

*BRITISH NATURALISTS' ASSOCIATION*

**Hertfordshire Branch**

***BULLETIN No.144***



Looking for plant galls at Broxbourne Wood

10<sup>th</sup> September 2022

*Photo: Chris James*



Finding interesting plants in urban habitats in St Albans - 7<sup>th</sup> May 2022

*Photo: Paula Shipway*



Admiring the Lizard Orchid at Much Hadham 22<sup>nd</sup> June 2022

*Photo: Chris James*

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**BULLETIN 144**

April – November 2022

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## EDITOR'S BIT

Within the past few days, the leaves on the big cherry tree in the garden have turned a stunning yellow. The colours in the spreading canopy contrast beautifully against the deep blue of a November sky - though it is only for a fleeting moment in time. Already, loosened leaves sway in the breeze as they come to rest; building a golden carpet on the lawn before they shrivel and brown. And now the light begins to fail as a lone Wren sings to the setting sun and there is the chill bite of dusk in the air. Such moments may be transitory, but they make our experience of our natural world all the more special and absorbing and together they build a picture of the changes and chances of the wildlife around us.

The following pages are filled with such moments and reflect some positive as well as negative fortunes of our local nature, such as thriving Lizard Orchids and the increasing presence of ravens in our skies. So, thank you to everyone who has helped make this bulletin possible.

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## SARRATT AND THE CHESS VALLEY

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> April

12 members

We assembled on a lovely but chilly morning by The Cricketers public house then moved off at our usual slow pace. A Holly Blue butterfly flew past as we walked towards the pond. Numerous snails of a curious shape could be seen on the leaves of Yellow Flag Iris but, fortunately, Alla had come across similarly shaped snails recently and discovered they were Bladder Snails belonging in the *Physidae* family.

The grass around the pond was mostly mown although a few patches had been left because of the daffodils. In amongst the daffodils, Cuckoo Flowers *Cardamine pratensis* were flowering and it seemed sad that the cultivated daffodils were protected but the lovely native flowers were apparently not being considered special!

We followed a footpath downhill towards the River Chess noting some common flowering plants including Thale Cress *Arabidopsis thaliana*, Groundsel *Senecio vulgaris*, Shepherd's-purse *Capsella bursa-pastoris*, White Dead-nettle *Lamium album* and Common Vetch *Vicia sativa*. We had plenty of opportunities to practice our *Veronica* identification and the first one of the day was Common Field Speedwell, *Veronica persica*. We next found Ivy-leaved Speedwell *Veronica hederifolia* (I gathered later that both sub-species had been spotted). White Comfrey *Symphytum orientale* was growing at the base of a wall near the village and Garlic Mustard *Alliaria petiolata* was growing in profusion and is always a delight to see in the Spring.

In the first field we crossed I confirmed Bulbous Buttercup *Ranunculus bulbosus*, by checking for reflexed sepals. It is always good to note the first grasses coming into flower and the first one on my list was Common Foxtail *Alopecurus pratensis*. Along a narrow footpath through a wood, we saw the first Bluebells of the day and Jane pointed out Red Campion flowering some distance away.



In the next field, the increasing warmth of the day encouraged butterflies to be on the wing and we spotted Orange Tip, Peacock, Green-veined and Brimstone in the sunshine. Two more Veronicas were added to the list, Germander and Thyme-leaved and a Greater-spotted Woodpecker was heard. William used his sweep net and showed us a Tortrix moth that he caught and later identified it as a Dark-barred Tortrix, *Syndemis musculana*. Common Mouse-ear *Cerastium fontanum* was noted growing in the field and a lovely Large Red Damselfly was skimming over the grass.

We then followed a path along an avenue of trees to the church and as the meeting was advertised as being for lichens and flowers, I thought it was time to start looking at the tree trunks. There was not a huge variety of lichen species, but I found *Hyperphyscia adglutinata*, *Candelaria concolor* and *Lecidella elaeochroma* on various tree trunks. With plenty of pairs of eyes searching I was able to add Three-nerved Sandwort *Moehringia trinervia* to the plant list and William told us that the micro moth larvae responsible for 'mines' in the leaves of a Holm Oak were *Ectoedemia heringella*. A Blue Tit was seen disappearing into a wide longitudinal crack in a Sycamore tree trunk so we assumed that it must be a nest site.

In the Churchyard we found more plants in flower: Early Dog-violet *Viola reichenbachiana*, Common Dog-violet *Viola riviniana*, Field Wood-rush *Luzula campestris*, Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* and one more *Veronica*, Slender Speedwell *Veronica filiformis*.

Time was moving on but there was time for a quick look at the wall where I spotted a lovely lichen, *Trapelia coarctata* and Wendy named a few mosses for us: Wall Screw-moss *Tortula muralis*, a feather-moss *Homalothecium sericeum*, Capillary Thread-moss *Bryum capillare* and Grey-cushioned *Grimmia*, *Grimmia pulvinata*. The wall also gave us Wall Speedwell *Veronica arvensis* which we added to our list of Veronicas.

We were still heading downhill to the river accompanied now by Skylarks singing overhead. We paused at old fence which provided a lovely habitat for more lichens *Trapeliopsis flexuosa*, *Placynthiella icmalea*, *Hypocenomyce scalaris* and *Diploschistes muscorum* which is parasitic on various species of *Cladonia*. *Cladonias* are a particularly difficult genus and I collected a tiny specimen hoping to be able to identify it. Even after a long time studying the

specimen, I could not identify it – and nor could one of the leading national lichenologists which somewhat mollified my exasperation at not being certain of the species!

There were mutterings about lunch so we rested for a while by an area where the river had overflowed and where there was a convenient fallen branch. Three Moorhens squabbled on the main river ignoring the numerous people out for an afternoon stroll.

During my recce of the area, I had noticed a particularly interesting lichen on the trunk of an Ash tree so after lunch I led the group over to see it. The pin lichen, *Calcium viride*, is distinctive when seen through a hand lens. It has a green thallus and tiny black pin-like fruiting bodies. There have only been 5 records for this species in Hertfordshire in the past. Other species on the trunk included *Cliostomum griffithii*, *Flavoparmelia caperata* and *Parmelia sulcata*.



Continuing along the river we heard a noisy Ring-necked Parakeet. We are very familiar with these now during our field meetings as they continue to spread north. We heard a Blackcap singing and saw a Little Egret standing by the river. Other additions to the list in my notebook included a Hairy Dragonfly, a Speckled Wood Butterfly and a few more plants; Greater Stitchwort *Stellaria holostea*, Greater Celandine *Chelidonium majus*, Soapwort *Saponaria officinalis*, and one of my favourites, Wood Melick *Melica uniflora*.

We reached the end of Dawes Lane where we needed to decide whether to continue to Frogmore Meadow Nature Reserve or turn up the lane back to Sarratt. The group split into two. I led the half that wanted to continue to the reserve and we increased our pace, passing a lovely show of Goldilocks Buttercup *Ranunculus auricomus* and Marsh Marigolds *Caltha palustris*. The wood close to the reserve hosted a spectacular display of Bluebells and was well worth the hard walk to get there. I quickly examined an Ash tree and recorded *Pertusaria amara* and *Pyrrhospora quernea*, then we all aimed for the far side of the reserve where Jane spotted a Gadwall on the river. We found leaves of Yellow Rattle *Rhinanthus minor* growing in amongst the grasses before heading back towards Sarratt.

Just as we entered the wood next to the reserve, Rose spotted Yellow Pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum* and growing next to it was our final *Veronica* of the day Wood Speedwell *Veronica montana*.

After all the downhill sections earlier in the day we inevitably had a long uphill section along Dawes Lane! We paused long enough to record more Three-nerved Sandwort, Sweet Woodruff *Gallium odoratum* and Barren Strawberry *Potentilla sterilis* growing on the banks.

As we were leaving Dawes Common Alla noticed a large shrub which she identified as *Viburnum rhytidadelphus*.

We arrived back at the cars at 5 pm which was thankfully a little earlier than I had feared, but I was reassured that everyone had enjoyed the day.

**William's bird list:** House Sparrow, Carrion Crow, Woodpigeon, Red Kite, Starling, Song Thrush, Blackbird, Jackdaw, Buzzard, Dunnock, Robin, Blue Tit, Pheasant, Chiffchaff, Coal Tit, Great Tit, Blackcap, Cormorant, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Goldfinch, Nuthatch, Skylark, Mistle Thrush, Magpie, Swallow, Moorhen, Kingfisher, Grey Heron, Coot, Gadwall, Mallard, Ring-necked Parakeet, Little Egret, Wren



**William's micro-moth list:** *Stigmella aurella* – Golden Pygmy, *Ectoedemia heringella* – New Holm-Oak Pygmy, *Phyllonorycter maestingella* – Beech Midget, *Pammene argyrana* – Black-bordered Piercer, *Syndemis musculana* – Dark-barred Tortrix, *Esperia sulphurella* – Sulphur Tubic, *Elachista canapennella* – Little Dwarf.

**Claudi's fungi and rust list:** *Daldinia concentrica*, King Alfred's Cakes on dead Ash, *Inonotus hispidus*, Shaggy Bracket, old, under an Ash, *Kuehneola uredinis*, a rust on bramble stem and leaves, *Melampsora allii-populina*, a rust on Lords-and-Ladies *Arum maculatum* leaves, *Melampsora populnea*, a rust on Dog's Mercury's *Mercurialis perennis* leaves, *Trametes versicolor*, Turkey Tail, old on dead Ash, *Uromyces ficariae*, a rust on Lesser Celandine *Ficaria verna* leaves.

**Paula Shipway**



## HOW WOOD

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> May

11 members

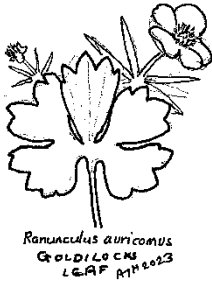
I came a bit earlier for this meeting with the intention of finding a particular crab apple tree recorded by Jean and Ruth back in 2016. My attempt was not successful, but I was spotted by William, who also came earlier and was exploring the area for moth luring activity (which proved to be very successful later in the afternoon). While we talked, William heard a Cuckoo call which made an exciting start to the walk.

We joined the rest of the group near the How Wood station. I knew (from my recce on the previous day) that there were quite a few plant species in flower in the small lane leading to the station, but I strongly underestimated the number. The first 100m stretch yielded 28 plant species, including a vigorously spreading garden Stonecrop. House Sparrows chatted cheerfully all the time and a starling flew over.

