red horn-like protuberances on the upper sides of the leaves.	
E. gracilis Nal.	67
Very local and only noted recently on raspberry near Staward.	
E. goniothorax Nal.	66, 67
Common enough in the Team Valley and at Staward.	
E. laevis Nal.	67
On alder at Pigdon—J.W.H.H.	
Euura amerinae L.	66
Quite common on <i>Salix pentandra</i> wherever that plant grows.	
Pontania viminalis L.	66, 67, 68
Quite common in the two counties wherever <i>S. purpurea</i> and the hybrid <i>S. rubra</i> grow.	
P. pedunculi Hart.	66, 67, 68
In the Team Valley on <i>S. aurita</i> and <i>S. caprea</i> , (66), at Blanchland and Staward (67) on <i>S. caprea</i> , at Alwinton (68) on <i>S. aurita</i> .	
P. proxima Lep.	66, 67, 68
Everywhere common on <i>S. fragilis</i> , <i>S. alba</i> , and <i>S. triandra</i> .	
P. bridgmann Cam.	66
Widespread but not very plentiful; found on Salices of the Caprea group. It is quite possible that this sawfly frequents <i>S. phlycticfolia</i> in Upper Weardale.	
Rhabdophaga pseudococcus Rubs.	66
This very strange gall midge occurs on <i>Salix caprea</i> along the River Team.	
Contarinia loti De Geer	68
Plentiful on Bird's Foot Trefoil on Holy Island.	
Harmandia petioli Kieff.	66
In a lane west of Cornsay on aspen.	
Contarinia filiarum Kieff	66
Common enough on Hme in Castle Eden Dene.	
Oligotrophus annulipes Hartig	66
On beech in Cocken Woods.	
Dasyneura similis F. Loew.	66
On <i>Veronica officinalis</i> in Cocken Woods but rare.—J.W.H.H.	