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THE VASCULUM

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THE VASCULUM

The Vasculum is a quarterly journal concerned with the Natural History of North-East England. Founded in 1915 as a privately-published concern, since 1942 it has been the published organ of the Northern Naturalists' Union. Any contribution on the Flora, Fauna and Geology of Northumberland and Durham will be considered for inclusion. Short notes as well as longer articles and simple records all fall within the scope of the journal. Space is also available for secretaries of local societies to record their transactions and announce future meetings.

For preferred style, and particularly for the method of citing references, will contributors please refer to previous issues. At least a four-figure grid reference should be supplied when referring to sites.

Contributions are accepted on paper, computer disc, or e-mail: the address for contributions is given on the front cover of this issue.

THE NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Northern Naturalists' Union (NNU) was founded in 1924 to promote co-operation between natural history societies, and to collect and collate local records. Membership currently stands at around 200.

The NNU publishes *The Vasculum*, and several past publications included a series of *Transactions* published between 1931 and 1953 and three separately published supplements to *The Vasculum: Sources of Information on the Natural History of County Durham* (1972) and parts I and II of T.C. Dunn & J.D. Parrack's *The Moths and Butterflies of Northumberland and Durham* (1986 & 1992).

The NNU organises a series of field meetings each year, and arranges a speaker for an Annual Invited Lecture, hosted by one of the constituent societies in November. An Annual General Meeting of the NNU is held in March, and is addressed by a guest speaker.

The field meetings serve a dual purpose. First, the informal exchange of knowledge between members and their guests, and secondly the recording of the flora and fauna of the sites visited. Lists of the species seen during field meetings are published in *The Vasculum*. Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due on 1st January. Subscriptions are £7.00 for individuals, £9.00 for societies/libraries and should be sent to
Northern Naturalists' Union, C/o Office Administrator, Durham Wildlife Trust, Rainton Meadows, Chilton Moor, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 6PU

THE VASCULUM

Vol. 90, No 1 March 2005

Subscription Reminder

Subscriptions were due on 1st January. Many thanks to those that have paid. Subscriptions are £7.00 for individuals, £9.00 for societies/libraries and should be sent to-

Northern Naturalists' Union, C/o Office Administrator, Durham Wildlife Trust, Rainton Meadows, Chilton Moor, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 6PU

81st Annual General Meeting

This will take place at Rainton Meadows Visitor Centre on Saturday 23rd April at 2.30 pm by kind permission of Durham Wildlife Trust. Tea and biscuits will follow. There will be space for members photographs and exhibits.

Agenda

1. Presidents welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of 80th Genereal meeting
4. Matters arising
5. Secretary's Report
6. Financial Report
7. Editors Report
8. Field Secretary's Report
9. 2005 Meetings
10. Election of Officers

Fungi in Northumberland: further records and notes

Hewett A. Ellis and Christine C. Ellis, 16, Southlands, Tynemouth, North Shields, NE30 2QS

The following records and notes document some uncommon species of fungi, most of which we have encountered for the first time in Northumberland during 2004 and early 2005. We have identified each species on the basis of the macro- and microscopic appearances.

ASCOMYCOTINA

Daldinia vernicosa (Schweinertz) Cesati & de Notaris **(Xylariaceae)**

Three locations:

(i) Several on burnt branches of Gorse *Ulex europaeus* L. Havannah Reserve, Hazlerigg VC67; NZ 216 717. 30.i.2005.

(ii) Several on scorched and burnt branches of Gorse Holywell Dene, Old Hartley VC67; NZ 337 759. 31.i.2005.

(iii) Several on the branches of two burnt Gorse bushes, waste land edge of Hadrian Park Estate, Wallsend VC67; NZ 306 685. 13.iii.2005.

This is the first time we have seen *D. vernicosa* in Northumberland. There is a record by Gordon Simpson for County Durham (VC66) (quoted by A.Legg, NEFSG Newsletter No.15, 1999).

Peziza ampliata Persoon:Fries **(Pezizaceae)**

Two locations:

(i) Several growing on a pile of wood-chippings in Holy Saviours Churchyard, Tynemouth VC67; NZ 364 697. 29.1.2004.

(ii) About a dozen growing on wood-chippings and leaf litter in Preston Cemetery, North Shields VC67, NZ 342 694. II.i.2005.

P. ampliata is an uncommon species (Jordan,1995) and is not included in the list of the nine species of *Peziza* most likely to be encountered in Britain (Spooner,2001). There is a record for County Durham (VC66) in Slit Wood Westgate, Weardale, where *P. ampliata* was found on a pile of wood chips and rotting humus during a NEFSG Foray, 24.vii.2004 (A.Legg, NEFSG Newsletter No.34, 2004).

Encoelia furfuracea (Roth:Fries) Karsten **(Leotiaceae)**

Several growing on moribund stems of Hazel *Corylus avellana* L. beside River Blyth between Attlee Park and Humford Mill, Bedlington VC67; NZ 265 809. 24.i.2004. Fresh bodies appeared 26.xi.2004.

The initial collection was confirmed by A.Legg.

This winter species is uncommon in the north and there are no previous records for Northumberland to our knowledge. It is commoner in Southern England (Weightman,2000). *E. furfuracea* has been recorded in County Durham by Andy McLay on *Alnus* at the Low Barns Reserve, Witton-le-Wear, 6.xi.1999 (NEFSG Newsletter No. 15, 1999).

BASIDIOMYCOTINA

Clavaria fumosa Fries **(Clavariaceae)**
Two records:

(i) Several groups in grass, clifftop. Hartley Bay, Old Hartley VC67, NZ 343 760. 2.x.2000 (Ellis & Ellis,2003).

(ii) Three large clusters growing amongst mossy grass and bracken, beside River Blyth, Plessey Woods, Stannington Vale VC67; NZ 232 794. 28.viii.2004.

C. fumosa is uncommon in the North-east and we know of only one recent additional record; Gordon Simpson found it in Kielder Churchyard VC67; 5.xi.2004. It was found in Darlington West Cemetery, County Durham by Alan Legg in September 1998 and is said to be "not uncommon" in grassland in Yorkshire (Bramley, 1985).

Macrotyphula fistulosa (Fries) Petersen **(Typhulaceae)**
[= *Clavariadelphus fistulosus* (Fries) Corner]
Young fruiting bodies growing singly and in multiple tufts through the bark of fallen twigs caught in the base of a Silver Birch *Betula pendula* Roth at the Havannah Nature Reserve, Hazlerigg VC67; NZ 219 718. 26.x.2004.
M. fistulosa is uncommon. We know of only one additional record for Northumberland; Gordon Simpson found it in Castle Wood, Kielder Forest VC67; 3.x.2004. We subsequently saw mature larger fruiting bodies of *M. fistulosa* on twigs of Hazel *Coryllus avellana* L. during a NEFSG Foray in Norman's Riding Wood, Winlaton, County Durham on 6.xi.2004.

Ramaria flaccida (Fries) Ricken **(Ramariaceae)**
Several clumps of coralliform fruiting bodies growing amongst wood chippings and leaf litter under hedge of recently trimmed Willows *Salix* sp.. Beach Road, Tynemouth VC67; NZ 356 701. 23.viii.2004.
Our identification confirmed by Alan Legg. *R. flaccida* is uncommon and we do not know of any other records for either Northumberland or County Durham. Alan Legg subsequently sent to us a photograph dated 27.ix.2004, of clumps of *R. flaccida* growing on humus at Scarness, Bassenthwaite, Cumbria (VC70) and there is also a record for North-east Yorkshire (VC62) (Bramley,1985).

Schizophyllum commune Fries **(Schizophyllaceae)**
Several dozens of the "split-gill-fungus" growing in rows in the longitudinal cracks in the bark of a fallen mature Ash *Fraxinus excelsior* L. near Bedlington bridge, Attlee Park, Bedlington VC67; NZ 267 814. 24.i.2004.
This appears to be the first record for Northumberland and is of interest in that the fungus was growing on a "natural" substrate. Gordon Simpson later found *S. commune* growing on silage bales at Donkleywood, Kielder Forest near Falstone VC67, 20.ix.2004. A few fresh fruiting bodies appeared again at the Bedlington site 16.i.2005.

S. commune was considered to be a distinct rarity in Britain until the great storm of 1987; then, in Southern England, it became common on the numerous fallen trees, until about 1990. Since then *S. commune* has been reported widely from Devon, Kent, Yorkshire and Scotland on silage bales, growing out through tears in the plastic coverings (Weightman,2002). Alan Legg (NEFSG Newsletter No28, 2003) reported finding his first ever personally recorded *S. commune* growing on cement-filled bamboo posts at a garden centre in North-west Yorkshire in October 2002. In County Durham John Walton found the fungus growing from a slit in a full plastic silage bag at Stodhoe Farm, Middleton-St-George near Darlington in January 2003. Legg (1996) refers to an old Darlington record of J.F. Nowers, who noted *S. commune* growing at the end of a cask full of beer at Haughton Road Brewery in August 1927.

Hygrocybe calyptriformis (Berkeley & Broome) Fayod **(Hygrophoraceae)**
Seven "Pink-Meadow-Cap"' growing on a riverside bank amongst damp moss beneath Sycamore *Acer pseudoplatanus* L. downstream of the rail viaduct Plessey Woods, Stannington Vale VC67; NZ 227 792. 28.viii.2004.
This is the only occasion we have seen the species. The Red Data Book for Northumberland includes only one Northumberland record at Bolam Lake and *H. calyptriformis* is classified as rare in the county (Beakes, 1998). We know of a further record by Gordon Simpson for Castle Wood, Kielder Forest VC67; 7.x.2001. In County Durham *H. calyptriformis* was recorded by Alan Legg in Darlington West Cemetery, 28.ix.1998.
H. calyptriformis is included in the Provisional Red Data List of British Fungi (Ing,1992), where it is coded as a vulnerable species likely to be endangered in the near future. However, recent surveys organised by Plantlife in partnership with the British Mycological Society indicate that the species might be commoner and more widespread in Britain than has been realised in the past (Watkins,1999; Holden,2000; Evans,2002 & 2003).