The road verge immediately added another dozen plant species and a beautiful *Peltigera* lichen among the grass. We finally proceeded along Burston Drive towards the wood itself, which was our main destination. Among many spectacular garden (and garden escapee) plants, a Daisy-bush (*Olearia* sp.) stood out, completely covered with small daisy-like flowers. Among native species, Common Stork's-bill *Erodium cicutarium* was a good find, as was Slender Pearlwort *Sagina filicaulis* showing its widely spread sepals essential for identification. William showed us hawthorn leaves turned into "paper" by Firethorn Leaf Miner moth *Phyllonorycter leucographella*, whilst Paula led a tour of lichens amongst which Chewing-gum lichen *Lecanora muralis* on the pavement and bright orange Elegant Sunburst *Xanthoria elegans* on a brick wall were especially popular. A few people asked what we were up to and were pleased to learn a few lichens!

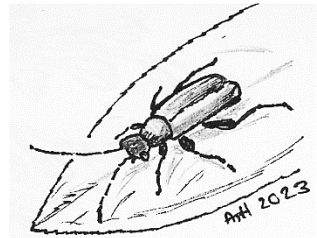
Approaching the wood, we came across a sizeable patch containing Few-flowered Garlic *Allium paradoxum*, Ramsons *Allium ursinum* and Autumn Stonecrop *Sedum telephium* agg. In the wood, Wood Anemones *Anemone nemorosa* and Bluebells *Hyacinthoides non-scripta* were still in flower. We spotted Wood Meadow-grass *Poa nemoralis* with its ladder-like leaves, Thyme-leaved Speedwell *Veronica serpyllifolia* and Wood Speedwell *Veronica*

*montana*. William showed us mines of Golden Pygmy *Stigmella aurella* moth on a bramble and we noticed elaborate mines on honeysuckle leaves. A squirrel and a bumblebee were spotted. Goldilocks Buttercup *Ranunculus auricomus* in full flower and a native form of Yellow Archangel *Lamium galeobdolon subsp. montanum* were added to the plant list.



We came to a small pond with a clear view of three Mallards and a Moorhen was spotted by Paula. Two trunks of a Hornbeam twisted against each other so closely that they became a single unit. Another Hornbeam had *Pertusaria leioplaca*, which is a lichen characteristic of woodland. Claudi identified a fungus on a Willow on the other side of the pond as Blushing Bracket *Daedaleopsis confragosa*. We talked about management of the pond. Some work had obviously been done (there were signs of trees having been cut), but it still looked over-shadowed. Sadly, we failed to spot a Pied Flycatcher which was reported the day before but singing Blackcap was a consolation prize.

We moved on, following a hedge, with both Common Hawthorn *Crataegus monogyna* and Midland Hawthorn *Crataegus laevigata*. A small longhorn beetle *Grammoptera ruficornis* was spotted along with a 7-spot ladybird. We had a good look at Hoary Mustard *Hirschfeldia incana* and a rather hairy specimen of Cat's-ear *Hypochaeris radicata*.



On closer inspection later, this was confirmed by the presence of chaffy scales. We reached Mayflower Park, which was the lunch spot planned in the event of 'slow progress'! A large *Xanthoria calcicola* lichen on a concrete post by the entrance gate slowed us down, as did an unusually formed Wild Cherry inside this small park.

After lunch, we continued along the streets and came to a low Box hedge destroyed by Box moth with many caterpillars still feeding on what was left (not much). A large *Flavoparmelia caperata* lichen with its apple-green lobes was spotted on the bottom of a Wild Cherry, followed by the bright yellow Least Yellow-sorrel *Oxalis exilis*. William swept Cucumber Green Orb spider *Araniella cucurbitina s.l.* and a 10-spot ladybird *Adalia decempunctata* among

other bugs. We then passed a very fragrant Guelder-rose (garden variety) with large globes of white flowers and spotted a pair of mating Harlequin Ladybirds *Harmonia axyridis*. Giant Bulbous Buttercups *Ranunculus bulbosus*, growing around a tree livened otherwise shortly mown lawn. Trees kept providing us with things to look at – a liverwort *Frullania dilatata* growing on bark and a Rowan with ants running up and down the trunk. Musk Stork's-bill *Erodium moschatum* with tightly spiralled beaks and a finely speckled Cramp-ball Fungus Weevil *Platyrhinus resinosus* were the last highlights as we were completing our circular route.

After the main part of the day was over, a reduced party of five eager for more moved to the 'wilder' habitats across the railway in the hope of seeing something special. We were not disappointed. Four male Emperor moths came to William's pheromone trap and gave us plenty of time to take photos. Holly blue and Orange-tip butterflies, a Common Carpet moth, a Red-headed Cardinal beetle and Bishop's Mitre *Epimedium sp.* were also appreciated, as were a blight on Hawthorn *Monilinia jonsonii* and *Puccinia hysterium* rust on Goat's-beard *Tragopogon pratensis*.

Another day full of nice finds – thanks to everyone!

Plants in flower: 98 (out of 111 plant species recorded)

**Lichens (thanks, Paula!):** *Flavoparmelia caperata* on timber on a road sign, *Flavoparmelia soledians* on timber on a road sign, *Lecanora muralis* on the pavement, *Lecanora semipallida* on a wall, *Pertusaria leioplaca* on a Hornbeam by the pond, *Sarcogyne regularis* on mortar on a wall, *Xanthoria elegans* on a wall. *Xanthoria calcicola* on a concrete post

**Extra moths (thanks, William!):** Cypress-tip Argent *Argyresthia cupressella*, Red-brindled Dwarf *Elachista rufocinerea*, Vetch Piercer *Grapholita jungiella*.

**Birds (thanks, William!):** Blackcap, Chaffinch, Chiffchaff, Collared Dove, Cuckoo, Dunnock, Goldcrest, Goldfinch, Great Tit, Greenfinch, Greylag Goose, Herring Gull, House Sparrow, Jackdaw, Jay, Magpie, Mallard, Moorhen, Red Kite, Ring-necked Parakeet, Robin, Starling, Whitethroat, Woodpigeon, Wren.

**Alla Mashanova**

## LITTLE PAXTON

Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> May

Paxton Pits Nature Reserve and visitors' centre lies just north of St. Neots. It comprises a series of large lakes resulting from gravel extraction stretching for a good two miles north along the River Ouse.

Another large party was congregating at the same time as we were, but we managed to meet up and find each other. Our first birds were Garden Warblers and Blackcaps and it was confusing trying to distinguish their songs. I was pleased to be able to identify Hart's-tongue *Phyllitis scolopendrium* - one of my favourite plants with its long leaves - in the early stage of growth. One area of compacted gravel with moss was worth a stop and we found Common Stork's-bill, Creeping Cinquefoil and Field Madder. Later, we also found Dittander occurring near the river although it was not in flower.

The first glimpse of water added Cormorant, Common Tern, Little Egret and Grey Heron to our bird list. As we moved on, it was good to hear a Cuckoo, at first rather distant though much louder when heard again later. The sun was with us all day and our path towards the river gave us a male Banded Demoiselle and the smaller Common Blue and White-legged Damselflies.

At the next hide a Kingfisher was seen, though not by all the party. There were better views of terns on their floating platforms. We found a nice place by the river to have our lunch.

Afterwards, we followed paths next to hedgerows and inspected the vegetation for signs of moths. We found a web canopy of the Spindle Ermine Moth *Yponomeuta cagnagella* - a micromoth whose caterpillars were feeding on the Spindle, leaving Hawthorn and Field Maple untouched. This is one of a group of eight very similar species, which can usually be identified by the caterpillar foodplant. Later, I studied other webs, this time on Hawthorn and Blackthorn, which would probably be the Orchard Ermine *Yponomeuta padella*. However, as there were faint red markings, they could have been Small Eggar, a much rarer record which I am checking out.

We saw a Red Fox in the neighbouring field and more patches of blue Viper's Bugloss caught our eye as we headed back towards the centre.

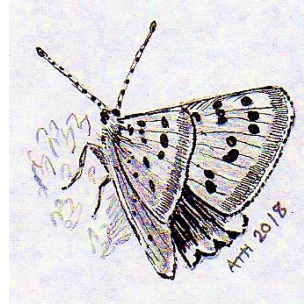
With thanks to my sister who wrote down records and invited us back to her beautiful garden for tea.

**Birds:** Cuckoo, Garden Warbler, Chiffchaff, Blackcap, Wren, Common Tern, Little Egret, Grey Heron, Greylag Goose, Cormorant, Coot, Moorhen

**Mammal:** Red Fox

**Butterflies and moths:** Speckled Wood, Common Blue, Holly Blue, Brimstone, Small Copper (right), Spindle Ermine Moth.

**Damselflies:** Banded Demoiselle, White-legged Damselfly, Common Blue Damselfly.



**Plants:** Vipers Bugloss *Echium vulgare*, Field Madder *Sherardia arvensis*, Common Stork's-bill *Echium cicutarium*, Slender Thistle *Carduus nutans*, Hound's-tongue *Cynoglossum officinale*, Perforate St. John's-wort *Hypericum perforatum*, Scarlet Pimpernel *Anagallis arvensis*, Wall Speedwell *Veronica arvensis*, Bristly Oxtongue *Helminthotheca echioides*, Creeping Cinquefoil

*Potentilla reptans*, Spotted Medick *Medicago arabica*, Lesser Trefoil *Trifolium dubium*, Dittander *Lepidium latifolium*, Crosswort *Cruciata laevipes*, Cut-leaved Crane's-bill *Geranium dissectum*, Dove's-foot Crane's-bill *Geranium mole*, Cudweed *Filago vulgaris*, Ribwort Plantain *Plantago lanceolata*, Lady's Bedstraw *Galium verum*.



**Fungi:** Chicken-of-the-woods *Laetiporus sulphureus*, *Monilinia johnsonii* – a small brown cup fungus found on old hawthorn berries which causes a leaf blight.

**Peter Alton and Juliet Pennington**

## BOVINGDON BRICKPITS and SHEETHANGER COMMON

Sunday 5<sup>th</sup> June

9 members

This meeting coincided with the Platinum Jubilee celebrations and weather forecasters suggested a range of possibilities including the prospect of street parties being washed-out. Fortunately, most of the rain arrived overnight and nine of us met on Bovingdon Green ready to explore the old brick pits which have been managed by Boxmoor Trust as a conservation area since 2001. It is a comparatively small site covering around 36 acres and is clearly a popular destination for local dog walkers.

On the edge of Bovingdon Green, I pointed out a large toadstool which had pink gills. Happily, Claudi was able to identify it as a Horse Mushroom *Agaricus arvensis* with its distinct smell of almonds and yellow staining when bruised. William showed us blistering on oak leaves which are caused by the larvae of a micro-moth, *Acrocercops brongniardella* and we also spotted a colourful micro-moth on a hazel leaf. Yellow-barred Long-horn *Nemophora degeerella* lives up to its name with the antennae at least twice the length of the moth and a bright yellow bar across the wings.

We found some Pignut *Conopodium majus* in flower and listened to a blackbird singing. At the entrance to the pits, I showed members our most common pin lichen *Chaenotheca ferruginea* growing alongside another lichen *Lepraria incana* on the trunk of a silver birch tree. A Wren sat on a branch singing loudly, seemingly unperturbed by a group of people walking close-by.

We entered an area which has been kept clear of scrub and trees where flora is flourishing, some of which has been seeded. Bird's-foot-trefoil *Lotus corniculatus* was abundant and we noted Ragged Robin *Lychnis flos-cuculi*, Lesser Stitchwort *Stellaria graminea* and Meadow Vetchling *Lathyrus pratensis*. The first Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsia* was also seen here and one spike had a particularly long head. There was a fine specimen of Curled Dock *Rumex crispus* and we noted Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum*. I caught sight of a Straw Dot *Rivula sericealis*, a common day-flying moth and William showed us a micro moth he had caught



in his sweep net, a Diamond-back *Plutella xylostella*, which is another very common species.

There are two highly invasive plant species on the site: there was clear evidence of how difficult it is to control the first one - Goat's-rue *Galega officinalis*. Yellow Shell moth was added to the list as well as two more birds, a Dunnock and a Jay. We followed a path towards the pits from where the clay was dug to produce bricks and recorded Musk Mallow *Malva moschata*, Yellow Rattle *Rhinanthus minor* and Teasel *Dipsacus fullonum*.

A lichen *Hypogymnia physodes* which had fallen from a tree above was retrieved from the ground. (This species is tolerant of sulphur pollution and so is becoming rare as sulphur levels in the environment fall). Also, under the trees there was a tall specimen of Common Figwort *Scrophularia nodosa* which proved difficult to photograph.

After admiring the small and delicate growths of Fairy Inkcap *Coprinellus disseminatus*, we followed a narrow path which led to an area where we spent a few minutes exploring. We found two terricolous lichens, *Peltigera hymenina* and *Cladonia furcata*. Strawberries ripe for picking on Wild Strawberry *Fragaria vesca* helped confirm the differences between Wild Strawberry and Barren Strawberry. Wood-sedge *Carex sylvatica* grew at the edge of the area and there were one or two shoots of an Eyebright *Euphrasia* sp. along with several spikes of Common Spotted Orchid.

We followed more paths noting countless numbers of Common Spotted Orchids and another terricolous lichen *Cladonia rangiformis*. Heath Speedwell *Veronica officinalis* was admired and Parsley Piert *Aphanes arvensis* was found growing on top of an ant hill. Fairy Flax *Linum catharticum* was also added to the list.



We reached the southern end of the pits and spent some time examining ferns. Male Fern *Dryopteris filix-mas* was identified and a possible Buckler Fern was pondered over. It was a tranquil spot with Honeysuckle and Ox-eye Daisies and there was a general reluctance to move on. We did, however, and found a slope to sit and eat our lunch. As we packed our lunch boxes away, there was a sudden shout of "Bee Orchid" from Rose. A further careful search revealed two more plants close-by.

We found the second invasive plant, Japanese Knotweed *Reynoutria japonica* towards the north end of the pit. A much more welcome plant, Dame's-violet *Hesperis matronalis* was growing close-by. We had to turn back from the planned route due to a padlocked gate but we found our way along a track towards the Green. We stopped to admire Wood Millet *Milium effusum*, that looked lovely in the dappled sunshine and Wall Lettuce *Mycelis muralis* growing under a hedge.

Back at the cars most of us decided to continue with the programmed visit to Sheethanger Common although we were later than I had anticipated! I should have known better than to think we would finish at the pits by lunch time!

Not far from the car park at Sheethanger Common, we examined an unusual *Crataegus* with large haws. William was able to identify this later as Lavallee's Cockspurthorn *Crataegus x lavalleei*. We then crossed over to the well-known chalk pits to look at the flora and recorded some of the expected chalk specialists including Common Rock-rose *Helianthemum nummularium*, Quaking Grass *Briza media*, Spring Sedge *Carex caryophyllea*, Glaucous Sedge *Carex flacca*, Salad Burnet *Poterium sanguisorba*, Crested Hair-grass *Koeleria macrantha* and Dwarf Thistle *Cirsium acaule*. Another Yellow Shell moth was seen and William showed us a curious construction on a Hazel where a Hazel Leaf Roller weevil had been busy. The Leaf Roller had nibbled through the leaf from both sides until it reached the central rib then wrapped the cut portion round to form a little dangling 'wigwam' as protection for its larvae!

Having finished exploring the chalk pit area, some members decided to head for home but a few of us continued to the northern end of the Common with the objective of re-finding Tor Grass *Brachypodium pinnatum*. Although we failed to find this specialist grass, we did manage to add several moths to the day's list. Grass Rivulet was seen in high numbers and William caught one of several micro moths 'dancing' under an ash tree which turned out to be a very colourful Yellow-spot Tortrix *Pseudargyrotoza conwagana*. Cinnabar Moth was added along with another micro moth, a Common Yellow Conch *Agapeta hamana*.

With thanks to all we had a lovely day!

**Paula Shipway**

## THERFIELD HEATH

Tuesday 7<sup>th</sup> June

8 members

This meeting was programmed as a mid-week half-day meeting as an experiment to see if members might appreciate a weekday alternative. A group of 8 members met in the car park on the Therfield Road. It was a beautiful sunny morning. Once we were organised, we walked steadily in a westerly direction on a bare chalky track.

This important SSSI nature reserve has lost its grazing sheep recently and the dominance of the grass was noted. Although there were still patches where some of the rarer plants grow, it worries me for the future of some wild flowers here.

We took our time gradually heading towards Church Hill and finding some nice chalk plants:

Common Restharrow	<i>Ononis repens</i>
Agrimony	<i>Agrimonia eupatoria</i>
Tufted Vetch	<i>Vicia cracca</i>
Salad Burnet	<i>Poterium sanguisorba</i>
Goat's-beard	<i>Tragopogon pratensis</i>
Clustered Bellflower	<i>Campanula glomerata</i>
Fairy Flax	<i>Linum catharticum</i>
Wild Thyme	<i>Thymus polytrichus</i>
Yellow-wort	<i>Blackstonia perfoliata</i>
Dropwort	<i>Filipendula vulgaris</i>
Field Fleawort	<i>Tephrosia integrifolia</i>
Greater Knapweed	<i>Centauria scabiosa</i>

Common Knapweed	<i>Centaurea nigra</i>
Bladder Campion	<i>Silene vulgaris</i>
Silverweed	<i>Potentilla anserina</i>
Rock-rose	<i>Helianthemum nummularium</i>
Tormentil	<i>Potentilla erecta</i>
Birds-foot-trefoil	<i>Lotus corniculatus</i>
Field Scabious	<i>Knautia arvensis</i>
Common Milkwort	<i>Polygala vulgaris</i>
Mignonette	<i>Reseda lutea</i>

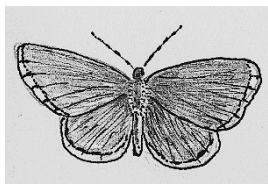
On the orchid front there were Pyramidal *Anacamptis pyramidalis*, Common Spotted *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and Bee Orchids *Ophrys apifera*. Later in Fox Covert under the beech trees, we also found the seedheads of White Helleborines *Cephalanthera damasonium* along with Sanicle *Sanicula europaea*. On Church Hill, seed heads of Cowslips *Primula veris* and hundreds of Pasque Flowers *Anemone pulsatilla* (right) were still in evidence.



One of the main reasons to visit Therfield Heath was to see the Adonis Blue

butterflies. These were unofficially released here three years ago and have survived and expanded. Numbers were down a little on our visit as it had been an early season for them and it had clouded over a little. Their food plant is Horseshoe Vetch and there was plenty of this as well as Kidney vetch.

We also saw the following butterflies and moths:



Adonis Blue (20), Common Blue (2), Brown Argus (1), Holly Blue (1), Meadow Brown (20), Marbled White (15), Small Heath (1), Small Tortoiseshell (4), Dark Green Fritillary (1), Yellow Shell Moth (3), Silver Y Moth (3) and Mother Shipton (2).

We had lunch on the southern boundary of the golf course and had great views across south Cambridgeshire. Skylarks and Meadow Pipits were everywhere. We had a good view of a Mistle Thrush which landed close by on a green and also recorded Blackcaps, Swallows, Jackdaws, a Kestrel and a Red Kite.

One of the lovely outcomes of a walk is seeing the excellent photos people send to Herts Branch's WhatsApp group afterwards. A photo of a metallic green beetle taken by Paula was identified by Phil as *Cryptocephalus aureolus*. Phil also sent his own photos of a Puss Moth caterpillar with its whacky twin tails, an orchid beetle *Dascillus cervinus* and a 'nationally scarce' scarab beetle *Omaloplia ruricola*, a chalk grassland specialist.

Thanks everyone for coming and for the great photos.

**Steve Kiln**

## **MUCH HADHAM AND BRANDS MEADOW**

**Saturday 25th June**

**11 members**

We are indebted to Vernon Taylor for hosting part of today's meeting. This included the parking at his lovely house near Much Hadham which was no mean feat, a delightful exploration of his flowery meadow followed by very convivial afternoon tea.

During the morning, we walked around some very attractive countryside west of Much Hadham, mostly following green lanes and field margin paths. From 'Brands' we took our time along the short section of Brands Lane linking up with Cox Lane. A nice thick brambly hedge attracted Ringlets, Meadow

Browns and a Large Skipper butterfly. We struggled with our identification of Small and Common Timothy grass!