Panellus serotinus (Schrader:Fries) Kühner **(Tricholomataceae)**
Three records:

(i) Several growing on fallen Willow *Salix* sp., Gosforth Park, Newcastle-upon-Tyne VC67; NZ252 704. 6.xii.1997.

(ii) Several growing on log beside River Blyth, Bedlington Country Park, Bedlington VC67; NZ 26 80. 3.i.2000.

(iii) Many clusters on trunks of several dead standing Alder *Alnus* sp., Havannah Nature Reserve, Hazlerigg VC 67; NZ 228 717. 30.i.2005.

In addition, in County Durham we saw *P. serotinus* during the course of an informal foray at Low Barns Nature Reserve, Witton-le-Wear VC66 following the NEFSG AGM 8.xi.1997; and the species has been recorded in Darlington West Cemetery by Alan Legg. *P. serotinus* is regarded by some (Jordan, 1995) as infrequent or rare, but is probably not uncommon if sought during winter between October and February.

Pluteus romelli (Britzelmayr) Saccardo **(Pluteaceae)**
[=*Pluteus lutescens* (Fries) Bresadola]
Two fungi growing in short grass in Preston Cemetery, North Shields VC67; NZ 345 692. 2.xi.2004.
This is the only occasion we have seen *P. romelli* in Northumberland and we do not know of any additional records for the county. In County Durham *P. romelli* has been recorded by Alan Legg in Darlington West Cemetery 4.ix.l998 and in Castle Eden Dene 16.x.1999. It was also recorded during a NEFSG foray to Hardwick Hall near Sedgefield VC66. 22.vii.2000.

Acknowledgements

We wish to thank Alan Legg for help with some of the determinations We are indebted to Members of the North Eastern Fungus Study Group who have contributed to the regional record database, and to Babs Walton for retrieving the relevant data on our behalf.

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Sowerbyella radiculata (Sow.:Fr.) Nannf. - a rare cup-fungus found in Darlington

AIan W. Legg, 36 Carleton Drive. Darlington DL3 9QP

A small group of the terricolous discomycete, *Sowerbyella radiculata*, was found in litter of *Cupressus* in Darlington West Cemetery (VC66) on 27th November 2004. A photograph was taken and material of the collection dried and sent to Dr. B.M. Spooner at the Kew Herbarium.

S. radiculata was first described by the celebrated English naturalist and illustrator, James Sowerby (1757-1822). Sowerby's epithet *radiculata* was later accepted by Fries and the fungus eventually placed in the new genus *Sowerbyella* by Nannfeldt in 1938. It has also been called *Pseudotis radiculata* by Boudier. Otherwise its synonymy is straightforward.

S. radiculata is considered rare in Britain (Ing, 1992) and, although there are currently 60 records on the national database, a high percentage of these are probably duplicates. It is here newly recorded for VC66 and there are no known records for Northumberland. From Yorkshire, 1907 material in the herbarium of Charles Crossland (Bramley, 1985) has been redetermined as *Otidea alutacea.* a much more common discomycete with which other early British collections are said to have been confused. Only two other Yorkshire collections are known. One was made in Clapham Woods (VC64) in 1975 by the distinguished discomycete specialist. M.C. Clark. The other is from VC61 in 1992 from "needle litter" but no further details are known.

It is not easy to form a full picture of European distribution but the fungus seems generally at least scarce in north-western Europe. The Dutch writer, Gerrit Keiser describes it as a rare red data list species (Keiser, 1997). In Scandinavia the fungus is found occasionally in Denmark but is rare in Norway and Sweden (Hansen & Knudsen, 2000).

Sowerbyella radiculata grows amongst debris of coniferous trees, especially Cypresses. Superficially it resembles a *Peziza* species with flattened cups from two to six centimetres in diameter. The disc is greenish ochre and the outer surface paler and downy. The "root" varies in length according to the depth of needle-litter but seems rarely to measure more than a centimetre or two. It is covered in short but dense white hairs encrusted with debris. It is said to be found throughout the autumn but seems to be generally a late-fruiting species. An acceptable photograph (Jordan, 1995 p.42), taken in Westonbirt Arboretum, Glos., appears to show apothecia in late autumn light with litter of *Cupressus* or *Chamaecyparis.*

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Erratum

Vasculum volume **85** No. 2 page 19 Liverworts. *Cephalozea pleniceps* was redetermined as *C. connivens* by D. Long.

Notes and Records

Sison amomum (Stone parsley) On ballast at edge of footpath. Blaydon Railway Crossings 26th June 2000. Still there in 2004 despite being sprayed by (presumably Local Authority). Not reported in VC 66 since 1805 by Winch

Doug McCutcheon

Butterfly Conservation Workshops In Northern England 2005

The following events have been organized by Butterfly Conservation's Northern England Regional Office in collaboration with partner organizations. These events are free. Please bring strong, waterproof footwear and clothing, plus a packed lunch.

For more information or to book a place on a workshop please contact:
Sam Ellis, Butterfly Conservation, 38 High Street South, Langley Moor,
Durham, DH7 8JW
Tel: 0870 7706148 or 0191 3789216
Email: sellis@butterfly-conservation.org
Website: www.butterfly-conservation.org.uk

THURSDAY 28th APRIL 2005: CUMBRIA AND LANCASHIRE HABITAT CONDITION MONITORING TRAINING DAY
Meet 10.30am, in the car park at Warton Crag (SD 492724), on the Warton to Silverdale road.

The event is organized by the High Brown Fritillary Action Group and is open to anyone interested. Butterfly Conservation has developed quick and easy methods of monitoring habitat condition for rare butterfly species. This workshop principally offers training on habitat condition assessment for the High Brown and Pearl-bordered Fritillaries, although methods for other species (e.g. Dingy Skipper, Duke of Burgundy) will also be covered.

SUNDAY 22nd MAY 2005: CUMBRIA AND LANCASHIRE DUKE OF BURGUNDY SEARCH DAY
Meet at 9.30am, The Barn, Gait Barrows NNR (SD 483775), near Silverdale.

This event is organized by the High Brown Fritillary Action Group and is a follow up of the search day in 2004. After a brief re-examination of the butterfly and its habitat at Gait Barrows, participants will join a survey of all occupied sites in the Morecambe Bay area. A reporting back session will be held at Gait Barrows late afternoon.

The event is weather dependent, if in doubt please phone Rob Petley-Jones (01539 735526) between 8.30 and 9.00am.

SATURDAY 4th JUNE 2005: CHESHIRE BUTTERFLY RECORDING AND TRANSECT WORKSHOP
Meet at 10.30am, Goostrey Village Hall, Main Road, Goostrey, Crewe (SJ 778700).

A joint event with Cheshire Wildlife Trust. A practical workshop for those new to butterfly recording. Designed to help you improve your identification skills of common butterflies, their habitats and important foodplants. Includes an introductory indoor session and a visit to a local site to practice field skills, learn how to record and undertake transect monitoring.

FRIDAY 1st JULY 2005: COUNTY DURHAM BUTTERFLY AND MOTH RECORDING AND TRANSECT WORKSHOP
Meet at 10.00am, Oakerside Community Centre, near main entrance Castle Eden Dene Nature Reserve, Peterlee (NZ 427395).

A joint event with Durham Heritage Coast and the Magical Meadows Project. A practical workshop for those new to butterfly recording. Designed to help you improve your identification skills of common butterflies, as well as the rare Northern Brown Argus, butterfly habitats and important foodplants. Includes an introductory indoor session and a visit to a local site to practice field skills, learn how to record and undertake transect monitoring.

FRIDAY 8th JULY 2005: CUMBRIA ARGENT AND SABLE LARVAL WORKSHOP
Meet at 10.30am, Meathop Moss, Cumbria Wildlife Trust reserve, near Witherslack. Park at SD 447821.

A joint event with Cumbria Wildlife Trust. The Argent and Sable is a scarce moth which breeds on birch seedlings and low regrowth as well as Bog-myrtle. The only recent Cumbria records are from Meathop Moss. This workshop will be to train participants how to search for Argent and Sable larvae and find out which foodplant is utilized on Meathop Moss.

SATURDAY 9th JULY 2005: CUMBRIA AND LANCASHIRE HIGH BROWN FRITILLARY TIMED COUNT SURVEY
Meet at 9.30am, at St Johns Church (SD 488889), off Brigsteer Road, near Brigsteer, Kendal.

The event is organized by the High Brown Fritillary Action Group and is open to anyone interested. Over 50% of the High Brown Fritillary sites around Morecambe Bay are monitored by regular transects, but information on the status of the butterfly at the other sites is sketchy. After a brief re-examination of the butterfly, its identification, habitat and the timed count method on Helsington Barrows, participants will join a survey of all non-transect sites.

This event is weather dependent, if in doubt please phone Sam Ellis (07709 904230) between 8.30 and 9.00am. In the event of cancellation, the survey will be moved to Sunday 10th July, with the same arrangements as above.

WEDNESDAY 13th JULY 2005: YORKSHIRE DARK BORDERED BEAUTY SEARCH DAY

Meet at 10.00am in the car park, adjacent the cattle grid on the Strensall to Flaxton road, 1.5 miles east of the entrance to Queen Elizabeth's Barracks (SE 648612)

The Dark Bordered Beauty is one of Britain's rarest moths, being confined to just four or five known sites, including Strensall Common, near York. This is a joint event with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Defence Estates and follows the successful 2004 workshop. We will be conducting further adult searches to find new localities on the common.

In addition several Dingy Skipper workshops are being organized during May in North East England. For further details please contact Dave Wainwright at the Regional Office.

Field Meetings-Cleveland Naturalists Field Club 2005

Wednesday, May 2nd, 10.30am, Ashberry Farm, leaders Maurice Hallam and Vincent Jones ☎ 01642 722814

GR SE571844. Meet at Ashberry Farm. Walter Fenwick, the owner, has kindly given us permission to park there. The main focus of the meeting is to listen to birdsong with Maurice's expert guidance. There will be a sustained walk, taken at a slow pace, but there will be some short climbs.

Sunday, May 8th, 10.30am, Wensleydale, leaders Joan Bradbury and Norma Pagdin ☎ 01429 268416

GR SD988898. Meet at the small nature reserve on the minor road connecting Redmire to Carperby to Askrigg. The reserve is 1.5 miles west of Carperby. After a brief look round we shall go on to Hardraw for a walk of about 5 miles, which involves some short but steep climbing. The GR for Hardraw is SD867913.

Wednesday, 11th May, 6:30 pm, Kildale, leader Alan Bunn ☎ 01287 633404

GR NZ604099. Meet on the corner at the entrance to Mill Bank Wood, near Kildale. There is a sharp incline half way, but members who wish may return, at this point, to the cars by the original route.

Sunday, 22nd May, 10:30 am, Fadmoor, leader Vic Fairbrother ☎ 01287 633744

GR SE669885. Park on the road verge at the west end of Green Lane near Fadmoor. The walk will be easy, about 6 miles in length, and will include some gentle climbing. There will be options for a shorter walk. Car parking for the shorter options will be arranged at the start of the walk, depending upon requirements.

Wednesday, 25th May, 10:30 am, Wheldrake Ings, leader Peter Waterton ☎ 01642 724270

GR SE692434. Meet in the car park, just south east of Wheldrake on Thorganby Road, about 1 mile north of Thorganby. The walk will be easy, on flat ground.

Wednesday, 1st June, 6:30 pm, Flatts Lane, leader Jack Marshall ☎ 01642 315365

GR NZ552168. Meet in the Country Park car park (off Flatts Lane, Normanby). There will be a ramble round the park, with some gentle climbs.

Saturday, 11th June, 10:30 am, Baldersdale, leader Anne Pritchard ☎ 01287 632981
GR NY967193. Park at the south east end of Hury Reservoir in Baldersdale. We shall walk to Hannah's meadow (a Durham Wild Life Trust reserve) along the north shore and return on the south side of the reservoir. The walk will be about 6 miles, but there will be opportunities for a longer walk.

Wednesday, 15th June, 6:30 pm, Scaling Dam, leader David Barlow ☎ 01287 634679
GR NZ740126. Meet in the car park at the western end of Scaling Dam. It may be useful to bring binoculars and wellingtons.

Saturday, 18th June, 10:30 am, Sandsend, leader John Blackburn ☎ 01642 583815
GR NZ861129. This is the YNU VC 62 meeting. Meet in the car park at the northern end of Sandsend village.

Sunday, 26th June, 10:30 am, Muker, leader Neil Baker ☎ 01325 361547
GR SD911978. Meet in Muker village car park. We will take a circular walk to Keld, which will involve some climbing. Individual low level options are available.

Sunday, 3rd July, 10:30 am, Levisham, leader Eric Gendle ☎ 01642 281235
GR SE833905. Park in Levisham village street. A circular walk of about 7 miles, which will involve some gentle climbing. There will be some shorter options available. Car parking for the shorter options will be arranged at the start of the walk, depending upon requirements.

Wednesday, 6th July, 6:30 pm, Egglescliffe, leader Ian Lawrence ☎ 01642 281380
GR NZ423132. Meet by the village green at Egglescliffe. There should be ample parking nearby. An easy evening walk.

Sunday, 10th July, 10:30 am, Ripon, leader Judy Dinwiddie ☎ 01845 537340
GR SE301750. Meet in the anglers' car park at Middle Park Farm. Turn off the A1608 at Ripon Golf Club. A tarmac lane leads to the car park. We have been given permission to visit the MOD Training Area. The ground is mainly boggy, so wellingtons may be advisable. Nearby is the area recently acquired by YWT where there is a large stand of *Orobanche reticulata* (Thistle Broomrape). It is hoped to visit this site.

Wednesday, 13th July, 10:30 am, Hutton-le-Hole, leader Colin Chatto ☎ 01642 599616
GR SE705901. Meet in the car park at Hutton-le-Hole at the north end of the village. The walk will be about 7 miles and will involve some climbing.

Wednesday, 20th July, 6:30 pm, Coatham Marsh, leader Andrew Ferguson ☎ 01642 311831
GR NZ586250. Meet in the Coatham Marsh car park just off Tod Point Road, Warrenby. We will gently stroll around one of the premier reserves of the Tees Valley Wildlife Trust.

Sunday, 31st July, 10:30 am, Hart, leader Vincent Jones ☎ 01642 722814
GR NZ470351. Meet in the car park in Hart village. The car park is between the primary school and the old Saxon church, and can be approached via Butts Lane, which runs north from the main street near the post office. The easy walk will include the old Hart-Haswell railway, a little woodland and field footpaths. It will be about 6 miles, but we can walk as far north along the old railway as members wish.

Wednesday, 3rd August, 2:00 pm, Acklam, leader Ian Lawrence ☎ 01642 281380
Meet in the car park at Natures World for a walk round the grounds.

Wednesday, 10th August, 10:30 am, Gilling East, leader Eric Gendle ☎ 01642 281235
GR SE615768. Park in the village street at Gilling East, which is 5 miles south of Helmsley. A circular walk of about 6 miles, with a little gentle climbing. This repeats a walk previously done by the CNFC in the spring of 2000.

Sunday, 21st August, 10:30 am, Ellerburn Bank, leader Alick Hunter ☎ 01751 477708
GR SE847853. Take the road to Dalby Forest Park from Thornton-le-Dale and park near Pexton Moor Farm. We will visit the Ellerburn Bank Nature Reserve and then walk along Thornton Dale. A circular walk of not more than 5 miles.

Wednesday, 7th September, 1:00 pm, Lion Inn, Blakey Ridge, leader Colin Chatto ☎ 01642 599616
GR SE679997. Meet in the car park of the Lion Inn, Blakey Ridge. The walk is about 5 miles and will involve some climbing. It may be advisable to bring a drink and a snack.

Saturday, 24th September, 10:30 am, Battersby, leader Tom Kirby, ☎ 01642 722814 (Vincent Jones)
GR NZ598077. Meet at the sharp bend at the eastern end of Battersby (popularly known as Old Battersby). Parking is limited by the road verge here, but it is possible to park on the grass on the other side of the stream. Vincent will be on hand to assist with any parking problems. This is a fungus foray, led by an expert. It will be a slow walk, but it is likely there will be some climbing.

Darlington and Teesdale Naturalists' Field Club-Field Meetings 2005

Participants normally meet at Darlington Arts Centre at the time indicated before travelling on.

DATE	ACTIVITY	TIME	LEADER MILES
April			
April 16 Sat	Walk around Eggleston Abbey	1:3 0 pm	E.Elliott 3M cars
May 1 Sun	Bank holiday on Monday	No outing	
May 3 Tues	Gainford Great Wood	6:3 0 pm	S Owens 3M cars
May 7 Sat	Black grouse lek and Upper Tees Dale	6:0 0 am	C&G Evans 5M cars
May 10 Tues	Croft circular	7:0 0 pm	M Port 2M cars
May 15 Sun	Coatham Marsh and South Gare	9:3 0 am	J.Turner 4M cars
May 17 Tues	Brinkburn Pond & Black Path	7:0 0 pm	R Bishop 2M cars
May 21 Sat	Brignall Banks	10:0 0 am	J&B Walton 3M cars
May 24 Tues	Catkill Lane Sadberg	7:0 0 pm	S. Keeney 2M cars
May 29 Sun	Bank holiday on Monday	No outing	
May 31 Tues	Indoor meeting Arts Centre	7:30 pm	
June 4 Sat	St Abbs Head	7:3 0 am	D Griss 3M coach
June 7 Tues	Low Conniscliffe	7:0 0 pm	J Dyke 3 M cars
June 12 Sun	Low Barnes	10:0 0 am	C&G Evans 3M cars
June 14 Tues	Brafferton	7:0 0 pm	E. Elliott 3M cars
June 18 Sat	Common Dale	10:3 0 am	J.Taylor & E Elliott 4M cars
June 21 Tues	Skerningham Woodland	7:0 0 pm	B. Hetherington 2M cars
June 26 Sun	Hay Meadows in Teesdale	9:3 0 am	C&G Evans 3M cars
June 28 Tues	Indoor meeting Arts Centre	7:30 pm	

July 2 Sat	Gunnerside Gill	9:3 0 am	J.Turner 5M cars
July 5 Tues	Bolam Lanes	7:0 0 pm	K & V Chapman 3M cars
July 10 Sun	Thrislington and Bishop Middleham	9:3 0 am	J. Turner 4M cars
July 12 Tues	Hell Kettles	7:0 0 pm	C&G Evans 1M cars
July 17 Sun	Durham Heritage Coast	9:30am	E Elliott 3M cars
July 19 Tues	Whinnies	2:0 0 pm	B Denham 2M cars
July 24 Sun	Green Lane Barnard Castle	1:3 0 pm	J Dyke 3M cars
July 26 Tues	Indoor meeting Arts Centre	7:30 pm	
July 30 Sat	Smardale	9:3 0 am	B.Denham 3M cars
Sept 4 Sun	Cow Green & Bowlees	10:0 0 am	C. Evans 5M cars
Sept 6 Tues	Firthmoor nature reserve & ponds	2:0 0 pm	J.Harding 2M cars
Sept 10 Sat	Alnwick Water Gardens	9:0 0 am	B Denham 2M coach
Sept 13 Tues	South Park tour & Bat watch	7:0 0 pm	F. Traice 1M cars
Sept 18 Sun	Saltburn sea shore	9:0 0 am	C. Sobkowiak 2M cars
Sept 20 Tues	Rockwell Pasture & Skerne restoration	2:0 0 pm	J.Turner 2M cars
Sept 24 Sat	Tees Mouth migration watch	9:0 0 am	D.Griss 3M cars
Sept 27 Tues	Indoor meeting Arts Centre	7:30 pm	


NORTHERN · NATURALISTS · UNION
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THE VASCULUM

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Table of Contents

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THE VASCULUM

The Vasculum is a quarterly journal concerned with the Natural History of North-East England. Founded in 1915 as a privately-published concern, since 1942 it has been the published organ of the Northern Naturalists' Union. Any contribution on the Flora, Fauna and Geology of Northumberland and Durham will be considered for inclusion. Short notes as well as longer articles and simple records all fall within the scope of the journal. Space is also available for secretaries of local societies to record their transactions and announce future meetings.