At the junction of paths near Bartrums' Wood, we found a small field which was apparently sown with Tufted Vetch (there was an awful lot of it so it looked deliberate). We looked a bit more closely in case there were other unusual cornfield weeds but found only Round-leaved Fluellen *Kickxia spuria*. We continued followed the bridleway in a north-easterly direction along a deep ditch which was well-buffered against a crop of Triticale by the wide grassy track. This allowed the growth of some very nice ditch vegetation including Great Willowherb *Epilobium hirsutum*, Perforate St John's-wort *Hypericum perforatum*, Water Figwort *Scrophularia nodosa* and good clumps of Bramble *Rubus sp.* We also recorded Long-tailed Tits, a Blackbird, a Blackcap and Common Whitethroat, the latter two singing their cheerful songs. Sadly, further north along the same track adjacent Vineyards Spring, the vegetation was generally uninteresting apart from the number of healthy Wych Elm *Ulmus glabra* trees along the wood margin.

After a brisk walk south-eastwards along Bromley Lane, where we found clumps of Crow Garlic *Allium vineale* in several places, we turned off on field paths which brought us back towards Much Hadham. We ate our picnics in the corner of a grassy field east of New Barns where we looked at the very attractive mature purplish heads of what was definitely Common Timothy *Phleum pratense*.

After some zig-zags around field boundaries, we joined the east end of Cox Lane close to Much Hadham and turned westwards along it. This was a very attractive green lane through the edge of a narrow tree belt containing mature Oak and Ash trees, along with more Wych Elm all in good health. However, being quite shaded, there was little of botanical or invertebrate interest (apart from a couple of Speckled Wood butterflies) to detain us from our afternoon's objective which was Vernon's chalky meadow.

Having acquired a grass 'paddock' along with the house, Vernon decided to make it more interesting by bringing in quite a few lorry-loads of chalky soil which he profiled into mounds and then sowed with a wide range of plants typical of chalk habitats. The field has now had several years to establish and stabilise and we had a very pleasant hour or so meandering around the



mounds and admiring stands of Scabious, Great and Common Knapweed, Lady's Bedstraw, Oxeye Daisies and other species, along with attendant butterflies, hoverflies and beetles. It was a very lovely place to spend a warm and sunny afternoon.

Vernon then invited us into his garden where he surprised us with his 'pièce de resistance'. This turned out to be at least a dozen magnificent Lizard Orchids *Himantoglossom hircinum* (right) growing in his lawn, all of which had self-sown from a single plant brought in from France several years ago! Obviously, our warming summers are to its liking. Each plant has to be marked with a stick so that they are not mown off by accident. Needless to say, there were a lot of 'wows' as we moved among them carefully, taking photographs or just marvelling at their unusual and fascinating flower shape. What a treat!



Lizard Orchid Photo: Chris James

Our most enjoyable day was rounded off with very welcome and civilised tea sitting round a table on Vernon's patio.

**Other birds seen or heard:** Buzzard, Red Kite, Magpie, Green Woodpecker, Robin, Great Tit, Wren.

**Butterflies recorded in the meadow:** Marbled White, Small White, Comma, Small Tortoiseshell, Red Admiral, Painted Lady, Large Skipper, Small Heath.

**Beetles:** Thick-thighed Flower Beetle *Oedemera nobilis*, Black-and-Yellow Longhorn *Rutpela maculata* and 7-spot Ladybird *Coccinella septempunctata*.

**Chris James**

## COLNEY HEATH COMMON

Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> July

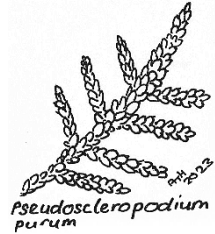
12 members

We met at the roundabout in Roestock on a windy but warm day. The forecast indicated that we avoid rain for the best part of the day. This was good, as I was hoping we could look at invertebrates. The second part of this plan required someone with the knowledge so I was very pleased to see Simon.

Colney Heath Common consists of two parts: one is the area along the River Colne and the second, called Furze Field, has the remnants of a heath. The latter was the focus of the day. We looked at the information board in the village, admired one of the “Coal Duty Posts” and started to move towards the heathy part. No surprise that our movement was very slow. A Kestrel flew over. Dwarf Mallow *Malva neglecta*, Sun Spurge *Euphorbia helioscopia* alongside Petty Spurge *E. peplus* and Goat’s-beard *Tragopogon pratensis* were recorded. Simon strode to a clump of Hogweed and found Fairy-ring Longhorn *Pseudovadonia livida* and Thick-thighed Flower Beetle *Oedemera nobilis*. We crossed the river using the road. Buck’s-horn Plantain *Plantago coronopus*, Hybrid Cinquefoil *Potentilla anglica* (or *erecta* x *reptans*) and Lady’s Bedstraw *Galium verum* were spotted at the roadside – an unusual mixture of species belonging to different habitats. Common Red Soldier Beetle *Rhagonycha fulva* was noticed on Teasel *Dipsacus fullonum*. While we were following the edge of the Common, Common Malachite Beetle *Malachius bipustulatus* and 7-spot Ladybird *Coccinella septempunctata* were added to the list. Alison spotted 6 young swallows being fed by their parents – a scene that made the highlight of the day. In the hedge, we found a Field-rose *Rosa arvensis* with styles joined in a “chimney-like” column.

Finally, we entered Furze Field at its northeastern corner. Near the entrance, vegetation was dominated by grasses including Sweet Vernal-grass *Anthoxanthum odoratum* which is a typical hay grass. Paula spotted a Grass-Veneer moth. Jean found a St John’s-wort with no translucent dots, which I keyed out later as a hybrid between Perforate and Imperforate St John’s-wort *Hypericum x desetangsii*. Catherine found an old puffball of a very impressive size, which Claudi confirmed as Giant Puffball *Calvatia gigantea*. There was a fair amount of Common Ragwort *Senecio jacobaea* so we were

not surprised to find a Cinnabar moth and plenty of its stripey yellow-black caterpillars. We came across a strange honeysuckle in a bramble patch which looked out of place but I could not make it into anything else but *Lonicera periclymenum*. Perhaps it was a garden variety. Heather *Calluna vulgaris* was coming into flower and the lemon-yellow flowers of Mouse-ear Hawkweed *Pilosella officinarum* livened the colours. We compared Slender St John's-wort *Hypericum pulchrum* with Perforate St John's-wort *H. perforatum*. White forms of Foxglove *Digitalis purpurea* and Marsh Thistle *Cirsium palustre* were spotted and we found a carpet of Neat Feather-moss *Pseudoscleropodium purum* (right) under the heather. Paula found a patch of Fragrant Agrimony *Agrimonia procera* which was indeed fragrant.



Insects included Welsh Chafer Beetle (*Hoplia phylanthus*) along with Marbled White, Meadow Brown, Gatekeeper and Ringlet butterflies. Small/Essex Skippers did not stay in place long enough for us to decide which colour their antennae were! Linnets were singing, flying and perching nearby and a bird flew over, sparking a discussion about whether or not it was a Peregrine Falcon. With all those exciting things around us we decided to have lunch.

Eventually, we moved on again through hawthorn scrub with plenty of oak seedlings (probably planted by jays) to the eastern section adjacent to Coursers Road. There were several signs of herbivores - rabbit droppings were natural but horse droppings and a tethered horse were not. A local enthusiast had put some tape around a patch with two Pyramidal Orchids *Anacamptis pyramidalis* and two Bee Orchids *Ophrys apifera* to protect them from horses. A few mole hills were scattered in the area. We passed Wood Sage *Teucrium scorodonia*, admired shiny olive-like seeds of Gorse *Ulex europaeus* and were pleased to see Dwarf Gorse *Ulex minor* which is a rare plant in Herts. Vegetation here was much taller but Simon somehow found a single Common Spotted Orchid *Dactylorhiza fuchsii* and there was a bit of Heath Bedstraw *Galium saxatile* nearby. Common Blue Damselfly *Enallagma cyathigerum*, Common Darter *Sympetrum striolatum*, Roesel's Bush-cricket *Roeseliana roeselii*, Common Plume moth *Emmelina monodactyla* and a bumblebee-mimic Hoverfly *Volucella bombylans* were spotted, along with Comma and Small Heath butterflies.

We left Furze Field and a smaller group went to explore the banks of the River Colne. The Swallows had gone but there was a Song Thrush singing in that area. We were pleased to record several water plants: Broad-leaved Pondweed *Potamogeton natans*, Flowering-rush *Butomus umbellatus*, Common Club-rush *Schoenoplectus lacustris*, Branched Bur-reed *Sparganium erectum*, Fool's-water-cress *Apium nodiflorum* and Lesser Water-parsnip *Berula erecta*. We had a good look at a large dock and I was confident enough to record it as a hybrid between Curled and Broad-leaved docks *Rumex x pratensis*. Back in the village, we were treated with ornamental (not useful for recording but still very beautiful) Golden Clematis *Clematis tangutica* and Pale Galingale *Cyperus eragrostis*.

Another day with a lot to record and to learn – many thanks to everyone!

Plant species in flower: 113 (out of 152 plant species recorded)

**Birds:** Blackcap, Blue Tit, Chiffchaff, Crow, Dunnock, Goldfinch, Jackdaw, Kestrel, Linnet, Long-tailed Tit, Red Kite, Ring-necked Parakeet, Song Thrush, Swallow, Whitethroat, Woodpigeon, Wren

**Invertebrates not mentioned in the text (thanks, Simon!):** hoverfly *Chrysogaster solstitialis*, parasitic digger wasp *Cerceris rybyensis* and sawfly *Macrophya montana*. Robin's Pincushion *Diplolepis rosae* gall was seen on a Rose.

*Alla Mashanova*

## **COLLEGE LAKE NATURE RESERVE**

**Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> July**

This walk was cancelled because the reserve was closed for a private event.

## **HERTFORD HEATH AND BALLS WOOD**

**Sunday 31<sup>st</sup> July**

No report.

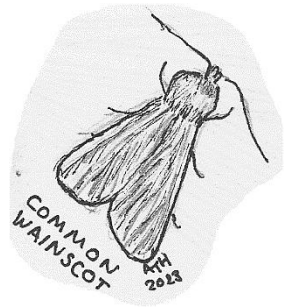
## **MOTH IDENTIFICATION AND WALK AT RUSTLING END COTTAGE**

**Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> August**

**13 Members**

Another hot and steamy day was forecasted so a big thank you to all those who attended. William Bishop arrived with three moth traps on Friday evening and, after a convivial supper with Tim and I, he set up the traps in the meadow. One trap was set beside a mixed hedgerow and two under the oak trees dividing the meadow and a fallowed field. Fortunately, William brought along generators to power the lights of his traps. We also set up two traps in the garden (thank you to Merle for the loan of hers), one between the large borders and one in the driveway hoping to catch some Box moths. Hornets and Wasps were a concern as these will devour the moths.