For preferred style, and particularly for the method of citing references, will contributors please refer to previous issues. At least a four-figure grid reference should be supplied when referring to sites.

Contributions are accepted on paper, computer disc, or e-mail: the address for contributions is given on the front cover of this issue.

THE NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Northern Naturalists' Union (NNU) was founded in 1924 to promote co-operation between natural history societies, and to collect and collate local records. Membership currently stands at around 200.

The NNU publishes *The Vasculum*, and several past publications included a series of *Transactions* published between 1931 and 1953 and three separately published supplements to *The Vasculum: Sources of Information on the Natural History of County Durham* (1972) and parts I and II of T.C. Dunn & J.D. Parrack's *The Moths and Butterflies of Northumberland and Durham* (1986 & 1992).

The NNU organises a series of field meetings each year, and arranges a speaker for an Annual Invited Lecture, hosted by one of the constituent societies in November. An Annual General Meeting of the NNU is held in March, and is addressed by a guest speaker.

The field meetings serve a dual purpose. First, the informal exchange of knowledge between members and their guests, and secondly the recording of the flora and fauna of the sites visited. Lists of the species seen during field meetings are published in *The Vasculum*. Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due on 1st January. Subscriptions are £7.00 for individuals, £9.00 for societies/libraries and should be sent to
Northern Naturalists' Union, C/o Office Administrator, Durham Wildlife Trust, Rainton Meadows, Chilton Moor, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 6PU

THE VASCULUM

Vol. 90, No 2 June 2005

Subscription Reminder

Subscriptions were due on 1st January. Many thanks to those that have paid. Subscriptions are £7.00 for individuals, £9.00 for societies/libraries and should be sent to-

Northern Naturalists' Union, C/o Office Administrator, Durham Wildlife Trust, Rainton Meadows, Chilton Moor, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 6PU

Field Meetings 2005

July 23	2.00 pm	GR NU 257201	Craster	
Meet in Tourist Information Centre car park (£1.50) at Craster.. Route follows cliff top path south to Howick, then into The Long Walk in wooded Howick Dene (this will be the last year of free public access to this permissive path). 5 miles approx. on good, mostly level footpaths. Habitats include sea cliffs, arable field edges, rock pools, marsh, lake and mixed woodland. Highlights include seabird cliffs (whin sill ledges at Cullernose Point), interesting plants in boggy cliff slumps, greater horsetail and wetland wild flowers, waders, woodland and wetland birds, plus kippers from the smokery in Craster. Also quite good for butterflies and interesting geology (faulted rocks and igneous intrusions in sedimentary rocks). Plenty of good places for a picnic. Good pub in Craster (The Jolly Fisherman), with a beer garden that probably has the best view in Northumberland, over the harbour and northwards to Dunstanburgh Castle. Howick Hall (home of Earl Grey tea) also has outstanding gardens and an excellent tea room in the converted ballroom.				
August 21st	**11.00 am**	GR. NZ 454228	Joint meeting with the Plant Gall Society. Billingham Bottoms.. Ecology Park, Billingham	
September 10th	2.00 pm	GR: NZ227734	Bigwaters -the car park is north off the road between Wideopen and Dinnington at Brunswick Village.	

Notes and Records

On the 17th of April 2005 I found the purple toothwort (*Lathraea clandestina*) in the former gounds of Windlestone Hall (NZ2628) last recorded in the Flora and Vegetation of County Durham in 1971 from the same location. Several plants were just coming into flower parasitising birch (Betula sp.)and possibly Cherry (Prunus sp.)

Terry Coult

On 24th August 2004 I was in Snipes Dene on the Gibside estate at NZ182597. I found a caterpillar resting on a lichen-covered fence. In captivity the caterpillar ate powdery green lichen. After a moult it closely resembled the photo of the red-necked footman illustrated in Caterpillars of the British Isles by Jim Porter. It pupated successfully and was kept in a cool garage over winter. A red-necked footman (*Atolmis rubricollis*) moth has recently emerged, which confirms the original identification. I have given the specimen to Liverpool Museum.

Matthew Wallace.

Speckled Wood (*Pararge aegeria*) in the meadow below Sherburn Hill (in numbers) July 2005.

A. Tiltman

Small Skipper (*Thymelicus sylvestris*). A small colony in a meadow on Esh Hill Top above Langley Park 10th June 2005.
Dingy Skipper (*Erynnis tages*). In good numbers flying with Wall in Bishop Middleham Quarry May 10th 2005.
Humming Bird Hawkmoth (*Macroglossum stellatarum*). One feeding on Red Valerian 2nd June 2005 Shildon. Also on Petunias in Consett 28th June 2005

Michael Mann

Helicella itala (Heath Snail). Large numbers of empty shells were found in a large vegetated hollow in sand dunes between the golf club house and the sea at Hart Warren on 1st March 2005. GR. NZ498359.

Sion Kop Cemetery, Hartlepool-On 5th June 2005 during a Hartlepool Naturalists' meeting, the following were noted- Grey Partridge, *Polyommatus icarus* (Common Blue), the molluscs *Pupilla muscorum, Vallonia excentrica, Cernuella virgata, Candidula intersecta,* and *Helix aspersa*. Amongst the turf were many individuals of the ground beetle *Badister bipustulatus*.

On Tuesday 7th June 2005 at Low Coniscliffe during a meeting of the Darlington and Teesdale Field Naturalists' club *Rhagio tringarius* (Marsh Snipefly) was found amongst vegetation close to the river.

On a Darlington and Teesdale Field Naturalists' Club meeting to Brafferton on 14th June 2005 *Trollius europaeus* (Globeflower) was found at Newton Ketton GR NZ 314207.

The Annulet (*Gnophos obscuratus*)-a single specimen was found at Bishop Middleton quarry GR NZ 332327 on the evening of 9th July 2005. The scarab beetle *Serica brunnea* was also noted.

M. Birtle

Field Meeting Reports 2005

Field Meeting 261 Rowley Station to Hownsgill May 21st 2005 2.00 pm

A small party walked east from the old station to Hownsgill Viaduct along the disused railway. The woods in Hownsgill were also briefly examined. Along the railway the molluscs *Trichia striolata* (Strawberry Snail), *Arianta arbustorum* (Copse Snail) and *Cepaea hortensis* (White Lipped Banded Snail) were noted along with *Anthocharis cardamines* (Orange Tip) eggs and imagos, *Bibio marci* (St Mark Flies), and *Cercopis vulnerata* (Red and Black Froghopper). The margins of the railway held a number of interesting plants-*Alchemilla acutiloba* (Ladies Mantle), Geranium sylvaticum (Wood Cranesbill), *Scrophularia nodosa* (Figwort), *Cardamines pratensis* (Ladies Smock), *Stellaria holostea* (Greater Stitchwort), *Myrrhis odorata* (Sweet Cicely), *Stachys officinalis* (Betony) and *Ajuga reptans* (Bugle). The fungi *Colocybe gambosa* (St George's Mushroom) and *Polyporus betulinus* were also seen. The woods contained many much *Gallium odoratum* (Woodruff) and *Sanicula europaea* (Sanicle). Spotted Flycatchers were observed amongst the woodland from the viaduct. Also from the viaduct it was possible to closely examine galls of *Neuropterus quercusbaccarrum* in the higher parts of the Oak trees. A cuckoo was faintly heard on return to the station.

Field Meeting 262 Eston Moor June 11th 2005 2.00 pm

This meeting was focused on a search for Large Red-belted Clearwing. The results of which are described elsewhere in this issue. In passing the following were also noted- Drosera rotundifolia (Round Leaved Sundew) and *Eriophorum angustifolium (*Common Cottongrass*)* in large numbers, *Coenagrion puella* (Azure Damselfly), *Cercopis vulnerata* (Red and Black Froghopper), the hoverfly *Volucella bombylans, Lasiommata megera (*Wall Brown), the Snipefly *Rhagio scolopaceus*, the ground beetle *Leistus spinibarbis*, the spider *Pisaura mirabilis* and an Endomychid beetle.

Large Red Belted Clearwing moth (*Synanthedon culiciformis*) in Cleveland.

Terry Coult

In an attempt to persuade field workers to search for clearwing moths in the 2005 field season, all historical clearwing records for the North East were collated and published, as suggested initial survey sites (see below).

One such site the Wilton Woods, Lazenby Bank escarpment had historical records for Large Red Belted Clearwing (last record 1987) and initial fieldwork carried out early in 2005 over the Lazenby Bank (NZ5718, NZ5719) and Eston Moor (NZ5617) area found two patches of cut Birch stumps (*Betula sp*), approx. 200 metres apart, which showed the characteristic approx. 3mm diameter

boreholes of the moth caterpillar. On the 23rd of March 2005 a single birch stump was collected from one patch (max. diam. 85mm) and three others (max. diams. 40, 48 and 50mm) from the other patch. All four showed boreholes around the periphery of the cut section of the stump between the wood and the bark with the odd bore hole further out into the cut section of the wood. In total there were 15 boreholes in the cut section of the stumps. The stumps were kept in a controlled situation to see what emerged.

On the 2nd of May 2005, two identical ichneumon flies emerged from the stumps, one of which was sent to Dr Mark Shaw at the National Museum of Scotland who identified it as *Macrocentrus marginator* an ichneumon known to parasitise Large Red Belted Clearwing. On the 5th and 7th of May, respectively, two further ichneumons emerged, both of which Dr Shaw again identified as *M. marginator*.

On the 18th of May two Large Red Belted Clearwings emerged from the stumps and a further single Large Red Belted Clearwing emerged on the 20th of May.