The most common moth caught in the meadow trap was the Common Wainscot where William counted around five hundred moths. The Common Wainscot is associated with grassland habitats so this catch was not surprising even though the meadow had been cut and lifted a few days before! Seventy-five different species of moth were caught in the three meadow traps with only twenty-two species in the two garden traps.



William spoke of how important it is to record moth species so that this data can be used in future years to track changes in the environment. It is important to record as many species as we can for future scientific analysis.

We picnicked in the garden where a new Rustling End Cottage butterfly visitor was seen by Alison - the Small Heath butterfly. I can now add this to my BTO garden birdwatch species count for the week.

After our lunch we walked past Hollays Wood towards Three Houses Lane to see the devastation caused by a field fire which occurred on the hottest day of the year - Tuesday 19<sup>th</sup> July - when temperatures locally reached 41 deg. The fire spread across 100 acres destroying woodland edges, hedgerows and

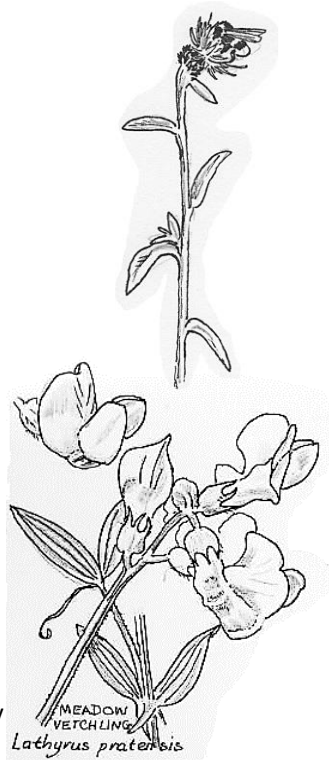
arable crops. We saw signs of life slowly returning with the emergence of new growth of Creeping Thistle and the odd blade of grass, even without any rain having fallen.

Our return walk brought us along Three Houses Lane and then left to Rusling End passing on our way the long-established grassland of Crouch Green meadow where Betony, Knapweed and Devil's-bit Scabious grow. We noted suckering shoots of Aspen which were colonising an uncut lane verge and also recorded Common Fleabane *Pulicaria dysenterica* and Angelica *Angelica sylvestris* in flower in a damp ditch further along opposite Graffridge Wood.

Tea and cake back at the cottage completed the afternoon's walk.

With thanks to William Bishop for his time and sleepless night with the mothing and to Alla Mashanova for her Plant's in Flower list.

<i>Anagallis arvensis</i>	Scarlet Pimpernel
<i>Angelica sylvestris</i>	Wild Angelica
<i>Centaurea nigra</i> agg.	Common Knapweed
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard
<i>Epilobium ciliatum</i>	American Willowherb
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i> x <i>E. tetragonum</i> ?	
<i>Epilobium hirsutum</i>	Great Willowherb
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Field Scabious
<i>Lathyrus pratensis</i>	Meadow Vetchling
<i>Melissa officinalis</i>	Balm
<i>Pulicaria dysenterica</i>	Common Fleabane
<i>Rubus fruticosus</i> agg.	Bramble
<i>Scorzoneroideis autumnalis</i>	Autumn Hawkbit
<i>Senecio erucifolius</i>	Hoary Ragwort
<i>Solanum dulcamara</i>	Bittersweet
<i>Succisa pratensis</i>	Devil's-bit Scabious
<i>Torilis japonica</i>	Upright Hedge-parsley
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i>	Scentless Mayweed





<b>MOTHS - William Bishop</b>		
<b>English Name</b>	<b>Taxon</b>	<b>Total</b>
Angle Shades	<i>Phlogophora meticulosa</i>	2
Blood-vein	<i>Timandra comae</i>	1
Box-tree Moth	<i>Cydalima perspectalis</i>	1
Brimstone Moth	<i>Opisthagraptis luteolata</i>	25
Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua fimbriata</i>	1
Codling Moth	<i>Cydia pomonella</i>	1
Common Carpet	<i>Epirrhoe alternata</i>	1
Common Grass-veneer	<i>Agriphila tristella</i>	7
Common Marble	<i>Celypha lacunana</i>	3
Common Purple & Gold	<i>Pyrausta purpuralis</i>	2
Common Wainscot	<i>Mythimna pallens</i>	526
Copper Underwing	<i>Amphipyra pyramidea</i>	2
Dark Fruit-tree Tortrix	<i>Pandemis heparana</i>	1
Dark Sword-grass	<i>Agrotis ipsilon</i>	3
Dingy Dowd	<i>Blastobasis adustella</i>	99
Dotted Oak Knot-horn	<i>Phycita roborella</i>	1
Dun-bar	<i>Cosmia trapezina</i>	3
Dusky Thorn	<i>Ennomos fuscantaria</i>	2
Ear Moth	<i>Amphipoea oculea</i>	1
Flame Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe designata</i>	1
Flame Shoulder	<i>Ochropleura plecta</i>	8
Flounced Rustic	<i>Luperina testacea</i>	12
Garden Pebble	<i>Evergestis forficalis</i>	3
Green Carpet	<i>Colostygia pectinataria</i>	1
Grey Knot-horn	<i>Acrobasis advenella</i>	1
Grey Poplar Bell	<i>Epinotia nisella</i>	2
Hummingbird Hawk-moth	<i>Macroglossum stellatarum</i>	1
Ingrailed Clay	<i>Diarsia mendica</i>	1
Iron Prominent	<i>Notodonta dromedarius</i>	1

<b>English Name</b>	<b>Taxon</b>	<b>Total</b>
Jersey Tiger	<i>Euplagia quadripunctaria</i>	4
Large Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua pronuba</i>	3
Latticed Heath	<i>Chiasmia clathrata</i>	2
Least Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua interjecta</i>	1
Lesser Broad-bordered Yellow Underwing	<i>Noctua janthe</i>	2
Light Brown Apple Moth	<i>Epiphyas postvittana</i>	2
Light Emerald	<i>Campaea margaritata</i>	1
Lime-speck Pug	<i>Eupithecia centaureata</i>	6
Little Grey	<i>Eudonia lacustrata</i>	1
Long-horned Flat-body	<i>Carcina quercana</i>	1
Maiden's Blush	<i>Cyclophora punctaria</i>	1
Marbled Piercer	<i>Cydia splendana</i>	1
Mother of Pearl	<i>Patania ruralis</i>	3
Oak Hook-tip	<i>Watsonalla binaria</i>	1
Oak Processionary	<i>Thaumetopoea processionea</i>	1
Oxtongue Conch	<i>Neocochylis molliculana</i>	2
Pebble Prominent	<i>Notodonta ziczac</i>	1
Pine Carpet	<i>Thera firmata</i>	1
Red Twin-spot Carpet	<i>Xanthorhoe spadicearia</i>	1
Riband Wave	<i>Idaea aversata</i>	1
Scalloped Oak	<i>Crocallis elinguaris</i>	1
Scorched Carpet	<i>Ligdia adustata</i>	1
Setaceous Hebrew Character	<i>Xestia c-nigrum</i>	18
Shuttle-shaped Dart	<i>Agrotis puta</i>	7
Single-dotted Wave	<i>Idaea dimidiata</i>	1
Small Grey	<i>Eudonia mercurella</i>	1
Small Rivulet	<i>Perizoma alchemillata</i>	1
Small Square-spot	<i>Diarsia rubi</i>	1
Spectacle	<i>Abrostola tripartita</i>	2
Square-spotted Clay	<i>Xestia rhomboidea</i>	2

English Name	Taxon	Total
Straw Dot	<i>Rivula sericealis</i>	3
Straw Grass-veneer	<i>Agriphila straminella</i>	5
Straw Underwing	<i>Thalpophila matura</i>	6
Tawny-barred Angle	<i>Macaria liturata</i>	3
Tree-lichen Beauty	<i>Cryphia algae</i>	1
Turnip Moth	<i>Agrotis segetum</i>	29
Uncertain	<i>Hoplodrina octogenaria</i>	7
Vapourer	<i>Orgyia antiqua</i>	1
Water Veneer	<i>Acentria ephemerella</i>	4
White-point	<i>Mythimna albipuncta</i>	21
Willow Beauty	<i>Peribatodes rhomboidaria</i>	1
Yellow Shell	<i>Camptogramma bilineata</i>	2
Yellow-barred Brindle	<i>Acasis viretata</i>	2

**Julie Wise**

## **SANDRIDGE AND SYMONDSHYDE**

**Sunday 28th August**

**10 Members**

We met in the car park at Sandridge Village Hall, turned left along the High Street then right into House Lane where I was surprised by the number of plants still in flower in the dried-up grass verge – Common Storksbill *Erodium cicutarium*, Common and Dwarf Mallow *Malva sylvestris* and *M. neglecta*, White Campion *Silene latifolia*. A young Pedunculate Oak was found to have both Marble and Spangle Galls on its leaves. We next turned left for Woodcock Hill alongside a dense, flowering Ivy hedge alive with bees and hoverflies and one Hornet. Progressing a little further at our usual BNA pace, a caterpillar with bright yellow stripes was spotted on a leaf of Yellow Toadflax and was identified using a phone App as a Toadflax Brocade caterpillar.

We were then able to walk along the edge of a field of stubble above the narrow lane. On the very dry margin some plants were flowering

successfully: Field Scabious *Knautia arvensis*, Sharp-leaved Fluellen *Kickxia elatine*, Fat Hen *Chenopodium album*, Dove's-foot Crane's-bill *Geranium molle*, Field Pansy *Viola arvensis*, Fool's Parsley *Aethusa cynapium*, Field Bindweed *Convolvulus arvensis* and Scarlet Pimpernel *Anagallis arvensis*. As we were heading towards Hammonds Wood, two birds of prey were spotted - one was a Buzzard and above it a falcon, possibly a Peregrine. At the side of the footpath, we were impressed by the Pedunculate Oaks and their boughs weighed down with huge acorns. Three more galls were found on their leaves, with thanks to Andy: Silk Button, Smooth and Knopper galls. An arable field opposite was planted with a mix of sunflowers, brassicas, maize and barley to provide food and shelter for insects and probably game birds. Looking across the crop there were many Cabbage and Small White Butterflies and, continually swooping over these, a large number of Swallows.