A field visit of the Northern Naturalists Union was organised to visit the Lazenby Bank, Eston Moor locations on the 11th of June 2005. The aim of the visit was to search for Large Red Belted Clearwing using pheromone lures and to check for field sign (boreholes and emerged pupae) on the cut stumps identified earlier in the year. Lack of sunshine precluded success with the pheromone lures but checking of the Birch stumps produced 27 empty pupa cases of Large Red Belted Clearwing and two adult moths found resting on low vegetation. Further examination of the cut section of the Birch stumps showed some very small boreholes with very obvious extruded frass of this seasons caterpillars on three stumps.

Field sign was very easy to find once recognised and it seems likely that the easiest way to find this moth is to systematically search cut stumps in old birch woodland for the characteristic larval boreholes at any time of year. This can be followed up by searches in early June for empty pupae extruded from the boreholes and slightly later in the season for new boreholes with sawdust frass around them.

Clearwing records, Durham and Northumberland

Clearwing species	Common name	Location	Date	Host plant	Recorder	Ref.	Current status
Paranthrene tabaniformis	Dusky clearwing	Birtley NZ2755 Knocked out of a black pop. 2 or 3 miles from Birtley	1931	Black poplar	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 17.4 .p157	Extinct
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Bywell NZ0461	1925	Salix purpurea	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 11.4. p128	Nb

Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Derwent Valley NZ1164	1917	Salix	G.B. Walsh	Vasc. 4.3/4. p94	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Wylam NZ1164	1939	Salix purpurea	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 26.2. p59	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Wylam	1944	Salix purpurea	NNU	Vasc. 29.3. p19	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Allansford NZ2852	1944	Salix purpurea	NNU	Vasc. 29.3. p20	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Chester le Street NZ2850	1948	various Salix sp.	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 34.2. p16	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Wylam NZ1164	1948	Salix nigricans	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 34.2. p16	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Eastgate NY9538	1952	Salix phylicifolia	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 38.2. p15	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Kelloe NZ3436	1952	S. atrocineria	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 38.2. p15	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Wylam NZ1164	1952	Salix viminalis	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 38.2. p15	
Synanthedon formicaeformis	Red tipped clearwing	Waldridge fell NZ2549	1964	Salix aurita, Salix atrocinerea	J.W. Heslop Harrison & E. Hall		
Synanthedon culiciformis	Large red belted clearwing	Lazenby Bank NZ573190	1987		Chris Bentley	Recorder	Nb
Synanthedon culiciformis	Large red belted clearwing	Wilton Wood NZ5919	1985		Ken Smith	Recorder	
Synanthedon culiciformis	Large red belted clearwing	Wilton Wood NZ593197	1986		Ken Smith	Recorder	
Synanthedon tipuliformis	Currant Clearwing	Birtley NZ2755 larval workings, The Avenue	1945	Currant bushes	G. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 30.3. p35	Nb
Synanthedon tipuliformis	Currant Clearwing	Hookergate /High Spen NZ1459	1973		R. Henderson		
Synanthedon tipuliformis	Currant Clearwing	Eaglescliffe NZ4113	2004	Currant bushes	James Duffie	Mapmate database	
Synanthedon flaviventris	Sallow clearwing	Birtley? NZ2755	1933		J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 19.2.	Nb
Sesia apiformis	Hornet clearwing	Birtley NZ2755	1925	Salix caprea	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 12.3. p119	Nb

Sesia apiformis	Hornet clearwing	Lamesley NZ2558	1927	Salix sp. & Black Poplar	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 14.2. p77	
Sesia apiformis	Hornet clearwing	Causey Dene NZ2055 Hag Wood	1962		NNU	Vasc. 4.7. p12	
Sesia apiformis	Hornet clearwing	Bishop Middleham NZ3331	1953	Salix caprea	J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 38.15	
Sesia apiformis	Hornet clearwing	Birtley NZ2755	1953		J.W. Heslop Harrison	Vasc. 38.15	
Sesia apiformis	Hornet clearwing	Birtley NZ2755	1927		G. H. Harrison	Vasc. 14.77	
Nb, Nationally Scarce B, recorded from 31-100 10km squares in GB since 1st Jan. 1980							

Agamic (knopper) galls of Andricus quercuscalicis (Burgsdorf) on Turner's Oak *Quercus X turneri* Willd.

Patricia Wood and Hewett A. Ellis***
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Knopper galls induced by the cynipid *Andricus quercuscalicis* (Burgsdorf), are a familiar sight on the acorn cups of Pedunculated Oak *Quercus robur* L., but little is known concerning their occurrence on oak hybrids. One of us (P.W.) first noted knopper galls on Turner's Oak in the summer of 2002 in Stewart Park Middlesbrough. Turner's Oak *Quercus X turneri* Willd. is a hybrid between *Q. robur* and the Southern European evergreen Holm Oak *Q. ilex* L. raised in the 18th century by Spencer Turner in Essex (Phillips,1978). It is occasionally found in large estate gardens and collections. The acorns are on long peduncles and fall in autumn and the cups have downy bracts. The leaves are stalked and without auricles at the base.

At a subsequent visit to the Park on 25th September 2004, during a Field Meeting of the Cleveland Naturalists, a small collection was made (P.W.) of nine knopper galls found on the ground beneath the Turner's Oak.

Examination of the galls (H.A.E.) revealed them to be somewhat smaller than those usually found on *Q. robur* and several were malformed with stenosis or absence of the usual apical vent (Ellis, 2004). The galls were kept overwinter in an unheated room and two adult *A. quercuscalicis* emerged on 27th February and 17th March 2005, respectively. This corresponded to the time that other *A. quercuscalicis* were emerging from knopper galls kept in the same conditions which had been collected from Q. robur in the autumn of 2004 from two locations in Northumberland (Bedlington Country Park and Havannah Reserve Hazlerigg). Nothing further emerged and the galls were dissected on 17th April 2005. Two galls contained dead adult *A. quercuscalicis* (one in an intact inner gall, the other partly emerged from the inner gall). In a further one there was a

dead *A. quercuscalicis* pupa in the inner gall and in the remaining three the inner gall contained a *A. quercuscalicis* larva. One of these was immature and had died whereas the other two were alive and mature and undergoing delayed diapause. Delayed diapause is well-recognised in a small proportion of knopper galls (Ellis,2005).

There seems to be very little published information concerning the occurrence of knopper galls on oak hybrids and in particular, on Turner's Oak, The only reference of which we are aware is that by Welch (1993), who states "Following a meeting of the British Plant Gall Society at Monks Wood in 1991, Miss E.M. Stephenson.... reported finding a single agamic gall of *A. quercuscalicis* on a hybrid *Q X turneri* at Batsford Park Arboretum, Gloucestershire on 21 August 1989". In a later paper Welch (1995) mentions a Turner's Oak at Bicton Park, Devon with galls of another cynipid *Andricus anthracina*, but he did not find any knopper galls. None of the present galls gave rise to inquilines or parasitoids and the dissections failed to reveal any evidence of their presence.

It would be worthwhile searching for further knopper galls on oak hybrids such as Turner's Oak in any of our regional established parklands.

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The False Morel *Gyromitra esculenta* (Pers.:Fr.)Fr. in Dipton Wood: A new record for Northumberland (VC 67)

Hewett A. Ellis and Christine C, Ellis 16, Southlands, Tynemouth, North Shields, Tyne & Wear, NE30 2QS

On 22nd April 2005, whilst recording Green Hairstreak butterflies in Dipton Wood near Corbridge (Grid Reference: NY 967 606), we found three fruiting bodies of the deadly poisonous fungus *Gyomitra esculenta*. One was small and growing at the edge of a pile of pine wood chippings and two large specimens were found nearby on a bank of sandy soil amongst pine needle litter below Pinus.

The characteristic reddish-brown convoluted brain-like caps and hollowed greyish-white furrowed stems enabled us to make a provisional determination of *G. esculenta*. The cap of the largest specimen measured 100 X 80 X 80 mm overall and the stem was 60mm long and 36mm diameter (total weight:250g). Subsequent microscopy revealed confirmatory features (ellipsoid spores, non-septate with two oily droplets and measuring 23.3 X 12.8 µm on average; paraphyses slightly swollen distally, septate and sometimes branched).

This is the first time we have encountered *G. esculenta* and we do not know of any other Northumberland records. Within County Durham (Vc 66) Gordon Simpson noted the species in Hamsterley Forest and more recently it has been found in the North-west of County Durham by Keith Cunningham in March 1999 at Hunstanworth (see photograph in NEFSG Newsletter No.20, March 2001), and by Clifford Evans in Baybridge Woods in April 2000 (A.Legg, pers. comm. 26 April 2005). In view of the rarity of the species in the North-east and at the suggestion of Alan Legg we sent the small dried specimen to Dr B.M.Spooner at Kew. Dr Spooner subsequently confirmed our identification. It seems that there are collections at Kew from Yorkshire and County Durham but none from Northumberland. In addition there are no Northumberland records for *G. esculenta* on the database held by the British Mycological Society. Our small specimen has been deposited in the Kew Herbarium (Accession Number K(M) 131030.

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THE VASCULUM

ht **The North Country Quarterly of Natural History**

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THE VASCULUM

The Vasculum is a quarterly journal concerned with the Natural History of North-East England. Founded in 1915 as a privately-published concern, since 1942 it has been the published organ of the Northern Naturalists' Union. Any contribution on the Flora, Fauna and Geology of Northumberland and Durham will be considered for inclusion. Short notes as well as longer articles and simple records all fall within the scope of the journal. Space is also available for secretaries of local societies to record their transactions and announce future meetings.

For preferred style, and particularly for the method of citing references, will contributors please refer to previous issues. At least a four-figure grid reference should be supplied when referring to sites.

Contributions are accepted on paper, computer disc, or e-mail: the address for contributions is given on the front cover of this issue.

THE NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Northern Naturalists' Union (NNU) was founded in 1924 to promote co-operation between natural history societies, and to collect and collate local records. Membership currently stands at around 200.

The NNU publishes *The Vasculum*, and several past publications included a series of *Transactions* published between 1931 and 1953 and three separately published supplements to *The Vasculum: Sources of Information on the Natural History of County Durham* (1972) and parts I and II of T.C. Dunn & J.D. Parrack's *The Moths and Butterflies of Northumberland and Durham* (1986 & 1992).

The NNU organises a series of field meetings each year, and arranges a speaker for an Annual Invited Lecture, hosted by one of the constituent societies in November. An Annual General Meeting of the NNU is held in March, and is addressed by a guest speaker.

The field meetings serve a dual purpose. First, the informal exchange of knowledge between members and their guests, and secondly the recording of the flora and fauna of the sites visited. Lists of the species seen during field meetings are published in *The Vasculum*. Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due on 1st January. Subscriptions are £7.00 for individuals, £9.00 for societies/libraries and should be sent to
Northern Naturalists' Union, C/o Office Administrator, Durham Wildlife Trust, Rainton Meadows, Chilton Moor, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 6PU

Unusual occurrences of "pocket plums" in south Durham.

Alan W. Legg. 36 Carleton Drive, Darlington DL3 9QP

Hewett Ellis is has recently drawn our attention (EllIs, 1999a) to the ascomycete, *Taphrina pruni*, the inducer of "pocket plums", sterile fruit-like bodies which replace fruit of *Prunus domestica* and, in this country especially, *Prunus spinosa.* These galls appear earlier in the year than normal fruit and are usually at their best in June. My first encounter with them was on June 11th 2000 when I came across a spectacular display of pocket plums on a row of Blackthorn bushes along a lane to the south of Oadby, Leicestershire (VC55, SP6499). Since then several records have been made in the Darlington area and along the Tees upstream to Barnard Castle, always on *Prunus spinosa.* It looks as though *Taphrina pruni* is undergoing a dramatic expansion similar to that of *T. amentorum* (Ellis, 1999b). Numerous additional records of this gall have recently been made in both Northumberland and Durham by e.g. Steve Robbins and Gordon Simpson.

On May 21st 2005, I was walking in the Hummersknott area of Darlington (NZ262143) and noticed early gall formation replacing incipient fruit of Cherry Plum, *Prunus cerasifera*, in a hedge-back. In previous years recently, galls of *Taphrina pruni* had been noted on nearby bushes of *Prunus spinosa.* I therefore assumed that this fungus had transferred its attention to the related species. On checking the British Fungus Database I found only 95 records of *T. pruni* nationwide (not at all a reliable index of its frequency by the way!). Amongst these, however, were two recent records on *Prunus cerasifera*, from Oxfordshire in 1997 and Suffolk in 2002.

On return from holiday in late June, I checked the Cherry Plum trees and found a number of shrivelled galls still attached to branches though it was apparent that most had fallen off and become inconspicuous on the grassy ground. I later contacted Steve Robbins who sent me a gall he found on *Prunus cerasifera "Pissardii"* in Rossmere Park, Hartlepool (NZ503298) in late July 2005. Although somewhat brown and shrivelled, this gall bore conspicuous traces of a whitish bloom from which it was a simple matter to isolate ripe asci of a *Taphrina* species, presumably *T. pruni.* Steve mentioned in a subsequent letter that he had seen galls aplenty on *Prunus padus* and *P. spinosa* but that the one from P. *cerasifera* was a new record for him.

It is impossible to judge with any certainty because observers are few and records even fewer, but it appears that *Taphrina pruni* may only recently have colonised *P. cerasifera* in England and reached County Durham even more recently. It should be looked for next year on this host in VC 67 and VC 68.

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Ellis, H.A., 1999b Observations on the mycocecidia of female catkins of Alder *Alnus glutinosa* (L.) Gaertner induced by *Taphrina amentorum* (Sedeb.)

Rostrup. a new record for Northumberland (VC67). *The Vasculum* 84(4): 16-25.

Cryptosphaeria lignyota (Fr.) Auersw., a rarely-recorded pyrenomycete, found in Darlington.

Alan W. Legg. 36 Carleton Drive, Darlington DL3 9QP

Since recent publicity given to *Populus nigra* var. *betulifolia* in the Darlington area, a specimen of this tree, at Baydale (NZ262154) on the outskirts of the town, has been monitored for any interesting phytoparasites it might host. Until recently, only common species were found but this position changed on 22nd April 2005.

About twenty dead attached twigs were collected and examined using a dissecting microscope. On only one twig, a few slightly raised patches of bark were seen to be evenly dotted with the ostioles of a subcortical pyrenomycete. These were reminiscent of the ubiquitous *Cryptosphaeria eunomia* on *Fraxinus* but much smaller, less conspicuous and very localised. Subsequent microscopical examination of excised perithecia revealed mature asci and spores easily identifying the fungus as *Cryptosphaeria populina* (Pers.) Sacc. (Ellis & Ellis, 1985). The National Database listed very few records and none at all with the host specifically identified as *Populus nigra* var. *betulifolia.* Ellis & Ellis *(op. cit.)* refer to *"P. serotina* and other poplars". Dr. M.B. Ellis seems to have found the fungus at one site only, Dunwich Forest in Suffolk (Ellis & Ellis, 1988). The Yorkshire Flora (Bramley, 1985) mentions a record of *"C. populnea"*, presumably a misspelling, made at Kingthorpe, Pickering in April 1947. As no other references could be traced in available literature, the material was sent to Dr. B.M. Spooner at Kew for verification and comment.

Dr. Spooner has now confirmed the identity of the fungus as *C. populina* but under the preferred name *Cryptosphaeria lignyota.* He adds that Kew holds only three other collections from Britain, two from Yorkshire and one from Surrey. The present collection certainly represents a new record for VC66 and is probably the most northerly British record, yet made. Material has been accessed in the Kew herbarium as K(M) 131360.

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Update on the inhabitants of the agamic (knopper) gall of *Andricus quercuscalicis* (Burgsdorf) in Bedlington Country Park, Northumberland VC 67

Hewett A. Ellis, 16, Southlands, Tynemouth, NE30 2QS

Introduction

The inhabitants of knopper galls, induced on the acorn cups of *Quercus robur* L. by *Andricus quercuscalicis* (Burgsdorf), were described in collections from six different locations in Northumberland in a previous paper (Ellis, 2005). In addition to *A. quercuscalicis* there were four species of chalcid parasitoids which had attacked the larvae of the cynipid inquiline *Synergus gallaepomiformis* (Boyer de Fonscolombe) in the outer gall wall. None of the *A. quercuscalicis* larvae within the inner gall had been parasitised.

The parasitoids were *Mesopolobus sericeus* (Förster), *Mesopolobus amaenus* (Walker), *Cecidostiba fungosa* (Geoffroy) and *Eurytoma brunniventris* Ratzeburg. *M. sericeus* was the most frequent and occurred at all six locations, whereas *C. fungosa* was found at only two sites. At one of these (Holywell Dene) there was a single *C. fungosa* compared with 43 *M. sericeus* in a collection of 42 galls. *C. fungosa* was the commonest parasitoid at only one location (Wansbeck Riverside Park) where the situation was reversed with 36 *C. fungosa* and only one *M. sericeus* obtained from two collections comprising 106 galls.

C. fungosa is a common parasitoid of knopper galls on the continent (Schönrogge,Stone & Crawley,1995) and since the early 1990's has apparently replaced *M. sericeus* as the dominant parasitoid of the inquiline *S. gallaepomiformis* in knopper galls in Southern England (Schönrogge,Walker & Crawley,2000; Randolph,2003). The present study was undertaken in order to determine whether or not *C. fungosa* is becoming commoner in knopper galls further north, here in Northumberland. Bedlington Country Park was chosen as a suitable location for this purpose, since earlier studies of galls formed in 2000 and 2002 at the site had revealed that *M. sericeus* was then the only species of parasitoid present (Ellis, 2005).

Materials and Methods

100 knopper galls in their first calendar year were collected from the ground beneath *Q. robur* in Bedlington Country Park (VC 67; Grid Reference: NZ 265 806) on the 15th and 23rd September,2004. Galls were measured and reared individually and all emerging insects recorded as previously described (Ellis,2004;2005). All galls were dissected at some time to determine the state and content of the inner galls.

Results

After overwintering four different species emerged: the cynipid gall-inducer *A. quercuscalicis* the cynipid inquiline *S. gallaepomiformis* and two species of chalcid parasitoids, *M. sericeus* and *C. fungosa*.

Andricus quercuscalicis

A. quercuscalicis was the first to appear, 43 emerging between 27th January and 14th February 2005. Subsequent dissections of the remaining 57 galls by June 2005 revealed no evidence of parasitisation of *A. quercuscalicis* larvae within the inner galls. Thus in 11 a dead adult *A. quercuscalicis* was found trapped in the main chamber(3), or in an intact inner gall (2), or partly emerged from the inner gall (6). The inner gall was intact in a further 46 and in 15 of these there was a live *A. quercuscalicis* larva undergoing prolonged diapause, a dead larva in 7 and a dead pre-pupa or pupa in 23. The remaining gall was small and malformed and its inner gall was empty.

Synergus gallaepomiformis

This inquiline emerged from 31 of the 100 galls between 30th April and 26th May 2005. There were 116 individuals (44 males, 72 females). In affected galls the number of *S. gallaepomiformis* varied from 1 to 33 (Mean 3.74 per gall) and for all 100 galls the average number was 1.16 per gall. Males only occurred in 5 galls, females only in 13 and both sexes in 13 galls. The Male:Female ratio was 1:1.6. *S. gallaepomiformis* occurred in galls irrespective of size and statistical comparisons of the mean heights and widths for galls with and without the inquiline revealed no significant differences. The present data, together with those from the earlier collections are summarised in Table 1.

Chalcid Parasitoids

Overall 17 parasitoids were obtained from 8 of the 100 galls and all had attacked the larvae of the inquiline *S. gallaepomiformis*. There were 10 *M. sericeus* (58.8% of parasitoids) and 7 *C. fungosa* (41.2 *%).* Details of the numbers, sex and dates of emergence of the parasitoids are summarised in Table 2.