After lunch we followed a path through the edge of Hammonds Wood and stopped to admire an ancient pollarded Hornbeam. This looked extremely sound until we walked round to the back where the trunk was completely hollow. Along the edge of Symondshyde Wood, bushes of Holly were present on both sides of the path and many of their leaves showed evidence of the Leaf Miner *Phytomyza ilicis*. We eventually emerged onto Hammonds Lane, turned left and after passing Hammonds Farm took a footpath along the edge of a field back towards Sandridge. It led towards some very welcome shade between a small wood and the Heartwood Forest Arboretum. We were soon within sight of Sandridge and made our way through the churchyard and back to the Village Hall.

**Jean Williamson**

## **BROXBOURNE WOOD NATURE RESERVE**

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> September**

**12 members**

Twelve members met in the west car park of Broxbourne Wood for a walk which would focus on galls. Members newly arriving were able to inspect a gall on a beech leaf that Paula had brought along. The current edition of British Plant Galls (2011) describes *Mikiola fagi* as 'not found in Britain for many years and possibly extinct here', although apparently there have been scattered records in recent years.

Before setting off, William gave a short briefing on the background to galls with a couple of examples found around the car park. The previous week the leaders had recce'd the walk and seen very few galls so their expectations for observations were low, but at least they were confident of not getting lost. Time proved them wrong on both accounts.

From the off, the benefit of many pairs of roving eyes produced results beyond the leaders' expectations. Steve turned up the first pimplid galls on Field Maple leaves *Aceria myrsideum* that were to prove frequent on the day, plus a woody example of the as-yet nameless gall that is found on willows (thought to be caused by a virus or phytoplasma but the causer has not yet been isolated). Phil found Rose Sputnik gall *Diplolepis nervosa* – perhaps the most visually striking gall of the day, as well as the egg sac of a Sputnik Spider *Theridion pallens* which at least looks as if it ought to be a gall.

William found a rather ordinary-looking felt gall on Turkey oak leaves. This type of gall, caused by mites, is common across a range of species but later it turned out that this particular one, *Aceria cerrea*, was unknown in Britain when British Plant Galls was last updated in 2011 and is likely to be a first record for Hertfordshire. (It is the first that has been submitted to HERC). Alison found an intriguing gall in the flower head of an umbellifer which had everyone stumped until we realised it must be *Kiefferia paricarpiicola* – in British Plant Galls this is listed under *Daucus* but notes that it can occur on other Apiaceae, in this case *Torilis japonica*.

Although gall-less, it was nice to find several Wild Service Trees *Sorbus torminalis*, a species well-known at Broxbourne Wood for many years. Chris was even moved to instigate a mini-work party, pruning back some of the scrub that was shading out a sapling.

Soon after this, the leaders realised they had taken a wrong turn and were looping back to the car park too early. Three members decided to carry on and make it a shorter day leaving nine to retrace their steps and recover the planned route. This took us along a wide, sunny ride and through some very pleasant woodland which provided a nice spot for lunch, but was a bit lacking in diversity. Non-gall excitement came from the appearance of a froglet and the discovery of a Yellow Pimpernel *Lysimachia nemorum* in flower. After lunch the weather warmed up and the gall hunting cooled down, as few new

species were turning up. We finally arrived back safely at the car park, despite the leaders' best efforts, at about 2.30pm.

The final species list for galls was:

Scientific name	Vernacular name	Group	Host plant
<i>Dasineura plicatrix</i>		Gall midge	Bramble
<i>Eriophyes rubicolens</i>		Gall mite	Bramble
<i>Urophora cardui</i>		Fly	Creeping thistle
<i>Aceria macrochela</i>		Gall mite	Field maple
<i>Acreia myriadeum</i>		Gall mite	Field maple
<i>Neuroterus quercusbaccarum</i>	Common spangle gall	Gall wasp	English oak
<i>Andricus quercuscalicis</i>	Knopper gall	Gall wasp	English oak
<i>Cynips divisa</i>	Pea gall	Gall wasp	English oak
<i>Diplolepis nervosa</i>	Sputnik gall	Gall wasp	Rose
<i>Kiefferia pericarpiicola</i>		Gall midge	Torilis
<i>Aceria cerrea</i>		Gall mite	Turkey oak
<i>Rabdophaga rosaria</i>	Rosette gall	Gall midge	Willow
<i>Iteomyia capreae</i>		Gall midge	Willow
<i>Iteomyia major</i>		Gall midge	Willow
<i>Pontania bridgmanii</i>		Sawfly	Willow
<i>Eupontania pedunculi</i>		Sawfly	Willow



**Andy Holtham and William Bishop**

Blushing Bracket in Broxbourne Woods  
looking a bit pale

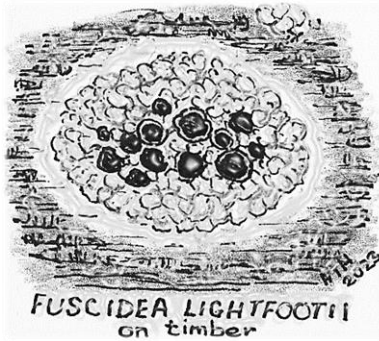
*Photo: Chris James*

# PATMORE HEATH NATURE RESERVE, ALBURY

Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> September

8 members & 1 visitor

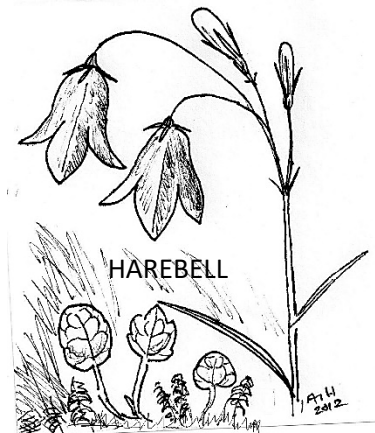
The meeting was programmed as a fungi foray led by Chris James, but sadly Chris had the Covid virus, so I led the meeting for her. I arrived early for the meeting so that I could have a look round before others arrived. After a long dry summer with just a little rain a couple of days earlier, I wasn't feeling optimistic about spotting many fungi so was delighted to see at least a dozen large Parasol toadstools very close to the car park. I was even more delighted to see Claudi arrive in the car park as my fungi identification skills are almost non-existent.



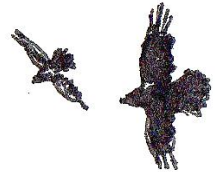
We spent a while admiring the Parasol toadstools and a few other fungi that grew close-by before we moved off at a very slow pace towards a dried-up pond. I stopped to point out a few lichens growing on the timber edging of a notice board - *Fuscidea lightfootii* and *Melanelixia subaurifera*. We also paused to look at an oak tree trunk where I was pleased to show members a previously recorded but

more unusual lichen *Chrysothrix candelaris*, which was reminiscent of a sprinkling of gold dust in the crevices of the trunk when the sun was shining on it. There are only five known sites for this species in Hertfordshire.

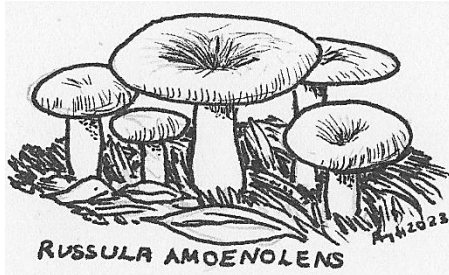
By the dried-up pond we were surprised to see Blackthorn *Prunus spinosa* in flower and we assumed that this was due to the dry summer followed by rain causing a second surge of growth. There was a shout of excitement when the first of many Small Copper butterflies of the day was seen and a few moments with a flower book confirmed that the mint plant that we spotted was Corn Mint *Mentha*



*arvensis*. The bright yellow flowers of Lesser Spearwort *Ranunculus flammula* were also making an unseasonal appearance and fresh green fronds were showing on Narrow Buckler-fern *Dryopteris carthusiana*. Near-by, Harebells *Campanula rotundifolia* and Devil's-bit Scabious *Succisa pratensis* provided a colourful display and the call of a Raven overhead caused members to look upwards.



Our visitor was determined to learn a little about lichens and so I showed her a few common species including *Lecanora expallens* on an Oak trunk and, on the trunk of a Rowan tree, a lovely specimen of *Arthonia radiata* with its distinctive stellate shaped fruiting bodies. We found a fungus with a black band at the base of its stipe growing on a stick, retrieved Claudi from under an oak tree and he quickly identified it as Blackfoot Polypore *Polyporus leptcephalus*. I was then given a fungus to smell and quizzed about whether it smelt of fish or Camembert cheese but I had to admit defeat! However, I could see the small 'goosebump' projections on the cap which helped to



Claudi to identify it as Camembert Brittlegill *Russula amoenolens*.

After studying a few more fungi we settled down to enjoy our picnic lunches in the glorious sunshine after which a few members left us to go home. Our diminished group set off on a local walk west of the Heath.

We noted a couple of interesting plants by the houses: Alexanders *Smyrnium olusatrum* which is only occasionally recorded in Hertfordshire and usually considered to be a coastal plant, and an attractive although persistent introduced plant, assumed to be a garden escape, Dappled Hawkweed *Hieracium scotostictum* Hylander. We walked north along the Albury Road, dodging traffic, before turning off to drop down to the River Ash which we found was dry. We followed a track which took us along a strip of arable land between two woods where we paused to admire a veteran Field Maple tree and watched a Buzzard soaring overhead. Further along we stood and watched House Martins and Swallows before passing Kitchers Pond.



We turned south towards Albury Hall following a track alongside another wood noting an interesting but sadly unidentified Cotoneaster that had red fruits reminiscent of jelly beans! A wall with beautifully shaped bricks on top was occasionally visible and I noted a lichen, *Verrucaria viridula*, growing on it. Passing an intriguing old hay barn with an open door we felt sure that it would make a perfect nesting site for Barn Owls and growing against the end wall was an enormous Fig tree and a huge Pear tree, both obviously planted but worthy of a mention.

We then followed a footpath through a corner of the wood where we recorded Long-tailed Tits before coming out into the sunshine on the southern side where there was a field of Lucerne. We were all delighted to see Clouded Yellow butterflies above the field and several of us tried our best to take photographs. Not an easy task as they took to the wing when approached but eventually there was some success. It was difficult to count them because of their fast flight and the to-ing and fro-ing but we estimated there were at least half a dozen.