Percentage parasitisation of S.gallaepomiformis

The number of *S. gallaepomiformis* obtained underestimates the number initially present in the galls since the larvae of others will have been attacked and destroyed by the chalcid parasitoids. Both *M. sericeus* and *C. fungosa* are solitary parasitoids of the inquiline, each destroying only one Synergus larva. Hence an estimate of the initial population may be obtained by combining the numbers of *S. gallaepomiformis* and parasitoids. It is then possible to calculate the percentage of the original *S. gallaepomiformis* population attacked by each of the two species of parasitoids. These data are shown in Table 3., which includes the data for earlier collections (Ellis, 2005) for comparison.

Discussion

The present study confirms the continued presence of the cynipid inquiline *S. gallaepomiformis* in knopper galls in Bedlington Country Park. The dates of emergence in the spring of the galls' second calendar year are similar in all the collections. The earlier individual collections comprised small numbers of galls and may not have been representative, but there does not appear to have been any recent marked increase in the mean infestation rate.

The proportion of *S. gallaepomiformis* parasitised in the three earlier collections combined (13.4%) was very similar to that in the present study (12.8%). However, in the earlier collections *M. sericeus* was the only parasitoid which attacked the inquiline, whereas in the most recent study both *M. sericeus* and *C. fungosa* were present and attacked 7.5% and 5.3% of the inquiline larvae, respectively.

C. fungosa has now been recorded in knopper galls at three locations in Northumberland and the present study suggests that *C. fungosa* is increasingly exploiting *S. gallaepomiformis* within knopper galls in Bedlington Country Park and might eventually become the dominant parasitoid at the site as it has at Wansbeck Riverside Park (Ellis, 2005). As in previous studies of local knopper galls I have been unable to find any evidence that the gall-inducer *A. quercuscalicis* has been parasitised, although such parasitisation is well known further south (Notton, 1988; Hails, Askew & Notton, 1990; Schönrogge, Stone & Crawley,1995; Schönrogge, Walker &Crawley,2000).

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Collection Date	Number of Galls	Number of affected galls (percentage)	*Synergus gallaepomiformis*			
			Emergence dates	Number (sex)	Mean number per	
					Affected gall	total galls
4.x.2000*	12	2 (16.7)	14.v.-20.v.2001	2m	1.0	0.17
2.xii.2000*	29	4 (13.8)	18.iv.-26.v.2001	15 (7m:8f)	3.75	0.52
24.ii.2003*	43	13 (30.2)	23.iv.-19.v.2003	41 (25m:16f	3.15	0.95
15 & 23.ix.2004	100	31 (31.0)	30.iv.-26.v.2005	116 (44m:72f)	3.74	1.16

Table 1. Dates of emergence and numbers of the inquiline *Synergus gallaepomiformis* reared from 100 knopper galls collected from Bedlington Country Park in September 2004 compared with earlier data (* Ellis,2005).

Parasitoid	Number of galls attacked	Number of parasitoids (sex)	Date emerged	Mean number per	
				Affected gall	total galls
M. sericeus	6	10 (4m:6f)	20.ii.-26.ii.2005	1.67	0.10
C. fungosa	*4*	7 (2m:5f)	26.ii.-11.iii.2005	1.75	0.07
Combined	8*	17 (6m:11f)	20.ii.-11.iii.2005	2.12	0.17

Table 2. Details of the two chalcid parasitoid species obtained from 100 knopper galls collected in Bedlington Country Park during September 2004.
* both *M. sericeus* and *C. fungosa* emerged from two of the galls.

Collection	Number of Galls	Number of inquilines*	Inquilines per gall	Percentage of inquilines parasitised by:		
				All parasitoids	*M. sericeus*	*C. fungosa*
Ellis, 2005	12	2	0.17	0	0	0
Ditto	29	24	0.83	37.5	37.5	0
Ditto	43	41	0.95	0	0	0
Present study	100	133	1.33	12.8	7.5	5.3

Table 3. Mean attack rates by the inquiline *Synergus gallaepomiformis*, and percentage rates of parasitisation by all chalcids, and by *Mesopolobus sericeus* and *Cecidostiba fungosa* in four collections of knopper galls from one site in Bedlington Country Park. * including those parasitised.

Field Meeting 263 July 23, Craster, Leader:Phil Gates

Lepidoptera		
Meadow Brown	*Maniola jurtina*	
Common Blue	*Polyommatus icarus*	
Ringlet	*Aphantopus hyperantus*	
Green Veined White	*Pieris napi*	
Red Admiral	*Vanessa atalanta*	
Dark Green Fritillary	*Argynnis aglaja*	
Magpie	*Abraxas grossulariata*	emergent on Ivy leaves under blackthorn

Notable Plants	
Ragged Robin	*Lychnis flos-cuculi*
Sticky Groundsel	*Senecio viscosus*
Agrimony	*Agrimonia eupatoria*

Auracaria trees were seen behind Cullernose Point. A field margin was full of Chicory (*Cichorium intybus*), not far from a Kittiwake colony on the cliff tops. A large digger wasp was seen grappling with an Asilid fly on a fence post. A blue specimen of Wrinkled snail (*Candidula intersecta*) was found amongst a small piece of sand dune habitat beneath the cliff, with Striped Snail (*Cernuella virgata*). A couple of Buzzards were lurking around the Long Walk woods.

Malcolm Birtle

Field Meeting 264 August 21st, joint with British Plant Gall Society. Billingham Bottoms Leader: Steve Robbins

FUNGI (including gall-inducing species)

Ascomycetes	
DiapleelIa clivensis	on dead stem of *Chamerion angustifolium*
Diplocarpon rosae	anamorph on leaves of *Rosa canina*
Erysiphe aquilegiae var. ranunculi	leaves of *Ranunculus repens*
Erysiphe cynoglossi	leaves of *Symphytum*
Erysiphe heraclei	leaves of *Heracleum*
Erysiphe sordida	leaves of *Plantago major*
Erysiphe ulmariae	leaves of *Filipendula*
Leptosphaeria typharum	dead *Typha* culms
Microsphaera aIphitodes	leaves of *Quercus*
Microsphaera euonymi-japonici	leaves of *Euonymus* New Vice-county record
Microsphaera sparsa	leaves of *Viburnum opulus*
Podosphaera clandestina	leaves of *Crataegus*
Podosphaera tridactyla	leaves of *Prunus spinosa*

Sphaerotheca epilobii	leaves of *Epilobium hirsutum*
Taphrina alnetorum	"cones" of *Alnus glutinosa*
Taphrina pruni	"pocket plums" on *Prunus spinosa*
Uncinula adunca	leaves of *Populus tremula*
Uncinula adunca var. *regrularis*	leaves of *Salix caprea*

Agarics

Coprinus leiocephalus	trackside
Hebeloma saccariolens	trackside
Psathyrella candolleana	trackside

"Aphyllophoralles"

Byssomerulius corium	fallen deciduous branch
Lachnella villosa	dead *Ulex stem*

Rusts

CoIeosporiurn tussiIaginis	leaves of *Tussilago*
MeIampsoreIIa symphyti	leaves of *Symphytum*
Puccinia menthae	leaves of *Mentha aquatics*
Puccinia pulverulenta	leaves of *Epilobium hirsutum*
Puccinia variabilis	leaves of *Taraxacum*
Triphragmium ulmariae	leaves of *Filipendula*
Uromyces trifolii	leaves of *Trifolium repens*
Xenodochus carbonarius	leaves of *Sanguisorba officinal is*

Smut

Ustilago segetum var. *avenae*	inflorescences of *Arrenatherum elatius*

Mitosporic fungi

Camarosporiurn salicinum	dead attached *Salix* twig
Ramularia rubella	senescent leaves of *Rumex obtusifolius.*

Alan Legg

Plants

Acer campestre	Field Maple	*Petasites hybridus*	Butterbur
" *pseudoplatanus*	Sycamore	*Phalaris arundinacea*	Reed canary-grass
Achillea millefolium	Yarrow	*Phleum pratense*	Timothy
Aesculus hippocastanum	Horse-chestnut	*Phragmites australis*	Common Reed
Angelica sylvestris	Wild Angelica	*Pinus sylvestris*	Scots Pine
Anthriscus sylvestris	Cow Parsley	*Plantago lanceolata*	Ribwort Plantain
Arrhenatherum elatius	False Oat-grass	" *major*	Greater Plantain
Artemisia vulgaris	Mugwort	" *media*	Hoary Plantain
Bellis perennis	Daisy	Poa annua	Annual Meadow-grass
Betula pendula	Silver Birch	*Populus alba*	White Poplar
Buddleja davidii	Butterfly-bush	" *tremula*	Aspen
Carex otrubae	False Fox-sedge	*Potentilla anserina*	Silverweed
Centaurea nigra	Common Knapweed	" *reptans*	Creeping Cinquefoil
Cerastium fontanum	Common Mouse-ear	*Prunella vulgaris*	Selfheal
Chamerion angustifolium	Rosebay Willowherb	*Prunus avium*	Wild Cherry
Cirsium arvense	Creeping Thistle	" *cerasifera*	Cherry Plum
" *vulgare*	Spear Thistle	" *spinosa*	Blackthorn
Conium maculatum	Hemlock	*Quercus petraea*	Sessile Oak
Cornus sanguinea	Dogwood	" *robur*	Pedunculate Oak
Corylus avellana	Hazel	*Ranunculus lingua*	Greater Spearwort
Crataegus monogyna	Hawthorn	" *repens*	Creeping Buttercup
Cynosurus cristatus	Crested Dog's-tail	*Rhinanthus minor*	Yellow-rattle
Dactylis glomerata	Cock's-foot	*Ribes sanguineum*	Flowering Currant
Deschampsia cespitosa	Tufted Hair-grass	*Rosa canina*	Dog-rose