I made a small navigation error (my excuse was the excitement caused by the Clouded Yellow Butterflies!), but we were soon on the right path and making our way back across the dry river and towards the Heath. We recorded a Hornet and further on I photographed a moth which I was later able to confirm was a Snout. The final note for the day in my book was a Comma butterfly that we saw resting in a hedge.

We all enjoyed the meeting so thank you to all who came out and especially to Claudi for his identification skills and to Chris for planning an interesting route.

### **Fungi recorded by Claudi Soler**

<b>ASCOMYCOTA</b>		
<i>Erysiphe(Microsphaera) alphetoides</i>	Oak Powdery Mildew	On living oak leaves
<i>Hypomyces chrysospermus</i>	Bolete Mould	On decaying bolete
<i>Nectria cinnabarina</i>	Coral Spot	On deciduous stick

<b>BASIDIOMYCOTA</b>		
<i>Bolbitius titubans</i> (= <i>B. vitellinus</i> )	Yellow Fieldcap	On decayed grass
<i>Gymnopus peronatus</i>	Wood Woollyfoot	On soil and grass
<i>Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca</i>	False Chanterelle	On soil
<i>Hypholoma fasciculare</i>	Sulphur Tuft	On buried wood
<i>Leccinum scabrum</i>	Brown Birch Bolete	On soil, under birch
<i>Macrolepiota procera</i>	Parasol	On soil and grass
<i>Meripilus giganteus</i>	Giant Polypore	On dead oak roots
<i>Paxillus involutus</i>	Brown Rollrim	On soil, under willow
<i>Piptoporus betulinus</i>	Birch Polypore	On birch dead wood
<i>Polyporus leptcephalus</i>	Blackfoot Polypore	On deciduous stick
<i>Russula amoenolens</i>	Camembert Brittlegill	On soil, under oak
<i>Russula cyanoxantha</i>	Charcoal Burner	On soil, under oak
<i>Russula parazurea</i>	Powdery Brittlegill	On soil, under oak
<i>Trametes hirsuta</i>	Hairy Bracket	On deciduous stick
<i>Xerocomellus cisalpinus</i>	Bluefoot Bolete	On soil, under oak
<i>Xerocomellus engellii</i>	A Bolete	On soil, under oak
<i>Xerocomellus porosporus</i>	Sepia Bolete	On soil, under oak

***Paula Shipway***

## ASTON AND ASTONBURY WOOD

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> October

14 members

Members gathered in Aston Village Hall car park for a walk primarily aimed at exploring Astonbury Wood. Parking near the wood is difficult so permission had been given for us to meet here - about 2.5km from the wood.

The first part of the walk took footpaths on field boundaries down to, and along the River Beane. Although not a promising habitat we did see Skylark, Red Kite and Buzzard, one Buzzard being vigorously mobbed by Jackdaws. The few flowering plants on this stretch of the walk were thoroughly investigated.



Magpie Inkcap

Turning off the lane at Aston Bury we found Hornets on ivy, and shortly after arrived at the northeast entrance to the wood. It was quickly apparent that fungi would be the main focus of our visit so we set off, moving southwards through the wood. A highlight after lunch was some rather magnificent Magpie Inkcaps *Coprinopsis picacea* near the southern end of the wood.

Turning north again, Peter saw a kingfisher flying along Stevenage Brook, which runs along the western side of the wood. Among other non-fungi finds, Paula spotted the lichen *Graphis scripta* (it looks like writing) on Hornbeam, and another Hornbeam had an impressive Witch's Broom probably caused by the gall *Taphrina carpini*.

Leaving the wood we saw Speckled Wood butterflies, then made our way back to the car park via Stevenage Golf Centre and Broadwater Lane.

Chris's final fungi list for the day reached 42 species (including Peter's Blue Band Brittlegill *Russula chloroides*), and Alla's plant list reach 50 flowering species, including the invasive Himalayan Balsam *Impatiens glandulifera*, and 24 species not in flower, notably Small Teasel *Dipsacus pilosus*.

<b>Fungi at Astonbury Wood</b>		
<i>Agaricus sp</i>	A Mushroom	
<i>Amanita muscaria</i>	Fly Agaric	
<i>Chlorociboria aeruginascens</i>	Green Wood Cup	
<i>Collybia dryophila</i>	Russet Toughshank	
<i>Coprinopsis picacea</i>	Magpie Inkcap	
<i>Coprinellus micaceus</i>	Glistening Inkcap	
<i>Daldinia concentrica</i>	King Alfred's Cakes	
<i>Ganoderma resinaceum</i>	A Bracket	
<i>Hygrophoropsis aurantiaca</i>	False Chanterelle	
<i>Hypholoma fasciculare</i>	Sulphur Tuft	
<i>Hyphomyces chrysospermus</i>	mould on Boletus	
<i>Inocybe geophylla</i> var. <i>lilacina</i>	Lilac variant of White Fibrecap	
<i>Inocybe praetervisa</i>	Another Fibrecap	
<i>Laccaria amethystina</i>	Amethyst Deceiver	
<i>Lactarius quietus</i>	Oakbug Milkcap	
<i>Lactarius subdulcis</i>	Mild Milkcap	
<i>Leucopaxillus giganteus</i>	Giant Funnel	
<i>Lycoperdon perlatum</i>	Common Puffball	
<i>Macrocystidia cucumis</i>	Cucumber Cap	
<i>Macrolepiota rhacodes</i>	Shaggy Parasol	
<i>Marasmius androsaceus</i>	Horsehair Parachute	
<i>Marasmius oreades</i>	Fairy-ring Champignon	in grass along the drive
<i>Meripilus giganteus</i>	Giant Polypore	on the stump along the drive
<i>Mycena alcalina</i>	A Bonnet	
<i>Mycena inclinata</i>	Clustered Bonnet (on oak)	
<i>Mycena pura</i>	Lilac Bonnet	
<i>Mycena vitilis</i>	Snapping Bonnet	
<i>Otidea onotica</i>	Hare's Ear	

<b>Fungi at Astonbury Wood (Continued)</b>		
<i>Paxillus involutus</i>	Rollrim	
<i>Pluteus cervinus</i>	Deer Shield	
<i>Polyporus leptcephalus</i>	Blackfoot Polypore	
<i>Psathyrella</i> sp	A Brittlestem	
<i>Russula amoenolens</i>	A Brittlegill	
<i>Russula atropurpurea</i>	Purple Brittlegill	
<i>Russula chloroides</i>	Blue Band Brittlegill	Peter Alton's record
<i>Russula nigricans</i>	Blackening Brittlegill	
<i>Scleroderma verrucosum</i>	Scaly Earthball	
<i>Trametes gibbosa</i>	Lumpy Bracket	
<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	Turkeytails	
<i>Xerocomus porosporus</i>	Sepia Bolete	
<i>Xerocomus subtomentosus</i>	Suede Bolete	
<i>Xerula radicata</i>	Rooting Shank	

**Andy Holtham**

## **FIR AND POND WOODS NATURE RESERVE**

**Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup> October**

No report.

## **THERFIELD**

**Sunday 6<sup>th</sup> November**

A small group of us met on the village green at Therfield. The sky was overcast and light rain was falling but, not to be put off, we set off down Chapel Lane. We were soon finding lots of small fungi growing at the edge of the path and on small twigs. Adorning lots of these twigs were the white kidney-shaped caps of Round-spored Oysterling *Crepidotus cesatii*. The wet weather had also given rise to lots of *Psathyrella* species (the Brittlestems), mostly impossible to name. Tiny *Mycenas* were also doing well: growing

among moss on living trees were Frosty Bonnets *Mycena tenerima* and, among moss on the ground, was the lovely Orange Bonnet *Mycena acicula* with orange cap and yellow stem. During the morning we were to record eight species of *Mycena*, some being checked later at home with the help of the microscope.

From tiny to large! A beautiful Shaggy Parasol *Macrolepiota rhacodes* exhibited its scaly cap and frill around the edge of the cap and on handling the stem bruised orange red. The second large toadstool we found was the Horse Mushroom *Agaricus arvensis* and, not far from this, was a group of Yellow Stainers *Agaricus xanthodermus*. As their name suggests, these quickly flush profusely yellow at the base of the stipe and also (slightly more slowly) on the cap, when handled.

We then found the Veiled Oyster Mushroom *Pleurotus dryinus* growing on a living Ash tree and we also saw it again on an Elder along with the Tripe Fungus *Auricularia mesenterica*. One unexpected find was a single specimen of Blushing Dapperling *Leucoagaricus badhamii*. This bruises instantly orange when touched then turns black. It is an uncommon species that grows on calcareous soil under broad-leaved trees.

Heading along Collins Lane we reached Hawkins Wood nature reserve which was closed due to the risks created by Ash Dieback disease, but we skirted along the edge of the wood and admired the rings of Trooping Funnels *Clitocybe geotropa*. By now the sky had darkened and rain poured down, so we hurried from the wood and took a shorter route back across a field which was being set aside for the re-wilding project that is being started in this area.

In the grassland grew the delicate caps and wiry stems of Hairy Parachutes *Crinipellis scabella*. Under a hand lens you can see fine hairs on the cap and stem. Another common species of the grassland is the Ivory Bonnet *Mycena flavo-alba* with its ivory-white to pale yellow caps. Close to these were the bright chrome yellow sticky caps of Yellow Fieldcap (or Egg-yolk Toadstool) *Bolbitius titubans* which is associated with dung among grass.

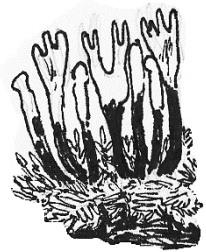
We retraced our footsteps swiftly back to the cars along the lane we had started out on as the weather came over threatening again.

FUNGI:

<i>Agaricus arvensis</i>	Horse Mushroom (right)
<i>Agaricus xanthodermus</i>	Yellow Stainer
<i>Armillaria mellea</i>	Honey Fungus
<i>Bolbitius titubans</i>	Yellow Field Cap
<i>Clitocybe geotropa</i>	Trooping Funnel
<i>Coprinellus micaceus</i>	Glistening Ink Cap
<i>Crepidotus cesatii</i>	Round spored Oysterling
<i>Crinipellis scabella</i>	Hairy Parachute
<i>Flammulina velutipes</i>	Velvet Shank (right)
<i>Leucoagaricus badhamii</i>	Blushing Dapperling
<i>Macrolepiota rhacodes</i>	Shaggy Parasol
<i>Mycena acicula</i>	Orange Bonnet
<i>Mycena arcangeliana</i>	Angels Bonnet
<i>Mycena filopes</i>	Iodine Bonnet
<i>Mycena flavo-alba</i>	Ivory Bonnet
<i>Mycena galericulata</i>	Common Bonnet
<i>Mycena olida</i>	Rancid Bonnet
<i>Mycena tennerima</i>	Frosty Bonnet
<i>Mycena vitilis</i>	Snapping Bonnet
<i>Pleurotus dryinus</i>	Veiled Oyster
<i>Pluteus phlebophorus</i>	Wrinkled Shield
<i>Tubaria autochthona</i>	Hawthorn Twiglet
<i>Xerocomus cisalpinus</i>	Bluefoot Boletus
<i>Coniophora puteana</i>	Wet Rot
<i>Dendrothele acerina</i>	Maple Whitewash
<i>Hyphodontia sambuci</i>	
<i>Peniophora limitata</i>	
<i>Peniophorella praetermissa</i>	
<i>Phellinis pomaceus (=tuberculosa)</i>	
<i>Stereum hirsutum</i>	Hairy Curtain Crust
<i>Stereum rugosum</i>	Bleeding Crust
<i>Tomentellopsis echinospora</i>	
<i>Trametes versicolor</i>	Turkeytail (right)
<i>Auricularia auricula Judea</i>	Jelly ear



<i>Auricularia mesenterica</i>	Tripe Fungus
<i>Exidia nucleate</i>	Crystal Brain
<i>Tremella mesenterica</i>	Yellow Brain
<i>Bisporella sulphurina</i>	Sulphur Disco
<i>Claviceps purpurea</i>	Ergot
<i>Daldinia concentric</i>	King Alfred's Cakes
<i>Diatrype stigma</i>	Common Tarcrust
<i>Hypocrea aureoviridis</i>	
<i>Hypoxylon fuscum</i>	Hazel Woodwart
<i>Xylaria hypoxylon</i>	Candle- snuff (right)



**Kerry Robinson**

## **ST. PAUL'S WALDEN**

**Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> November**

**14 members & 2 guests**

Our walk began with an introductory talk from landowner Fergus Bowes-Lyon explaining the sustainability of the estate's farming practices. These at present include increasing field margins, sowing cover crops, no ploughing, 'mob grazing' beef cattle and planting new hedgerows. The aim is to increase wildlife biodiversity whilst improving soil structure and crop yields.

As usual, we didn't get very far from our starting point inside Stagenhoe's entrance gates before finding some interesting flowering plants in the field margin including Wild Carrot *Daucus carota*, Meadow Buttercup *Ranunculus acris* and Field Scabious *Knautia arvensis*. A leaf beetle *Galeruca taneceti* was also spotted in the flowery field margin. This beetle feeds on Yarrow foliage.

Fungi at the edge of Hitch Wood included a colony of Trooping Funnel *Clitocybe geotropa*, a Lilac Bonnet *Mycena pura* and The Deceiver *Laccaria laccata*. Ruth demonstrated photographing the fungi using her phone camera upside-down a technique taught her by her grand-daughter.

While looking for lichens, Paula spotted a cluster of moth eggs on the trunk of a Hornbeam tree. These were incredible seen through a lens and identified as the eggs of Vapourer Moth *Orgyia antiqua*.



In a hedgerow we found a Blackbird's nest probably from this year's breeding season.

We continued our walk past Stagenhoe House towards Pinfold Wood and then on to Hearnfield Wood where we stopped for lunch. The edge of the wood provided us with a warm sunny picnic spot. Once settled we were then able to observe what was immediately around us. A pair of Kestrels took it in turns to hover over a nearby field hunting for prey. Andy found a 7-spot ladybird crawling over his trousers and, not to be out-done, Julie found two 22-spot ladybirds on her trousers!

After lunch we continued along the footpath towards Hitch Wood where we were greeted by Fergus and Fran Bowes-Lyon. A lovely poem was displayed on a post at the start of the path into the wood see below:

*Deep around the oaks in old Hitch Wood  
In pools of dappled shade,  
Banks of verdant bracken stand,  
Ringing the leafy glade.*

*Beyond the bordering berry hedge  
Purple clover meadows lie,  
Pocked with tussocky grass and sedge,  
Simmering in-glare of the summer sky.*

*Over the field, whispers breezy air  
To wandering bees and hidden hare,  
While creeping mice, dodge rising raptors  
Wheeling on thermals on cerulean high.*

*A brace of hawks hunting under the sun,  
A murderous pair; patrolling swings  
Of gliding wings; steely eyes seeking  
Timorous prey, that should dare to run.*

Anon

Our walk then took us into the majestic Hitch Wood where the UK's largest Barbastelle bat maternity roost has been found. Fergus told us that some of

the bats were monitored using satellite tags attached to the bats using eyelash glue!

We were lead 'off piste' deep into the wood by Fergus and were delighted to see so much dead and standing wood so important for fungi and invertebrates. Alla, Fran and Sophie spotted Smoky Bracket Fungus *Bjerkandera adusta* on a living Beech tree trunk. We also saw a herd of Fallow deer including two large stags, a Hare and some Muntjac scat.

Then the rain began to fall so we headed for home.

**BIRDS:** Buzzard, Kestrel, Red Kite, Raven, Carrion Crow, Fieldfare, Green Woodpecker, Great Spotted Woodpecker, Nuthatch, Robin, Wren, Chaffinch, Long-tailed Tit, Coal Tit

**GALLS (recorded by Andy Holtham):**

**Gall Causer**

*Aceria macrochela*

*Neuroterus quercusbaccarum*

*Aceria campestricola*

*Hartigiola annulipes*

**Gall Host**

*Acer campestre*

*Quercus robur* (Common spangle gall)

*Ulmus procera*

*Fagus sylvatica*

**FUNGI:**

*Clitocybe geotrupa*

*Cortinarius sp.*

*Laccaria laccata*

*Collybia butyracea*

*Hypholoma fasciculare*

*Oudemansiella radicata*

*Mycena pura* var. *rosea*

*Clavulina cinerea*

*Calocera viscosa*

*Xylaria hypoxylon*

*Stereum hirsutum*

*Bjerkandera adusta*

*Helvella crispa*

*Tremella mesenterica*

*Neobulgaria pura*

Trooping Funnel Cap

A Webcap

The Deceiver

Butter Cap

Sulphur Tuft

Rooting Shank

Rose Bonnet

Grey Coral Fungus

Yellow Stagshorn

Candle Snuff

Hairy Stereum

Smoky Bracket

Common White Helvella

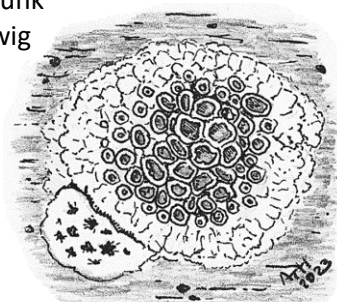
Yellow Brain Fungus

Beech Jelly Disc



# **LICHENS (recorded by Paula Shipway)**

<i>Arthonia radiata</i>	Oak twig
<i>Diarthonia (Arthonia) spadicea</i>	Sweet Chestnut trunk
<i>Dimerella pineti</i>	Oak trunk
<i>Graphis scripta</i>	Hornbeam trunk
<i>Lecanactis abietina</i>	Oak trunk
<i>Lecidella elaeochroma</i>	Oak twig
<i>Lecanora expallens</i>	Horse Chestnut trunk
<i>Lecanora hybocarpa</i>	Horse Chestnut twig
<i>Lepraria incana</i>	Oak trunk
<i>Parmelia saxatilis</i>	fallen branch
<i>Parmelia sulcata</i>	fallen branch
<i>Physcia adscendens</i>	Oak twig
<i>Ramalina farinacea</i>	fallen branch
<i>Xanthoria parietina</i>	Oak twig



*Lecanora hybocarpa* and  
*Arthonia radiata*

# **PLANTS (recorded by Alla Mashanova)**

<i>Achillea millefolium</i>	Yarrow
<i>Capsella bursa-pastoris</i>	Shepherd's Purse
<i>Crepis capillaris</i>	Smooth Hawk's-beard
<i>Daucus carota</i>	Wild Carrot
<i>Galium verum</i>	Lady's Bedstraw
<i>Helleborus sp.</i>	
<i>Helminthotheca echioides</i>	Bristly Oxtongue
<i>Knautia arvensis</i>	Field Scabious
<i>Lamium album</i>	White Dead-nettle
<i>Lamium purpureum</i>	Red Dead-nettle
<i>Melilotus officinalis</i>	Ribbed Melilot
<i>Prunella vulgaris</i>	Selfheal
<i>Ranunculus acris</i>	Meadow Buttercup
<i>Rubus fruticosus agg.</i>	Bramble
<i>Senecio jacobaea</i>	Common Ragwort
<i>Senecio vulgaris</i>	Groundsel
<i>Silene dioica</i>	Red Campion



*Lamium purpureum*

<i>Silene x hampeana</i>	
<i>Sinapis alba</i>	White Mustard
<i>Solanum nigrum</i>	Black Nightshade
<i>Trifolium pratense subsp. sativa</i>	Red Clover
<i>Trifolium repens</i>	White Clover
<i>Tripleurospermum inodorum</i>	Scentless Mayweed
	Common Field
<i>Veronica persica</i>	Speedwell

**Julie Wise**

Vapourer Moth eggs on  
Hornbeam at St Paul's  
Walden

20<sup>th</sup> November 2022

Photo: Ruth Graham

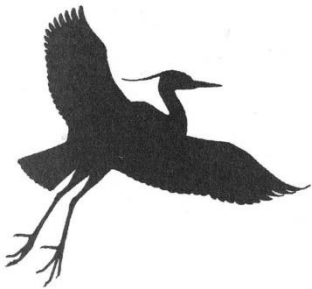




Another fascinating 'haul' from the moth trap at Rustling End  
13<sup>th</sup> August 2022  
*Photo: Paula Shipway*



Andy & Richard examining an ash sapling near Astonbury Wood  
8<sup>th</sup> October 2022  
*Photo: Paula Shipway*



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