Dipsacus fullonum	Teasel	*Rubus fruticosus*	Bramble
Echium vulgare	Viper's-bugloss	*Rumex obtusifolius*	Broad-leaved Dock
Epilobium hirsutum	Great Willowherb	" *sanguineus*	Blood-veined Dock
Equisetum telmateia	Great Horsetail	*Salix alba*	White Willow
Euonymus europaeus	Spindle	" *caprea*	Goat Willow
Filipendula ulmaria	Meadowsweet	" *cinerea*	Grey Willow
Fraxinus excelsior	Ash	" *fragilis*	Crack Willow
Galium cruciata	Crosswort	*Sambucus nigra*	Elder
" *verum*	Lady's Bedstraw	*Sanguisorba officinalis*	Great Burnet
Geranium molle	Dove's-foot Crane's-bill	*Scabiosa columbaria*	Small Scabious
" *pratense*	Meadow Crane's-bill	*Senecio jacobaea*	Common Ragwort
" *robertianum*	Herb-Robert	*Silene alba*	White Campion
" *sanguineum*	Bloody Crane's-bill	" *dioica*	Red Campion
Glyceria maxima	Reed Sweet-grass	" *vulgaris*	Bladder Campion
Heracleum sphondylium	Hogweed	*Sonchus asper*	Prickly Sow-thistle
Holcus lanatus	Yorkshire-fog	*Sorbus aucuparia*	Rowan
Hypericum perforatum	Perforated St John's-wort	" *intermedia*	Swedish Whitebeam
Juncus inflexus	Hard Rush	*Stachys sylvatica*	Hedge Woundwort
Lapsana communis	Nipplewort	*Symphytum officinale*	Common Comfrey
Leucanthemun vulgare	Oxeye Daisy	*Syringa vulgaris*	Lilac
Ligustrum vulgare	Wild Privet	*Tanacetum vulgare*	Tansy
Lolium perenne	Perennial Rye-grass	*Taraxacum officinale*	Dandelion
Lotus corniculatus	Common Bird's-foot-trefoil	*Taxus baccata*	Yew
Lycopus europaeus	Gipsywort	*Torilis japonica*	Upright Hedge-parsley
Lythrum salicaria	Purple-loosestrife	*Trifolium pratense*	Red Clover
Malva moschata	Musk Mallow	" *repens*	White Clover
" *sylvestris*	Common Mallow	*Tussilago farfara*	Colt's-foot

Medicago lupulina	Black Medick	*Typha latifolia*	Bulrush
Melilotus altissima	Tall Melilot	*Urtica dioica*	Common Nettle
Mentha aquatica	Water Mint	*Viburnum opulus*	Guelder-rose
Odontites verna	Red Bartsia	*Vicia cracca*	Tufted Vetch
Origanum vulgare	Marjoram		

Mammals

Oryctolagus cuniculus	Rabbit	*Talpa talpa*	Molehills

Birds

Anas platyrhynchus	Mallard	*Gallinula chloropus*	Moorhen
Columba palumbus	Wood Pigeon		

Insects

Bombus lucorum	Bumblebee	*Neodiprion sertifer*	Pine Sawfly
" *pascuorum*	Bumblebee	*Pieris brassicae*	Large White Butterfly
Inachis io	Peacock Butterfly	" *rapae*	Small White Butterfly
Lasiommata megera	Wall Butterfly	*Platycheirus albimanus*	Hoverfly
Melanostoma scalare	Hoverfly	*Sympetrum striolatum*	Common Darter

Fungi and Lichens

Erysiphe alphitoides	Oak Mildew	*Phragmidium violaceum*	On Bramble leaves
" *cichoracearum*	Mildew on Sow-thistle	*Podosphaera clandestina*	Mildew on Hawthorn
" *heraclei*	Mildew on Hogweed	*Puccinia distincta*	Rust on Daisy
" *ulmariae*	Mildew on Meadowsweet	" *pulverulenta*	Rust on Great Willowherb
Melampsorella symphyti	Rust on Common Comfrey	*Xantharia parietina*	Lichen
Microsphaera trifolii	Mildew on Red Clover		

Gordon Simpson


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THE VASCULUM

The North Country Quarterly of Natural History

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THE VASCULUM

The Vasculum is a quarterly journal concerned with the Natural History of North-East England. Founded in 1915 as a privately-published concern, since 1942 it has been the published organ of the Northern Naturalists' Union.

THE NORTHERN NATURALISTS' UNION

The Northern Naturalists' Union (NNU) was founded in 1924 to promote co-operation between natural history societies, and to collect and collate local records.

The NNU publishes *The Vasculum*, and several past publications included a series of *Transactions* published between 1931 and 1953 and three separately published supplements to *The Vasculum: Sources of Information on the Natural History of County Durham* (1972) and parts I and II of T.C. Dunn & J.D. Parrack's *The Moths and Butterflies of Northumberland and Durham* (1986 & 1992).

The NNU organises a series of field meetings each year, and arranges a speaker for an Annual Invited Lecture, hosted by one of the constituent societies in November. An Annual General Meeting of the NNU is held in March, and is addressed by a guest speaker.

The field meetings serve a dual purpose. First, the informal exchange of knowledge between members and their guests, and secondly the recording of the flora and fauna of the sites visited. Lists of the species seen during field meetings are published in *The Vasculum*. Subscriptions

Subscription enquiries should be sent to
Northern Naturalists' Union, C/o Office Administrator, Durham Wildlife Trust, Rainton Meadows, Chilton Moor, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear, DH4 6PU

Closure of Northern Naturalists' Union and Vasculum

At a recent meeting of the NNU Council the decision was made to close down the Northern Naturalists' Union and Vasculum. This is due to a number of factors including

- Inability to find officers for critical functions i.e. Editor, Treasurer, Membership Secretary, Field Secretary
- Diminishing contributions to the Vasculum
- Replacement of printed media by electronic publication and distribution technology
- Diminished attendance at field meetings
- Falling membership recruitment

No further subscriptions will be taken from January 2006.

Extraordinary General Meeting

An Extraordinary General Meeting will be held on 28th January at 10.00 am at Durham Wildlife Trust Offices, Rainton Meadows, Chilton Moor, Houghton-le-Spring, Tyne and Wear to ratify this decision or otherwise. Discussion will take place at this meeting regarding any future possibilities for an organisation/publication for northern naturalists. Contributions are invited from anyone interested.

Field Meeting 263 July 23, Craster, Leader:Phil Gates-Additional Contribution from Lee Stephenson

My wife, daughter and I set off to the meet in good time. After a long delay at the Tyne Tunnel we arrived over forty minutes late for the start of the walk, so we headed off on our own with an outside chance of running into other members. It was pleasant weather, it didn't rain and among the various things we saw were white harebells among the normal blue ones and black ants among colonies of aphids on thistle heads. They appeared to be tending (milking?) them rather than eating them. I've seen this on TV but never in real life. I showed my daughter how to turn a harebell pink by irritating an ant with the flower and it sprays it with formic acid, a favourite pastime of Danish children but I've never heard of it here. We caught grasshoppers along the way but couldn't identify them and examined the rock pools, but they didn't have much in them except small crustaceans. We ran into Malcolm Birtle and Phil Gates later and exchanged observations before heading inland on our return trip. Back at Craster I was interested to see several escaped garden plants thriving almost on the splash zone. All in all a very pleasant day finishing up in the pub. On our return home a mile or two south of Craster we had a breathtaking view of a Barn owl as it flew across the road diagonally towards us, changed its mind and did a beautiful manoeuvre to return from where it came. It was quite late and the sun was on its way down. Later we were treated to the Tall Ships firework display as we neared Blyth.

Species list for Craster

Agrimonia eupatoria	Agrimony
Armeria maritima	Sea Pink
Calluna vulgaris	Ling
Campanula latifolia	Giant Bellflower In woodland near Holwick Hall
Campanula rotundifolia	Harebell Inc. white ones
Centaurea nigra	Common Knapweed
Centranthus ruber	Red Valerian
Cichorium intybus	Chicory
Circaea lutetiana	Enchanter's Nightshade
Cirsium arvense	Creeping Thistle
Cochlearia officinalis	Common Scurvy Grass
Cortaderia selloana	Pampas Grass Escape on rocks at coast
Crithmum maritimum	Rock Samphire Not confirmed
Digitalis purpurea	Foxglove
Erica cinerea	Bell Heather
Erysium cheiri	Wallflower Escape on rocks at coast
Eupatoria cannabinum	Hemp Agrimony
Falopia baldshanica?	Russian Vine Escape on rocks at coast
Filipendula ulmaria	Meadowsweet
Galium verum	Lady's Bedstraw
Geranium pratense	Meadow Cranesbill

Honckenya peploides	Sea Sandwort
Inula conyza	Ploughman's Spikenard
Papaver orientale	Oriental Poppy Escape on rocks at coast
Papaver somniferum	Opium Poppy Escape on rocks at coast
Plantago coronopus	Buck's Horn Plantain
Plantago maritima	Sea Plantain
Potentilla anserina	Silverweed
Prunus spinosa	Sloe
Sedum spectabile	Autumn Joy Escape on rocks at coast
Silene dioica	Red Campion
Stachys sylvatica	Hedge Woundwort
Symphytum officinale	Common Comfrey
Tanacetum Vulgare	Tansy
Teucrium scorodonia	Wood Sage
Tragopogon pratensis	Goatsbeard
Tritonia crocosmiflora	Montbretia Escape on rocks at coast
Ulex europaeus	Gorse

Buteo buteo	Buzzard
Falco tinninculus	Kestrel
Haematopus ostralegus	Oystercatcher
Phalacrocorax carbo	Cormorant
Rissa tridactyla	Kittiwake
Tringa hypoleucos	Sandpiper
Tyto alba	Barn Owl
Bufo bufo	Common Toad Dead and desiccated on coastal rocks

Abraxes grossulariata	Magpie Moth
Maniola jurtina	Meadow Brown
Polyomamatus icarus	Common Blue
Zygaena filipendulae	Six-Spot Burnet


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